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Just Within the Limits of the Law: Minors from Consumers of Advertising to Creators of Advertising in Spain

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Abstract: Children have gone from being consumers of advertising to being creators of advertising. This article provides an overview of the different lines of research on advertising and minors in Spain over the last 10 years and uses it as a basis to argue that the concept of the minor needs to be clarified and multiple regulations need to be unified, which should also be applied to new trends (such as kidgamers and YouTubers). This study highlights the need to find, on a global level, more specialized research lines that are more relevant to current realities, such as the YouTuber advertising that kids are exposed to today.

Keywords: adolescence research, advertising, early childhood research, legislation, self-regulation, YouTube, Spain

Introduction and objectives

The purpose of this study is to offer an overview of current research trends focusing on advertising and minors and their relationship with Spanish regulations. The current presence on the Internet of new forms of advertising aimed at children allowed researchers to understand that it is necessary to analyze the research lines taking regulation as the central concept for classification.

The first objective is to show the main trends of these lines of research and answer questions such as:

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- Is there a solid and homogeneous line of research on the topic of advertising/children?
- Are these the most important social issues or could it be there are others to which attention is not being paid?

The second objective of this paper is to organize, classify, and systematize these lines of research in order to show the current panorama and guide future studies. The (sometimes unjustified) complexity of current regulations is such that the researchers' own starting point was difficult to decide.

Spain has been taken as a case for study because the country have a high concentration of globally successful influencers who are children. Several Spanish children are currently at the top of the Social Blade ranking[1], ahead of even some of the most famous kid YouTubers from the United States. Examples for these Spanish kid Youtubers include „Las ratitas" and „MikelTube".

In addition to these objectives, this paper reviews the Spanish regulations (not only legislation but also self-regulation codes); the "Advertising principles in Spanish regulations" (Table 1) and the "Prohibited advertising messages and regulations that govern them" (Table 2) are systematized and classified in order to obtain a complete picture of the relationship between research and the real problems faced by the older (television) and newer (Internet) advertising modes.

The child in the context of advertising

When speaking of children and media, the traditional legal concern is to focus on how to protect children from the messages they receive; this is also the general direction that educommunication has taken since its origins (Barbas, 2012) and is still being applied today (e.g., from a media literacy ecosystem approach) (Nupairoj, 2016). However, advertising today is much broader, given that children have gone from simple recipients (Lazo, 2005) to active participants. Thus, children can receive messages (advertising) or be advertising players. Although this is not a new development, what has changed, especially with regard to YouTube, is that children have become communicators (content creators) who also address their peers with messages that can often unquestionably be advertising (Jané, 2011), a phenomenon (that of the prosumer) that has made the leap from journalism (Berrocal, Campos-Domínguez, & Redondo, 2014; Vizcaíno-Laorga, Montes-Vozmediano, & De-la-Torre, 2017; Justel, Fernández-Planells, Victoria,& Lacasa, 2018) to social networks (Martínez-Rodríguez & Raya, 2015; López-Meri, 2018) and advertising. Therefore, on YouTube, children, encouraged by their parents, have become creators without them by themselves necessarily having the initiative to do so or it being a spontaneous act. This is a recent concern that is prompting officials in Spain to take notice: in fact, in 2018, the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) published the first legal guide to focus on kid influencers (Martínez-Pastor, Vizcaíno-Laorga, Ortiz, & Riba, 2018). Minors are, therefore, recipients, actors, and communicators who must be taken into account in the legislation. For this reason, the limits of certain concepts such as

[1] The first metrics of the Social Blade ranking were based on number of subscribers and numbers of views of the YouTube channels. Now it uses "a variety of metrics including average view counts and amount of 'other channel' widgets listed in." The exact set of parameters used and how they are used is not public. The objective, therefore, is not only to quantify the number of visits or subscribers but also the influence of the channel: "The SB [Social Blade] ranking system aims to measure a channel's influence" (Social Blade, Frequently Asked Questions: What is the SB Rank all about?," https://socialblade.com/youtube/help)

"sufficiently mature," "higher interest," "responsibility to the minor," and the definitions of a "minor," as well as their rights and duties, must be considered from a legal perspective.

The concept of a child: a definition is necessary to set advertising limits

Considerations of the concept of a child are varied, and international efforts to standardize it have been unable to limit it for practical advertising uses and purposes. The consequences that different approaches have for advertising are multiple (fundamentally when considering the child as a potential consumer or at least a minor who receives advertising messages). According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) "a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years" (Article 1); according to the Spanish Constitution: "Spaniards are of legal age when they turn eighteen years" (article 12), the same age stated in Organic Law 1/1996, of January 15, on the Legal Protection of Minors (Article 1). The limit is 18 years, but we cannot treat a child aged 17 the same way we treat a child who is five years old, because their maturity is different. However, we can categorize children according to the national legal framework (the Penal Code, for example) or the educational system (the educational structure and its corresponding classes by age). From the previous sources (Convention on the Rights of the Child, Spanish Constitution, Organic Law on the Legal Protection of Minors and Spanish Penal Code, Spanish and many other educational systems), broadly speaking and for the purposes of this paper, we can understand children to be minors aged under 12 years old (babies until three years old and toddlers until five years old); preadolescents ("*preadolescentes*" in Spanish) are those who are aged 12 years and younger than 14, and finally, adolescents ("*adolescentes*" in Spanish) are aged between 14 years and younger than 18 (who are not emancipated). For a more comprehensive discussion on the concept of the child and possible classifications see Martínez-Pastor, Serrano-Maillo, Vizcaíno-Laorga, and Nicolás Ojeda, 2017: 24-29). Each country will view these divisions slightly differently. Obviously, when determining children's maturity and possible responsibility and identifying whether or not the child is autonomous enough to exercise their rights, this generic classification can only serve as support. That is, it is a tool to adjust, differentiate, and finally determine the passage from the concept of "child" or "minor" to a different category ("not minor"). As this article will demonstrate, communication has assumed some of these nuances and applied them to different environments (advertising, cinema, videogames, etc.) and to different products (toys, alcohol, or tobacco).

The protection of the child in advertising: the child as a subject of the law

Another issue to consider is whether children are entitled to rights. Although there seems to be some consensus—Cardona, referring to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, states that "children will go from being considered objects of protection, to subjects of rights" (Cardona, 2016: 39)—some authors, such as Sánchez-González (2006), maintain that it is necessary to be of legal age to enjoy those rights. Acebal Monfort, on the other hand, believes children are not only entitled to human rights, but also to personal, civil, and political freedom rights (Acebal, 2010), which implies granting them ownership of those rights as well as the ability to exercise them. Advertising seldom reflects on these quasi-philosophical postulates. Its world is more practical and uses materials directly prepared for the advertising context; it has no use for hypotheses that must be transferred to daily life (Martínez-Pastor et al., 2018). But researchers do need to know the different theoretical approaches to guide their decisions. Thus, the aforementioned opposing positions (children as subjects of law or as objects of protections until they reach adulthood) respond respectively:

1. The theory of interest or benefit, whose maximum exponent is MacCormick (1988), considers children as entitled to all rights, as ownership of those rights "exists from a basic need or a higher interest in favor of that subject" (Lozano, 2016: 4);
2. The theory of will or choice, represented by Hart (1982), which does not understand that children have any rights, as "they lack autonomy or an ability to act as a moral agent" (Lozano, 2016: 3).

There is a middle ground which recognizes that children can be holders of rights, but their ability to exercise them depends on the type of right and each individual's maturity. This is similar to that postulated by Gil-Antón (2015), who stated that "Human rights are owned simply by being a person, you own those rights regardless of age; however, the exercising of the rights is completely different" (Gil-Antón, 2015: 19). For this reason, we need to know how the advertising industry and current research is approaching the issue of minor's rights, the age classifications they consider appropriate, and the types of rights assimilated to each group.

As this paper will outline, the discrepancies occur mainly in theoretical-legal issues, as in practice all the agents involved (parents-guardians, public administration, publicists, and industry) concur that children who work must be given special protection to ensure that children work within an appropriate environment, where their personality can develop. This, therefore, involves granting them special protection (Convention on the Rights of the Child) that is appropriate and adapted to their age, since this obligation of care and supervision (Martínez-García, 2016) must coexist and be balanced with the possibility that children exercise certain rights—which they own—and participate in making decisions about those issues that affect them, and are capable of understanding those decisions.

The maturity of the child and their rights and responsibility as an advertising producer

As a general rule, the more mature a child is, the greater autonomy to exercise rights they will be given; although this generally depends on age, it is subjective and should be determined on a case-by-case basis. The law does not give us a clear classification by age, only certain references. Thus, the Organic Law on the Legal Protection of Minors establishes that "maturity must be evaluated by specialized professionals... in any case, the minor is considered to be sufficiently mature when they turn 12 years old." (article 9.2). Organic Law 5/2000, of January 12, regulating the criminal responsibility of minors establishes a range of 14-18 years old (article 1.1), and the Regulation implementing Organic Law 15/1999, of December 13, on personal data protection refers to the processing of data of children aged 14 years, with their consent. For minors under 14 years of age, "the consent of the parents or guardians will be required" (article 13.1). Thus, although the ideal approach would be "to observe the person in particular, their psychological and physical conditions as well as their personal circumstances, to verify or clarify the legal application of their specific case" (Rocha, 2014: 51), we can see that the law has resolved the question of maturity by appealing to age.

Indeed, exercising rights implies assuming responsibility for actions. In Spain, minors are criminally responsible from the age of 14. They are responsible for any action they carry out that is classified as an offense in the Criminal Code: against privacy, against honor, against intellectual property, etc. What they do not have is full civil responsibility, as their parents or legal guardians are jointly responsible and liable (article 1903 of the Civil Code). This obligation to repair the damage only ceases if the parent shows that they acted diligently and did everything possible to prevent the criminal act. This is also included in the Law on Legal Responsibility of Minors (article 61).

Child first, YouTuber second: in the best interests of the child

In any communicative environment (social networks, for example), especially in advertising, children can exercise rights that may be subordinated to the so-called best interests of the child. This principle has two objectives: to ensure children's rights are protected and to guarantee their involvement –according to their maturity– in all matters that concern them. This means that any action or measure that concerns them (of whatever kind and regardless from whom it may come) must be governed by the principle of the "best interests of the child" (Fernández-González, 2017: 228): whenever there are several options, that which most benefits the child should be chosen, and if a legal provision can be interpreted in different ways, it will be done with the perspectives that best serve the interests of the minor (Organic Law 8/2015, of July 22, on Modification of the System for the Protection of Children and Adolescents). One difficulty that arises is the indeterminate nature of this principle: positive because it facilitates adapting each decision to each case and negative because its ambiguity can lead to a certain degree of arbitrariness (Martínez-Calvo, 2015: 201). The truth is that the principle of the best interests of the child "goes beyond that of the family and is on the level of a general informative principle for the current legal system" (Rocha, 2014: 54), and is therefore not only included in all regulations that refer to minors but is also the source for all others.

Another difficulty it poses "is establishing whether the best interests of the child are understood solely in the child's sense of well-being or implies that children have the right to participate in decisions about their lives" (Van Bueren, 1998: 16). We understand that this must be "considered fundamental in all actions and decisions that concern the child, both in a public and private context" (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989), such that children's best interests will be prioritized in cases of conflict with other legitimate interests, if satisfying both is not possible. Thus, it acts as a limit to the exercise of their rights: even if the child has the right, for example, to privacy, their parents (or guardians) can intervene if they suspect that they are in danger (e.g., accessing their social networks if they believe a pedophile is stalking them). However, it must be applied proportionally.

Research into minors as consumers of advertising content

Having now established the difficulties involved in defining the concept of a minor and their rights and obligations, we must next focus on the legal and regulatory limitations established in advertising in Spain regarding children and, based on the research carried out over the last 10 years, determine whether or not the advertising industry complies with them. This will give us an overview of not only what is currently being researched but also the usefulness of those laws. This in turn will influence the direction that future research should take, as possible niches of study will be detected.

Minors are entitled to the right to freedom of expression and the right to information (Convention on the Rights of the Child), which includes the freedoms to seek, receive, and disseminate information and ideas of any kind by any means, provided they are appropriate for their age. A child sitting in front of a screen receives advertising messages, and parents must ensure that they are appropriate for their age. There are legal limitations of a general nature and those that are specific to content, age, and sector, which is why we have decided to analyze advertising content governed by current regulations—both by the positive law and by self-regulation—as well as conduct a literature review on advertising message regulations.

Studies on the legal limitations of a general nature (principles): the limits of advertising

Advertising messages addressed to children must comply with a series of premises so that they do not confuse them (Pardo, Lázaro & De la Vega, 2012; Lema, 2007; Tato, 2014). Thus, advertising must: respect the law (principle of legality) be identified as advertising (principle of authenticity or honesty), clearly differentiated from entertainment content (principle of identity), be loyal to its competitors so as not to confuse consumers (principle of loyalty), be true (principle of truthfulness) and respect the law and the values and rights recognised by the Constitution (Tato, 2014; Lema, 2007; Bel & Corredoira, 2003; De La Cuesta, 2002; Santaella, 2003). Obviously, the legal requirements regarding these premises must be adapted to the public the specific message is addressed.

Table 1. Advertising principles in Spanish regulations

Advertising principles	**Regulatory standards**		
Principle of authenticity or honesty	General Law on Advertising (article 9) "Advertisers must (...) unequivocally disclose the advertising nature of their advertisements"	Code of Advertising Conduct (article 13) "Advertising will be identifiable as such whatever its form or the medium used"	Ethical Code for Online Trust: "When advertising through electronic communications media the advertiser must be clearly identifiable through their company name or the brand being advertised, such that they are clearly identifiable through the company name or the brand being advertised in such a way that the public they are addressing will recognize them and can communicate with them without difficulties." (article. 4.)
Principle of identity	General Law on Advertising (article 9). The means of diffusion significantly set the limits for the messages transmitted within their informative function which are used as vehicles of publicity	Law on Unfair Competition (article 26) "Television advertising and telemarketing should be easily identifiable as such and be distinguished from editorial content"	Law on Audiovisual Communication (article 13) "Television advertising and telemarketing should be easily identifiable as such and be distinguished from editorial content"
Principle of loyalty	Law on Unfair Competition (article 20) "In relations with consumers and users, commercial practices are considered unfair when they are likely to influence consumers and users' economic behavior. These practices include comparative advertising which -in their factual context and considering all characteristics and circumstances- create confusion, and messages of risk of association with a competitor's goods or services, their trademarks, trade names or other distinctive marks."		
Principle of legality	Constitution, articles 14, 18 and 20, section 4.	General Law on Advertising: (article 3. A) "Advertising that offends the dignity of the person or violates the values and rights that are recognized to them is illegal."	Code of Advertising Conduct (article 11) "Advertising must necessarily respect the rights to honor, privacy and self-image."
Principle of truthfulness	General Law on Audiovisual Communication Advertising "shall not mislead or present falsities about the characteristics of the products, their safety or the capacity and skills children need to use them without causing harm to themselves or to third parties" (article 7.3).	Code of Advertising Conduct (article 14.1) "Advertising should not be misleading. Deceptive advertising is understood to be that which in any way misleads the public it is addressed to."	

Main authors that have studied these regulations: Tato Plaza, 2014; Lema Devesa, 2007; Santaella, 2003; Bel and Corredoira, 2003; De La Cuesta, 2002.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Studies into advertising regulations and minors

Advertising seen by children from the media should favor their integration and growth and transmit messages that promote tolerance and equality, reject discrimination and violence, etc. Below we outline the main research lines, classified into the different advertising content perspectives concerning minors.

Studies analyzing regulations

Studies by Ramos, Piñeiro, and Caldevilla (2012) have analyzed regulations without focusing on a specific means of communication or specific content. Studies focusing on specific topics have been carried out by Del Moral (2005) (the legal regulation of advertising), Medina and Méndiz (2012) (advertising self-regulation and an in-depth analysis of deontological regulations regarding minors), and Ruiz San Román (2011) (an exclusive analysis of article 7 of Law 7/2010 on Audiovisual Communication). Muñoz-Saldaña and Gómez-Iglesias (2013), Morillas (2014), and Martínez-Pastor, Serrano-Maillo, Vizcaíno-Laorga, and Nicolás-Ojeda (2017) have carried out integrative studies analyzing both legal regulations and self-regulation of advertising and minors. The first study is a general reflection on the need for co-regulation and self-regulation, while the latter is the first work in Spain to research the positive law and self-regulation integrally—it includes all areas of industry, as well as the media—and has an analytical, reflective, and informative approach. Recently, the IAB published a legal guide centering on kid influencers (Ortiz et al., 2018), which focuses on children as advertising prosumers.

Conversely, there are studies that, without analyzing specific topics, do focus on a certain aspect of the regulations. For example, Martín-Llaguno and Navarro-Beltrá (2013) carried out a comparative analysis of advertising laws on gender violence and sexism in Argentina, Spain, the United States, and Mexico. García-Noblejas (2012) and Tato Plaza (2010) analyzed practices related to advertising incitements. The law states that advertising should not directly incite children to purchase a good or service by exploiting their inexperience or credulity or encouraging them to persuade their parents or guardians (Article 3.b of the General Budgetary Law (GBL) and article 7.3 of the General Law on Audiovisual Communication (GLAC)). Studies by Massaguer (2010) and Zubiri De Salinas (2011) highlight the unfair aggressive advertising practices that directly encourage children to purchase products, thus failing to comply with article 30 of the Law on Unfair Competition (see Table 2).

Studies focusing on the media: from an interest in television to a focus on the Internet

Studies into advertising and minors focused on specific media are abundant, especially in an audiovisual context. Reviews into regulations concern themselves with highlighting differences in the regulatory systems according to country. Comparative studies include one by Rodríguez-Campra García (2009), who reviewed the audiovisual advertising regulations of 12 European countries and the United States and identified three different categories regarding child protection. The United States was the most permissive country regarding advertising on television networks. However, all those countries have bodies that regulate, advise, and sanction non-compliance, and all agree that television advertising "should not harm minors morally or physically, nor should it directly encourage them to buy a product" (Rodríguez-Campra, 2009: 108). A study by Muñoz García (2009) systematically categorized the criteria for classifying advertising content for minors on television into different codes for Spain, France, England, the Netherlands, and the United States. The codes include content related to violence, pornography, terror, vulgar language, sexist and racist content, and content that

incites the "consumption of substances harmful to physical, mental or emotional development" (Muñoz García, 2009: 164). Teruel Benítez's 2014 doctoral thesis analyzed the television-based campaigns ("Vuelta al cole" and "Navidad") broadcast continuously from 1997 until 2015, in an ambitious, formal study that analyzes values and effects.

Conversely, general studies related to advertising and minors which focus on online media are scarce. In those that do exist, minors or advertising are looked at as part of larger projects. Castelló (2010) focused her studies on online regulation and self-regulation, but the issue of the minor is addressed only when digressing. Likewise, Rallo and Martínez-Martínez (2010) analyzed the regulation of social networks from all angles, but not from an exclusively advertising-minor perspective. Pérez-Bes (2010) studied social networks, and Sánchez-Valle and de Frutos (2010) analyzed interactive advertising strategies targeting minors.

The study by Pérez Díaz (2016) centers on the protection of minors' data on mobile devices and the Internet and on social networks as "information privacy." It analyzes the regulations and the staff responsible for collecting and processing data, and it analyzes the legal issues of the phenomenon of sexting in relation to minors, placing particular emphasis on the protection of minors. Serrano-Maillo (2013), in turn, focused on social networks but purely with regard to the validity of consent, a very specialized point of view of minors and rights.

Thematic studies on advertising and minors

Other lines of research concentrate on certain content or products (rather than the medium itself), although they can be related (i.e., research into toys can focus on sexism and gender issues). Establishing a clear taxonomy is thus complex, such that aforementioned issues complicate the task of categorizing the current situation.

Works on discriminatory content in advertising

According to regulations, advertising targeting minors should never include discriminatory messages (regarding race, nationality, religion, sex, or sexual orientation), or that violate dignity (article 3.a of the GBL article 10 of the Code on Advertising Conduct, or CAC). Although any discriminatory messages are prohibited, advertising standards particularly take note of messages that discriminate against women (see also article 7.e of the General Law on Audiovisual Communication and Table 2). This is to prevent minors from viewing society differently from how it is in reality (Organic Law 1/2004, of December 28, Measures of Comprehensive Protection against Gender Violence).

Studies along these lines worth mentioning include the Andalusian Observatory on Non-Sexist Advertising (2015), which focused on sexist advertising in commercials and toy catalogues; that of the Basque Institute for Women (2014), which developed indicators to detect the presence of sexism in the advertisements for games and toys in accordance with the law on television, radio, printed and digital media, and specialized catalogues. Similarly, studies by Martínez-Pastor, Nicolás, and Salas (2013) analyzed television spots' degree of compliance with regulations on gender issues; those by Pérez-Ugena, Martínez-Pastor, and Salas (2011) identified whether advertising directed towards minors generated gender stereotypes, thus breaching regulations; and studies by Díaz-Campo and Fernández-Gómez (2017) analyzed stereotypes in toy advertising on Facebook.

Risk advertising: studies into minors, violence, and dangerous situations

The law addresses violence and advertising from multiple perspectives and studies even go further (e.g., Ragnedda and Ruiu (2010) analyzed the symbolic violence of music as a means

of persuasion). Advertising messages must not cause—or encourage their audience to cause others—physical or moral harm (article 28 of the CAC, article 7.3 of the GLAC and article 3b of the GBL). Advertisements can resort to neither danger nor fear "except when doing so in a context where the minor can deduce that it is safe" (article 9 of the Code on Advertising Conduct). Other issues in the same vein can be seen in Table 2.

The research line into television violence has a long tradition (Pérez-Ugena, Menor, & Salas, 2010). However, there are fewer studies dedicated specifically to advertising. In any case, regulations make it clear that advertising should not incite children to violence and cannot suggest that acting violently can be advantageous in any way (article 6 of the CAC).

In general, studies along these lines are extremely focused and fragmented, because they concentrate on either the medium or the perspective to be addressed. Liceras Ruiz (2014) mentions advertising only when digressing and alludes to it to refer to violent television content and its relation to advertising, but from a purely commercial perspective. Baladrón (2005) studied the ethical limits of violence in television advertising; Martínez-Pastor (2015) analyzed national and regional regulations on the advertising of video games and limits on the promotion of violent content. Garrido (2010) continued his previous lines of research (Garrido, 2004) and analyzed the trailers of a corpus of 23 Walt Disney animated films made between 1991 and 2008, reaching the conclusion that the desensitization to violence they may generate in minors could be harmful.

Advertising, minors, and food

There are many studies analyzing the influence advertising (on television and the internet) can exert on children's food preferences and eating habits. It is an international concern (Boylan & Whalen, 2015; Folkvord, Anschütz, Nederkoorn, Westerik, & Buijzen, 2014) and the results of comparative studies suggest conclusions similar to those of Spanish studies: advertising for unhealthy products targeting children is common practice and "more effective policies limiting children's exposure to unhealthy product advertisements" should be developed (Morales et al., 2017: 221). These studies suggest that advertising exerts a direct, even impulsive, influence on children. In the case of Spain, the self-regulation of food advertising targeting minors has been addressed by León et al. (2018), *Morales et al. (2017),* Pérez-Ugena, Martínez-Pastor, and Perales (2011), and Martín-Llaguno, Fernández-Poyatos, and Ortiz-Moncada (2011). González-Díaz (2013) carried out a comparative study between the Spanish PAOS code, international codes and codes in other countries. León (2017) detected a greater breach of the revised PAOS code in 2012 compared to 2008. Fernández-Gómez and Díaz-Campo (2014) put forward an opposing perspective: they saw that brands involve themselves in promoting a healthy lifestyle in certain ways (overlays on the screen), although the marketing pitch is still based on incentives rather than on the nutritional qualities of the products.

Research regarding advertising and physical appearance

Advertisements should not generate expectations of success, love, friendship, triumph, etc., in children. Nor should they create false expectations or "overestimate the skill level or the age limit children need to enjoy or use their products" (article 28 CAC). Fostering an obsession with physical appearance "and the rejection of one's own image through products such as slimming products, surgical interventions or aesthetic treatments that appeal to a social rejection of certain physical conditions, or success due to a certain weight or aesthetics" are prohibited (article 7 GLAC). Advertising should never incite minors to behave in ways that may be harmful to their health (article 29 of the Advertising Code of Conduct). Table 2 lists the complete restrictions.

Meléndez, Del Rosario, and Carrillo (2011 and 2016) studied advertising that contained messages of obsession with physical appearance (2011) and whether they included messages of sexual content that could harm the psychophysical development of minors (2016). An original approach was provided by Jiménez-Marín, García-Medina, and Bellido (2017), who studied the advertising of 18 children's fashion brands at the point of sale (through mannequins) in 50 establishments in five Spanish cities. The authors concluded that most brands "tend to generate unrealistic children-adult images," which may result in a "potentially negative self-evaluation." Medina and Méndiz (2012) created a guide entitled "Good Practices for Using Images of Minors in Advertising" after analyzing the deontology of advertising.

Toys and video games

In order to not disappoint a child with regard to the product they would like to buy, it is important that advertising not mislead them when advertising the product's characteristics, according to age. Advertisements addressing children must clearly indicate the "real size, value, nature, durability, and performance of the advertised product" (article 28 CAC and article 7.3 GLAC). Further details can be seen in Table 2. These considerations apply especially to toys since they are the most common products targeting minors (Uribe, 2012). Martínez-Pastor, Gaona, and Nicolás (2017) specifically carried out research into advertising and toys which identified and analyzed European self-regulations and codes (including Spanish regulations). Martínez-Pastor and Nicolás (2015) and Martínez-Pastor, Pérez-Ugena, and Salas (2010) carried out case studies of non-compliance with current regulations, while the Audiovisual Council of Andalusia and the Andalusian Institute for Women (2015) conducted extensive studies analyzing, among other variables, colors and music in television and toy catalogues, especially in regard to sexist practices. Finally, an interesting study was carried out by García-Redondo and Hita (2011) that connected toy advertising with possible benefits or harm to "civic and healthy activities" such as sports or social relations.

For their part, video games also attract the attention of advertising-minor scholars, although they approach the association from indirect or basic perspectives. These studies are often carried out to define concepts and thus serve as a basis for further studies, such as that conducted by Martí-Parreño (2010)and Méndiz (2010), which defined the concept of *advergaming* and explored the possible relationships between initiation of the minor into advertising and brands through gaming, and Martínez-Pastor (2015), who offered an overview of the specific videogame regulations in Spain. Ramos-Serrano and Herrero-Diz (2015) addressed the phenomenon superficially when analyzing certain cases in which children become prescribers of videogames.

Martínez-Pastor, Salas, and Pérez-Ugena (2011) outlined the stereotypes present in videogame advertising. Marí Rodríguez (2012) analyzed the in-game advertising children aged 6-12 years are exposed to, while Rodríguez-Campra García (2010) studied the advertising effectiveness of videogames played by children aged 8-12 years, without focusing on the legal aspects. González-Díaz and Francés (2011) have studied *advergaming* in the context of the food sector and children.

Others: tobacco, gambling, and the environment

Other studies focus on the regulation of certain products that are harmful to health such as tobacco (Abad, 2006; Soto Mas & García-León, 2009; Vázquez, 2011) and alcohol (Tortosa-Salazar, 2010) from both national and community perspectives.

Concerning gambling advertising, a study by Buil, Solé-Moratilla, and García-Ruiz (2015) is worth mentioning, as it outlines how current regulations on this matter insufficiently protect the child. This study addresses the risk to minors of advertising for gambling because of its attractiveness, the easy access to platforms and the possibility of earning easy money. The investigation analyzes both Law 13/2011 on the Regulation of Gambling and the Code of Conduct on commercial communications of gaming activities to know if these regulations protect the minor. The results of this work show, on the one hand, that there is no legal obligation to inform through advertising of the possible risks derived from the practice of gambling and, on the other hand, that gambling companies have resorting, in their advertising strategies, to sports sponsorship, and this advertising activity goes against the child protection legislation. In conclusion, the research holds that the regulation is not enough, and online gambling can increase the risk of practice in minors and proposes developing ad hoc standards. The research by García-Ruiz, Buil, and Solé-Moratilla goes further, urging different social agents such as public authorities to take responsibility for developing responsible gambling policies and raising awareness in society. They press the industry to implement prevention and awareness mechanisms for safe and controlled gaming in order to protect minors.

Advertising should also avoid showing conduct that may encourage behaviors that are harmful to the environment (Article 12 CAC), but instead promote respect for the environment. This is only indirectly explored in certain studies, such as one carried out by the Association of Users of Communication (sf) entitled "Advertising and the Environment" and one by Martínez and Nicolás (2015) that analyzed advertisements for toys and possible offenses in their messages (including those related to the environment).

Table 2. Prohibited advertising messages and regulations that govern them.

CONTENT	REGULATION THAT GOVERNS IT			
Discriminatory messages	**General Law on Advertising** "The previous warning is against advertisements that present women vexatiously or discriminatorily, either by using their body or parts of their body as a mere object disconnected from the product being promoted; or their image associated with stereotypical behaviors that violate the foundations of our order, contributing to generating the violence referred to in Organic Law 1/2004, of December 28, on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence" (article 3.a).	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "Messages must not incite behaviors that foster inequality between men and women" (article 7)	**Organic Law 1/2004, of December 28, on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence** "Advertisements that present women vexatiously or discriminatorily, either by using their body or parts of their body as a mere object disconnected from the product being promoted; or their image associated with stereotypical behaviors that violate the foundations of our order, contributing to generating violence (...)" (sixth additional provision)	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not hint at circumstances of discrimination either because of race, nationality, religion, sex or sexual orientation, nor will it threaten people's dignity. In particular, those advertisements that may be humiliating or discriminatory to women will be avoided." (art. 10)
Direct incitement to purchase	**General Law on Advertising** "Advertisements directed at minors that encourage them to purchase a product or a service, exploiting their inexperience or credulity, or those where children persuade their parents or guardians to purchase." (article 3.b)	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "a) Messages must not directly incite minors to purchase or lease products or services by taking advantage of their inexperience or credulity. b) They should not directly encourage minors to persuade their parents or third parties to purchase advertised goods or services" (article 7.3. a and b)	**Unfair Competition Law** "It is considered disloyal (through its aggressiveness) to include in advertising a direct appeal to children to purchase products, use services or to convince their parents or other adults to contract any products or services advertised" (article 30)	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Messages must not exploit children or adolescents' naivety, immaturity, inexperience or natural credulity or abuse their sense of loyalty." (art. 28)
Physical or moral damage	**General Law on Advertising** "Messages should not mislead (...) children about the necessary skills they need to use the products being advertised without causing harm to themselves or to third parties" (article 3b)	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "Commercial communications on products specifically targeting minors (...) not mislead children about the necessary skills they need to use them without causing harm to themselves or to third parties" (article 7.3)	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not foster or encourage behaviors that harm the environment" (article 12)	
Risk situations	**General Law on Advertising** "Children cannot be shown to be in dangerous situations, without a justified reason" (article 3b)	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "Commercial communications must not cause moral or physical harm to minors" (article 7.3.)	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not send messages that prey on the fear or superstition of the target public" (article 5) and "Advertising should not encourage dangerous practices unless the public can deduce that it is safe" (article 9)	
Expectations	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "During the protection of minors time slot, audiovisual	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "(...) Advertisements must not create false expectations or		

	communication service providers may not insert commercial communications that foster an obsession with physical appearance and the rejection of one's own image through products such as slimming products, surgical interventions or aesthetic treatments that appeal to a social rejection of certain physical conditions, or success due to a certain weight or aesthetics" (article 7)	overestimate the skill level, or the age limit children need to enjoy or use their products" (article 28)		
Incite behaviors that are harmful to health	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not encourage recipients, especially teenagers, to acquire behaviors that may be harmful to their health." (article 29).	**Self-regulation codes on television content and minors and television programming in protected time slots** "Message will nor incite children to imitate behaviors that are harmful or dangerous to their health, especially: the consumption of any type of drug and a desire for extreme thinness" (article 1.d)		
False product characteristics	**General Law on Audiovisual Communication** "Commercial communications on products especially those targeting minors, such as toys, should not mislead or present falsities about the characteristics of those products, their safety or the capacity and skills children need to use them without causing harm to themselves or to third parties." (article 3)	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Special care will be taken to ensure that advertisements do not trick or mislead children as to the actual size, value, nature, durability and performance of the advertised product" (article 28)		
Violent messages	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not incite violence, nor suggest that there are benefits to be gained from aggressive or violent attitudes." (art. 6)			
Encouraging illegal behavior	**Self-regulation codes on television content and minors and television programming in protected time slots** "Minors that can be identified with, will not be shown consuming alcohol, tobacco or narcotic substances" (article II.2.c)			
Images of sex	**Self-regulation codes on television content and minors and television programming in protected time slots** "Messages or scenes showing explicit violent or sexual content that lack educational or informative basis will be avoided in programs whose target audience are children, and during those program's			

	commercial breaks."			
Harm to the environment	**Code of Advertising Conduct** "Advertising will not foster or encourage behaviors that harm the environment" (art. 12)			

Main authors who have studied these regulations: **Martínez Pastor, Serrano Maillo, Vizcaíno-Laorga, and Nicolás Ojeda (2017), Martínez Pastor, Gaona Pisonero, and Nicolás Ojeda (2017), Andalusian Observatory of Non-Sexist Advertising, Andalusian Institute for Women – Department of Equality and Social Policies.(2013), Medina and Méndiz (2012), Martínez Pastor, Pérez-Ugena, and Coromina, Salas Martínez (2010), Rodríguez-Campra García (2009), Muñoz García (2009), Del Moral Pérez (2005).**

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Conclusions

With regard to the first objective (to detect the main research trends in advertising-children and where there is a homogeneous line of research), current studies on advertising and children do not have one clear priority. Research is inconsistent, focuses on different themes, and lacks continuity over time with certain exceptions (studies focusing on toys or certain comparative studies). Television continues to be one of the most analyzed media, although there is a growing interest in online and interactive media, as well as other advertising formats related to videogames. Studies on kid YouTubers (where advertising is currently just within the limits of the law) is as of yet an emerging line of study. Although the dichotomy between media and online media has been overcome, it has not been sufficiently translated into research into advertising and children.

The first objective of the study also raised the possibility of finding neglected social needs. In this way, food and physical appearance are two clear concerns in research into publicity and minors. However, there is a lack of research on working with parents (educommunication-training rather than regulation and its subsequent monitoring) despite its importance, and we should thus start exploring this area.

The classification and organization of the lines of research on the topic of advertising and children (the second objective of this paper) and the relationship between these issues and the Spanish regulations (Table 1 & Table 2) as a case for study show that the research studies are either too generic or so specific that a very wide range of research lines has emerged which do not interrelate. This is unsurprising, as it is a complex issue and the legislation is inconsistent and, in many cases, repetitive. Thus, simplifying regulations, or at least clarifying and unifying them, would be of interest, and would also facilitate access for all relevant agents involved: industry, publicists, and users. Additionally, scholars will more probably be able to find and follow clearer lines of research.

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Communication between editors and reporters: Feedback and coaching in Estonian dailies' newsrooms

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to find out how much journalists receive and editors provide coaching and/or feedback and how. Empirical data were gathered by using a non-participant observation in a national daily newsroom and two participant observations in a national daily and in a local newspaper newsroom in Estonia – altogether 2 months and three days. The results showed that communication between experienced journalists and editors lacked constructive feedback and coaching. The editors tended to direct the work of a less experienced journalist; experienced journalists could work alone and decide independently how to solve situations within the news production process. All in all, not providing constructive feedback or coaching could have negative influences on journalists, especially when the working conditions are changing.

Keywords: journalist coaching; communication; content analysis; newsroom interactions; participant observation

Introduction

As many researchers have stated, journalism is "in a state of flux" (Preston, 2008; Spyridou et al., 2013; Hermida, 2010, etc). Occupational changes are occurring because of the crisis of media economics (Picard, 2006), convergence, new technologies, and media in the newsrooms (Bardoel & Deuze, 2001). These changes are also influencing "journalistic work process" (Picard, 2000: 100) and therefore the journalist as well.

Yet, norms and standards of the journalistic job (accuracy, objectivity, etc.) conflict with some of the new demands; for example, speedy reporting puts accuracy in danger (O'sullivan & Heinonen, 2008). Abandoning conventional norms and values of journalism has led to journalists describing their profession being precarious (Örnebring, 2018) and overall feeling dissatisfied with work (Reinardy, 2009).

Adapting is mostly left up to journalists, who might not understand the necessity of changes or could suffer from inadequate skills that are necessary for adapting (Spyridou et al., 2013). These problems have especially been connected to older, more experienced journalists,

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who report feeling insecure at their job and unsuccessful in the job market (Davidson & Meyers, 2016; Ekdale et al., 2015; Clark & Fry, 2003). Job insecurity means that the employee does not feel confident about the future of their job (Cheng and Chan, 2008). Job security is supported by good organizational communication and high employee autonomy (Vander Elst, Baillien, Cuyper & de Witte, 2010).

Feeling insecure at a workplace could have a negative effect on the quality of work produced, creativity and courage to try out innovative ideas (Schreurs et al., 2012; Ekdale et al., 2015; Reich, 2013). This in turn means that adapting to the new demands is hindered. This instability and dissatisfaction with work could potentially have a couple of severe consequences – professional journalists resigning from the field, leaving the positions open for employees without an ethical compass, ability to sort out newsworthy topics, etc., and/or producing low quality content.

In the context of changes, new demands, and insecurity that occur in the profession and newsroom, this study aims to observe how much editors provide feedback and coaching, not only to younger, less experienced journalists, but to older, experienced journalists as well. As there is a lack of research about coaching and professional feedback inside of the newsroom, the theoretical part presents and analyzes coaching, different concepts of feedback, and the psychological reactions to them, as they help to explain the necessity of professional communication.

Coaching and feedback as resources

Feedback is a broad term. All in all, it could be said that feedback is "actions taken by (an) external agent(s) to provide information regarding some aspect(s) of one's task performance" (Kluger and DeNisi, 1996: 255). The information that is forwarded as feedback could be of different kind. Baron (1988) differentiated constructive and destructive feedback, saying that constructive feedback is a very detailed description of performance; it is also considerate of the external aspects that might have had influence on performance of the employee and values the effort the employee had put in. Destructive feedback, on the other hand, is carried out in an offensive tone and manner, does not take into account any external aspects, and primarily focuses on internal aspects. Comments made about the poor quality of performance are very general without any specific details (ibid). Due to the different content and aim of the feedback, the reaction of the employee differs as well.

While thought-through constructive feedback has the ability to direct the employees' capabilities and knowledge to where it is needed (Steelman & Rutkowski, 2004), destructive feedback could make the employee oppose changes, not agree with compromises, and could hinder self-development and efficiency (Baron, 1988; London, Larsen & Thisted, 1999). Constructive feedback makes the employee more efficient and thus more beneficial to the organization (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute, 2008). Constructive feedback could help the journalist to find effective routines for producing quality content in the precarious settings, as in the converged newsrooms routines are yet to be developed (Ivask, 2019).

Another way to distinguish feedback is by its content: positive versus negative. This approach mostly relies on employees' perception of feedback. Negative feedback is not considered as accurate and acceptable by the employee as is positive feedback because it might conflict with self-generated feedback, which in turn puts one's ego in danger of being affected (Fedor et al., 2001). Employees with high self-esteem might ignore the negative feedback provided by a source that they do not view as an expert or who does not place higher in the newsroom hierarchy; when negative feedback is provided by a source that is an expert or higher in the hierarchy, individuals with high self-esteem might look at the feedback as authoritative

and/or credible, and they see the necessity to put in a greater effort to behave accordingly (ibid). All in all, negative as well as destructive feedback could cause similar negative reactions in employees.

According to the Job Demand and Resource (JD-R) model, feedback is one of the resources at a workplace. Feedback, social support, and supervised coaching are needed for self-growth, self-efficacy, and feeling motivated at work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Both the Conservation of Resources model (COR) and JD-R emphasize on the necessity of social support that could have a positive effect in diminishing the probability of burnout (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004), which is especially beneficial for journalists, whose work is considered to be very stressful (e.g. Reinardy, 2009, 2011; Simpson & Boggs 1999; Himmelstein & Faithorn, 2002).

Good performance feedback assures the employee that the company values them; it also leads to high motivation and job satisfaction (Maertz Jr & Griffeth, 2004; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990). If the employee has the feeling of not being valued by the company and the feedback provided is perceived as negative and destructive, the employee might leave the company (Chen & Spector, 1992; Fitness, 2000). Overall, these trends are already happening: journalists, who are dissatisfied with demands and resources of the job, leave or consider leaving the field (Ivask, 2017).

In order to analyze more thorough the communication that could provide professional help or feedback to the employee, another concept is being analyzed in this article – coaching. People often confuse coaching with mentoring or use these terms synonymously, but they are not the same. The difference is that coaching is used as a tool for helping to learn rather than teach or direct; it requires expertise in the techniques of coaching. Mentoring, on the other hand, emphasizes passing down knowledge and skills from one individual to another (Whitmore, 2010).

The difference between providing feedback and coaching is that providing feedback means forwarding information about the performance that was carried out in the past, whereas coaching is helping to evolve and reflect on the process of working in real time without giving "right answers" to the employees. Rather, coaching provides tools for the coachee to find the answers. And although both practices provide information about the performance, coaching has longitudinal effect on the employee.

According to Gallwey (2001), coaching helps individuals to understand their capabilities and leads to practicing the capabilities to the fullest; coaching helps to improve the work performance of an individual and is therefore beneficial for the company. It has positive effects on "performance and skills, well-being, coping, work attitudes, and goal-directed self-regulation" (Theeboom et al., 2014: 12).

Coaching could act as a resource for both the journalist and the editor. This kind of communication leads to partnership and both sides knowing what each other's expectations are. For example, without knowing the progress of writing or newsgathering, the editor does not have a full certainty whether he receives the story in time to be able to edit it. This leads to suffering from negative stress and time-pressure. The people who suffer the most from stress in a newsroom are desk personnel, because they are the last ones to receive the articles, often very close to the deadline, so they have limited time to edit it (Ternes et al., 2017). And as younger journalists are in the midst of developing their skills, routines, and time management (Ivask et al., 2017), editors as coaches could be at hand to improve the work environment and the capability to overcome difficulties.

Although feedback from the audience has offered more interest to researchers (e.g. Bruns, 2011), feedback and coaching provided inside of the newsroom by employees are scarcely covered by researchers. One small-scale research project carried out about coaching among journalism students provides results that the approach helped to improve their stories

(McKeen & Bleske, 1992). Clark and Fry (1992 & 2003) explain that coaching could help to improve journalists' skills so that the editor does not have to work on editing the news as much. Only editing the text and paying attention to mistakes could lead to the reporter wanting to oppose the editor; coaching could make the journalist and editor feel more like partners, not just like a supervisor and an employee (ibid).

One of the biggest research projects that included questions about feedback was a MediaAct survey. The sample of the survey consisted of 1762 journalists from 12 European and two Arab countries. The results showed that journalists admitted to seldomly receiving feedback. To be more precise, the results indicated that Estonian journalists were the least critical towards each other's work (Lauk et al., 2014). The small size of Estonian journalists' community makes criticizing or giving feedback to a friend or an acquaintance difficult (ibid) because it could lead to a role conflict. As there is a lack of such research, this article aims to provide insights into professional feedback and coaching practices in newsrooms.

Method and sample

For this study, three observations were carried out to gather empirical data. Two of the observations took place in national dailies and one in a local daily newsroom in Estonia. As anonymity was promised to all of the newsrooms in the sample, specific details about them cannot be presented, because they would make the newsrooms identifiable. The circulation number of two dailies (a national and a local) is more than 12,000. A circulation number of the second national daily cannot be added because it would make it identifiable in Estonia. There are four national dailies (published in Estonian) in Estonia and four bigger local dailies (published in Estonian). There are newsrooms that have similar circulation number, publishing frequency, and number of employees in the sample.

These observations provided the researchers with the opportunity to observe the interactions happen in the newsrooms without the interpretation of the participants. Journalists and editors may not be able to recognize their behavior, or recall or analyze the content of the communication (e.g. whether it was constructive feedback or not). The strong side of observations is the collection of "clean" data; the weakness is that the researcher interprets the interactions (Mey et al., 2010; Given, 2008). Different kinds of observations were carried out in this study to provide versatile data (with and without intervention from the researcher).
During the non-participant observation, the researcher focused fully on observing the newsroom. In this case, she was able to videotape all of the days. In two other cases, the researchers worked side by side with the journalists and editors, they intervened and asked questions, and they experienced the interactions themselves. In these cases, the researchers were not able to videotape their observations and their field notes were not as detailed as during the non-participant observation, but their observation period was longer, thus providing more data to recognize some of the behavioral patterns. All of the participants were promised anonymity.

All of the observers used identical diary and observation systems, which were created together. It was agreed in our research group that if anything significant happens, the observer would mark down the exact time and description of the situation.

The non-participant observation

The non-participant observation was carried out in a national daily from Monday to Wednesday (8 to 10 February 2016). Six journalists (all female) and one editor (male) were observed. As

different newsrooms have their own systems and schedule, then during the observation in this national daily, only one editor was observed, because he was in charge of assembling the newspaper that week, so he supervised all of the journalists.

Observations lasted from 12 to 13 hours each day, starting when the first journalist or the editor came to work and ending when the last one left. Four of the journalists had less than five and two had more than five years of experience in journalism. On the week of the observation, one of the younger, less experienced journalists had just started working in the newsroom. The average age of observed journalists was 26 years old. The observed editor was a 37-year-old male who had more than five years of experience in the field. Two women and one man were absent during the observation (average age: 35 years).

Participant observations

Two participant observations were carried out in two different newsrooms: a national daily and a local daily. The observers, who had prior experience as journalists, worked with journalists and editors side by side, taking notice of what the others were doing and asking additional questions to clarify certain situations and motives of behavior. All of the data were gathered in written form (diaries and notebooks of the observers).

The observation in a local daily was carried out in January 2016 (see Table 1). Reporters and editors of local news and online newsroom were observed. Eight of the reporters had more than five years of experience and five had less. Among the thirteen journalists were two who worked only for online and eleven who worked mainly for the newspaper. At times, editors directed all of the journalists to create online-based content as well. The age span of the journalists was 22 to 61 years old and average age was 44 years old. All the observed editors were women; three of them had more than five years of experience and one less. Their age span was 33 to 56 years old, with an average age of 42.

Observation in a national daily was carried out from 1 to 28 August 2016 (see Table 1). Although the newsroom is designed as an open office, where all of the journalists of different beats work together, only journalists of Estonian news were observed. The newsroom had a separate online newsroom and online journalists, yet observed journalists had to create content for the online as well at times.

Seven journalists and five editors were observed in the newsroom. Three of the journalists had more than five years and four less than five years of experience in the field. Three of the editors were women and two were men. The average age of the observed editors was 31 (the age span was 25 to 44). Two editors had less than five years and three had more than five years of experience in the field.

Table 1: Sample and details of the observations in 2016. Source: Author.

	National daily 1 Non-participant observation	**National daily 2 Participant observation**	**Local daily Participant observation**	**In total**

Journalists observed	6	7	13	26
Editors observed	1	5	4	10
Gender of the journalists	Women: 6 Men: -	Women: 4 Men: 3	Women: 5 Men: 8	Women: 15 Men: 11
Gender of the editors	Women: - Men: 1	Women: 3 Men: 2	Women: 4 Men: -	Women: 7 Men: 3
Age of journalists (mean)	26	31	44	34
Age of editors (mean)	37	31	42	37
Observation period	8–10 February 2016 (3 days)	1–28 August 2016 (1 month)	3–30 January 2016 (1 month)	2 months and 3 days

In total, 26 journalists and ten editors were observed (see Table 1). There were more women participating in this study than men, which could be explained by the fact that there are more women (58.4%) working in journalism in Estonia than men (Worlds of Journalism, 2016).

I analyzed the data by directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005), focusing on the main research questions and codes by using MAxQDA 10. The author of the article analyzed and coded the data.

The main codes used in the analysis are as follows:

1. Editor communicating with a journalist about plans: editors asking about the plans of the journalist outside of the newsroom meeting.

2. Editor directing the work of a journalist (giving orders): situations and communication, in which the editor directs and interferes with the journalists' work without a detailed

explanation (e.g. editor changing the headings or leads; orders to phone a certain source etc).

3. Editors providing constructive feedback to journalists: communication initiated by the editors that consists of detailed information and constructive feedback about the work of a journalist (e.g. feedback consists of examples from the journalists' articles).

4. Coaching: situations with elements of coaching, such as two-way communication that aims at the journalist finding the solutions (e.g. editor asking how the journalist would solve the situation).

5. Editor forwarding destructive feedback to journalists: communication that could be considered feedback, but is of a destructive nature, meaning it does not provide information for journalists' professional development, is forwarded in an offensive manner, or is superficial (e.g. editor making a remark that a story was not good enough).

6. Journalist in need of help: situations where journalists are having problems with sources or with news production (e.g. journalists cannot reach the sources; journalists not having enough time to produce news content for the web or print).

7. Directing by the editor affecting journalists in a negative way: editors' directions and interference having negative implications for journalists (e.g. editing causing a factual error in the article).

8. Journalists being late for the morning meeting

9. Journalists not present in the newsroom

10. Journalists asking for feedback and information from editors: situations in which the journalists ask either about their article or work arrangement in the newsroom.

Results

The overview of used codes (see Table 2) shows that there is a lack of information exchange between the editors and journalists in the newsrooms that is directed at professional development of the journalist (e.g. coaching n=1, providing constructive feedback n=2, etc.). Editors tend to direct (n=177) the journalists by giving the solutions they think are suitable or by providing destructive feedback (n=41).

Some of the journalists are in need of help (n=59) and ask for feedback and information in the newsroom from editors to fulfill their tasks (n=34). Yet again, as analysis shows, the communication tends to be linear (from editor to journalist) and does not support the professional development of the journalist, rather solves the problems quickly. In the following chapters, I analyze these situations and indications more thoroughly.

Table 2: The overview of codes and analysis

1. Communication between journalists and editors

1.1 Editor communicating with a journalist about plans	26

1.2 Editor directing the work of a journalist (giving orders)	177
• Less experienced journalists	148
• Experienced journalists	29
1.3 Editors providing constructive feedback to journalists	2
• Less experienced	2
• Experienced	0
1.4 Coaching	1
1.5 Editor forwarding destructive feedback to journalists	41
• Less experienced journalists	39
• Experienced journalists	2

2. Journalists in the newsroom

2.1 Journalist in need of help	59
2.2 Directing by the editor affecting journalists in a negative way	62
2.3 Journalists being late for the morning meeting	6
• Less experienced journalists	2
• Experienced journalists	4
2.4 Journalists not present in the newsroom	9
• Less experienced journalists	2
• Experienced journalists	7
2.5 Journalists asking for feedback and information from editors	34
• Less experienced journalists	27
• Experienced journalists	7

I divided news production for the newspaper into two phases: 1) newsroom meeting and 2) newsgathering and writing phase, during which the editors' impact on the production enhances. Additionally, I added a subchapter talking about multitasking and time pressure in the newsroom, as it affects journalists in both phases. During the newsroom meeting, journalists and editors are together in a room collectively, but during the newsgathering phase, journalists are usually alone behind a desk, in a calling booth, or at the editors' desks.

Newsroom meeting

Workdays in the newsroom start at different times for different journalists, but in these observations, all journalists had to be present at the time of the newsroom meeting in the morning, which took place around 10 A.M. This is where every journalist presents the story or news he or she is working on and gets feedback as to whether or not the editor sees the necessity of writing about the topic or what should be taken as a focus of the story.

Some of the tendencies during these meetings indicated that editors showed different attitudes towards journalists with different experience. The analysis showed that six cases occurred during the observed period in which journalists were late to the morning meeting (two less experienced and four experienced). One significant event took place one morning in a

national daily, where an experienced journalist was late for the newsroom meeting. The supervising editor did not pay attention to this and continued on with the meeting. A couple of journalists, who were sitting behind the table, looked at each other in dismay after this incident. When the researcher asked afterwards about their reaction, then they explained that they were bothered by the lack of information, why their colleague was late, was he engaged with work in the morning or was there another explanation to it and if the supervising editor knew about it. All in all, the analysis shows that no visible negative reactions followed up to the late arrival of the journalist.

Two situations also occurred in which a less experienced journalist was late for the meeting. In both of the cases, the journalists received criticism from the supervising editor in front of their colleagues, reminding the less experienced journalist to be on time for the meeting. The difference in behavior towards these situations could lie in supervising editor assuming that the norms and rules of the newsroom are clear for the experienced journalist, who was late, but is still knowledgeable about them, yet, these rules and norms of the newsroom might not yet be clear for the young, less experienced journalist, and the editor might thought it was necessary to remind them. Another explanation could be that the experienced journalist had let the editor know that he would be late, so it did not come as a surprise.

There were nine cases of journalists not working in the newsroom – in all of the cases, journalists informed the supervising editor the day before or in the morning. They phoned each other or used Facebook/messenger.

Some of the situations, in which the editor forwarded destructive feedback to journalists (n=41), occurred during the morning meetings, where the supervising editors expressed quite a critical attitude towards topics and news suggested by the less experienced journalists. Criticism was passed on in a higher pitched voice, using negative connotations and adjectives, which are indicators of destructive feedback. Additionally, there was a lack of explanation as to why the editors declined or disliked the news and topics offered to them. For example, one editor just said: "This story could and should wait." After this, she carried on with the meeting. During these meetings, the editor started to direct the work of a less experienced journalist. For example, some of the less experienced journalists had to abandon the ideas that they had or instead of writing thorough news on the topic they suggested, the editor asked the young journalist to write a small bulletin for the web. One of the less experienced journalists admitted after another one of this kind of an incident: "[It] seems like the editor does not trust me enough to let me write a bigger news." This was one of the 62 negative reactions to an editor directing or interfering with the work of a journalist.

In some cases, when the experienced journalists did not have a topic to write on, they did not receive a negative reaction from the editor. At times, they both made fun of it saying it is a "dry season," which means that there is not anything newsworthy happening. Editors usually asked couple of additional questions about the topic the older journalist had suggested and moved on after that, no further in-depth discussion followed – which also means there was a lack of constructive feedback.

Newsgathering and writing phase

Both of the experienced and less experienced journalists and editors started to communicate more when the journalist was working on an article that was supposed to be published in the next day's newspaper, meaning it had to be ready on the present day at a deadline. The communication consisted of either the editor asking about the journalists plans (n=8), the editor directing (giving orders) (n=177), or journalists asking for feedback and information from the editors (n=34).

If there were no articles in the newsgathering or writing phase, then the journalists and editors usually did not communicate with each other, or when they did, the communication tended to be informal, focusing more on non-work-related topics.

Out of 177 cases, where the editor directed the work or a journalist, 148 were connected with less experienced journalists and 29 with experienced journalists. This result could be explained by several factors. Firstly, older and more experienced journalists tended to work on newsgathering and writing on their own in the newsroom, very rarely consulting with the editor. In case of any problems with the sources or with the news, they approached the editor and passed on the information (e.g. they were not able to write the news for the next day). Their communication was quite short and concrete, and very rarely did further discussion follow. The experienced journalists approached the editor mostly in the early hours of afternoon, rarely in the evening.

Secondly, there were a few cases when the editor approached the experienced journalist to talk about some other topics they had found and thought could be suitable for the journalist to work on next. The editors very rarely approached the journalists to discuss the articles that were in the works. In one of the newsrooms, when the editor approached the experienced journalist and asked what he was doing, the experienced journalist gave a short and concrete overview, after which the editor left.

Thirdly, one reason for rarely talking to editors was the fact that older experienced journalists worked usually on investigative or analytical news, so they had more time to write their stories. These stories tend to be more on the feature side, so they are not as timely as news. This means that the journalists did not need advice that fast and could spend more time in thinking about the issues that they may have faced.

During the observations, the editors did not give any kind of constructive feedback to the experienced journalists about their work (n=0). There was a situation in which an experienced journalist went up to the editor to check up on his article and the editor said: "Everything is fine." It is notable that the editor did not use an adjective that expresses the highest quality of the article, but instead the average, nor did he provide detailed information about the article.

There was more frequent communication between less experienced journalists and editors; the initiator of the communication was usually the editor. Therefore, it could be said that the less experience the journalist had in the field and in the newsroom, the more the editor paid attention to the journalist on a daily basis. There was an indication of coaching (n=1) when an editor wanted to get an overview of what the less experienced journalist had written so far, so the journalist had to send in her draft of her article. After sending in the article to the editor a follow-up discussion followed: the editor sat down with the journalist and explained what he had changed in the story and why.

Yet, other times the editors, after receiving news from the less experienced journalists, gave orders to the authors to re-write and send in the news again, forwarding destructive feedback in this manner (n=41). During these cases, the editor did not give any clear instructions or guidelines on how to re-write the news either.

There were exceptions of less experienced journalists talking to the editor first. For example, in one case, the journalist wrote many articles in advance, because she had to leave for a conference for couple of days. When they communicated with each other, the journalist did not receive feedback or advice on the articles, and the editor mostly asked about the plans of the journalist (n=26).

During these observed situations, another difference occurred between less experienced and experienced journalists. The experienced journalists were not afraid to admit that they did not have any topics or news to write on or that they were not be able to write the news they had promised during the morning meeting.

In one case, when an experienced journalist did not publish anything for a week, she explained that she could not find anything newsworthy to write about. During the week, she was asking for feedback from editors about her ideas (n=7). There was a situation when the editor refused to talk to the journalist because he was working on other journalists' stories. This indicated that the journalist was not a priority at the given moment. But the journalist was not pressured to produce as well, which could be an indicator of autonomy.

The analysis of the codes (see Table 2) indicates that experienced journalists have more independence compared to less experienced journalists. For example, less experienced journalists have more encounters (n=148) with the editor directing their work or work process than their experienced colleagues (n=29). All in all, the experienced journalists experiences in the newsroom indicate lack of professional two-way communication between them and editors, which could be an indicator for autonomy, but also encapsulation.

Less experienced journalists, on the other hand, did not want to admit to the editor that they were not able to contact the source or the news was on the verge of not meeting the deadline – generally, that they were in in need of help (n=59). When the editor finally came up to the journalist and asked how the newsgathering was going, then the journalist had to admit the problems he or she was having. When the editor found out about the situation, one solution was that he told the less experienced journalist to write the news without the source or focus on a different aspect and find another expert. The other solution was that the supervising editor insisted that the journalist "put some more effort" into trying to write the news and reaching the source. Again, no guidelines were provided to the journalist. In both cases the editor directed the work of a journalist (n=177).

There were conflicts between less experienced journalists and editors because the editor did not know how long it would take for the journalist to send in the article and this led to asking aggressively when the journalist would finish it. Editors asked about the journalists' plans (n=26), but the less experienced journalist was not capable of precisely evaluating the time necessary, which led to problems. During the observations, no conflicts or aggressive speaking between editors and experienced journalists were witnessed.

Experienced journalists left the newsroom as soon as they finished writing their article, because the editors would call them if there were any problems. Less experienced journalists were asked to stay in the newsrooms while their articles were edited, so that problems could be solved as soon as they arose.

Multitasking and time pressure

One difference between experienced and less experienced journalists was the amount of content they were expected to produce. Less experienced journalists were expected to write both for the newspaper as well as for the web and, at times, to produce videos and photos. Older, more experienced journalists said that they would do what they consider to be "additional tasks" when they have enough time.

During the observation, the editor pressurized less experienced journalists to be faster in producing news for the web. Additionally, the editors asked the less experienced journalists quite aggressively at times when would they put an abstract of the news they were writing for the newspaper on the web as well. This way, the editor ordered the journalist to speed up some phases of the news production process.

In converged newsrooms, journalists must be able to produce news for different platforms. A problem occurred when the supervising editor was unhappy with a less experienced journalist being occupied with producing video for the web and not being able to produce news for the next day's newspaper. This was a conflict because the editor had

considered producing materials for different platforms as a priority for the whole newsroom, but at that time he needed people working only for the newspaper. Less experienced journalists said that these situations confused them, because they thought they had done everything that the supervising editor expected from them, but then received a new task in an aggressive tone. This led journalists to think they had made a mistake somewhere; so the orders and directions by the editor had a negative impact on a journalist (n=62).

In couple of cases, the editor changed his mind during the day and ordered the young journalist (n=148) to write news for the next day's newspaper that he had declined during the newsroom meeting in the morning. In the case of unforeseen events (e.g. accidents, gatherings, meetings etc.), then the editors sent less experienced journalist out in field without proper preparation of how the journalist should approach the event. These kinds of situations confused young journalists and it was visible that their stress levels increased: hands started shaking, they started to scratch their head and play with their hair, they started to speed walk around the newsroom, and they visited the calling space (an isolated room in the newsroom). They did not expect this kind of a change in their work routine. They mentioned having problems with collecting themselves and focusing on being effective; they did not know where to start in reporting and newsgathering process.

This led to a case when the less experienced journalist started talking to the editor first: the journalist indicated that some of the tasks that were put on them started to overlap with each other and it was difficult to handle them all. This is also another example of where the directing by the editor led to negative effects (n=62).

Young journalists connected absence of one of the supervising editors, who was very critical, to having a pleasant working environment. One of the journalists said: "The feeling in the newsroom today is very positive, maybe because the supervising editor is not present."

The accumulation of work and the lack of free time to take rest could have added to the situation. During the discussions of who should be on call for the weekend, ready to write when something important happens, the older journalists emphasized personal family matters and said that they will not be able to be there. The burden quite often fell on younger, less experienced journalists' shoulders, who were unhappy with this kind of an arrangement, because they needed a break.

Conclusive discussion

The results from three different dailies indicate that constructive feedback and coaching are not part of the current communication culture in newsrooms, which supports the findings of the MediaAct study (Lauk et al., 2014) as well. Not only do editors not provide constructive feedback or coaching to journalists, journalists seldomly ask for these aspects as well.

As the occupation and newsrooms are changing (Preston, 2008; Spyridou et al., 2013; Hermida, 2010; Bardoel & Deuze, 2001; Picard, 2000: 100), providing feedback and/or coaching could lead to several positive ramifications as are indicated by the studies of Maertz Jr and Griffeth (2004), Hanisch and Hulin (1990), and Schaufeli and Bakker (2004).

In developing these ideas further, the resulting coaching and constructive feedback ideas could provide journalists with information of what the management expects and a possibility to reflect on how to meet these expectations. Especially when doing a job that journalists describe as being "precarious" (Örnebring, 2018), good, informative communication is an important part of job security. Negative interactions and some of the situations observed in the newsrooms could be avoided, given the addition of better professional feedback and/or coaching in the newsroom (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Vander Elst, Baillien, Cuyper and de Witte, 2010). In order to carry out changes in newsrooms, constructive feedback could help journalists

to adapt to the new situations and technology. Feedback helps to improve and develop the journalists' skills – as journalism is a creative work that changes over time, feedback or feed-forward could help journalists with different experience to evolve with the changes in the newsroom.

The differences in the work arrangements of experienced and less experienced journalists could have also affected the feedback and coaching practices. Experienced journalists had autonomy in the newsroom: they had more analytical and in-depth investigative stories to work on, they were not pressured by the editors to speed up their newsgathering or to publish materials online, they could work on the news they produced on their own. Due to the fact that the initiator of the communication tended to be the journalist, giving feedback or coaching by the editor could have been difficult as well, because the more active participant in the communication was the receiver who dictated the time, tone and the aim of the communication. The coach should be the more active participant, because he or she has the skills and techniques to explain shortcomings or to provide help (Clark & Fry 1992).

The editors might not have time or skills to give analytical or constructive feedback or even coach. It also might be that the experienced journalists, who are used to not receiving feedback or coaching, will not be expecting these actions either, neither would they have interest in improving and developing their skills (Hattie and Timperley, 2007), which is why a thorough approach is necessary.

As young journalists are still developing their skills and some of those observed in this study were new in the newsroom, feedback *was* provided at times (to talk about shortcomings of the article and norms, standards of the newsroom). There were situations in which the editors had edited the news and wanted to provide feedback regarding what they had changed in the text. Comparing to different concepts of feedback, then this situation could be considered as constructive feedback or even coaching, yet, the communication during the act of giving feedback was mostly linear, meaning there was a lack of dialogue. In this case, the editors did provide constructive feedback, yet it tended to be an overview of the changes and no in-depth explanations as to why the changes were necessary. Overall the feedback lacked the coaching element that could have helped the journalist to improve his or her own text and skills, to act in a manner more suitable for the newsroom in the future.

Lack of feedback, lack of clarity

Mainly negative feedback was provided in the newsroom to the less experienced journalists, who showed signs of exhaustion because of multitasking and producing materials for different platforms and not being able to take a rest on weekends. The less experienced journalists were not happy receiving such feedback; one of them even said that the absence of the supervising editor (who mostly passed on the criticism) provided a more positive working environment.

The reaction could be connected to the concept of receiving negative feedback or even destructive feedback (Fedor et al., 2001; Baron, 1988). Negative feedback mostly aimed at solving the fast, shortsighted problems – for example, journalist eliminating the problems in the article that was pointed out by the editor. Feedback could be more efficient if it provides a wider understanding of the problematic issues in the article (for example, explaining why the issues are considered problematic) and knowledge of how to avoid these in the future.

Although criticism came from higher in the hierarchy, the reaction from the less experienced journalists indicated that they felt it to be unfair, which supports the findings of Fedor et al., (2001) that people with more experience are open to criticism. Another reason why the less experienced journalists were negatively affected by criticism was that their efforts were left unnoticed and it provoked feelings of injustice, which supports the earlier findings of

feedback studies (e.g. Baron 1988, Fedor et al., 2001, Steelman and Rutkowski 2004). Negative or destructive feedback may have a discouraging effect on journalists trying new approaches or technology.

The roles and role expectations were not clear in newsrooms, and neither was the hierarchy of the people working there. During the observations, editors seemed to be higher in the hierarchy than less experienced journalists, yet, comparing editors to the experienced journalists, then the editors seemed to be on the same or on a lower level. The less experienced journalists were younger than most of the editors observed and had less experience as well; additionally, they were new to the profession, so they might have placed themselves lower than the editor in the newsroom hierarchy and they might have felt the need to be submissive. This also came forth while comparing the "editor directing the work of a journalist (giving orders)" code frequencies among less and experienced journalists, where it was visible that less experienced journalists had more experience with these kinds of situations. Editors directed and presented tasks to the less experienced journalists as commands, so the journalist might have felt that they did not have any opportunities to debate or refuse. This indicates a lack of autonomy and trust.

The results indicate that although changes in the newsrooms and profession have occurred, there is a lack of explanations of demands and expectations by the supervisors. Thought through constructive feedback has the ability to direct the employees' capabilities and knowledge to where it is needed (Steelman & Rutkowski, 2004). Some feedback, but mostly directing, is provided to the novice journalists, but older more experienced journalists are left aside. The deficit of constructive feedback and coaching could also express the lack of agreed upon expectations of management and/or editors (Ivask, 2019).

The state of precariousness and lack of professional communication could lead to a situation where older, more experienced journalists are let go and substituted with younger, less experienced journalists, but as younger ones lack experience and capability of time management (Ivask et al., 2017) and examples from whom to learn in the newsroom (as the situation is completely new with new demands and expectations), this could then lead to an accumulation of stress and burnout and, in turn, high numbers of turnover (Chen & Spector, 1992; Fitness, 2000).

As many journalists in Estonia are hesitant about staying in the field – one of the reasons for doubting being dissatisfaction with demands and resources in the newsroom (Ivask, 2017) – offering constructive feedback could have a very positive effect on their decision, as suggested by JD-R (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Overall, the lack of constructive feedback and coaching hinder the development of both experienced and less experienced journalists. Although the lack of feedback or professional communication could be perceived as part of the autonomy, it could also lead to experienced journalists being isolated from the rest of the newsroom, making it difficult to update their skills and competencies according to the expectations of the job, further leading to job insecurity. There is a lack of studies about professional feedback among journalists, but the topic is worthy of further investigation as it plays a great role in the working culture.

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Electors are from Facebook, political geeks are from Twitter: Political information consumption in Argentina, Spain and Venezuela[1]

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Abstract: This article compares the patterns of political information between general voters and the most interested audiences (journalists, academics, consultants and political leaders), focusing on the case studies of three critical elections held in 2015: the last general elections from Argentina, Spain, and Venezuela. The method used compared primary data for specialized audiences (also called "political geeks") with secondary data for normal voters, taken from three different external sources. The research found that the habits and sources of political information of specialized audiences during the electoral campaign differ from those of the general voting public. Specialized publics rely more on social networks as source of political information than general voters, however the gap is bigger on Twitter and narrower for Facebook. Voters in general use Facebook and WhatsApp more than specialized audiences do. In addition, there is a shift of the center of gravity of the campaigns towards the digital world, both in the specialized publics and in the normal electoral population, but digital migration seems to be more accelerated among specialized audiences than among ordinary voters. It was also observed that political information tends to lead to media convergence and a consolidated or "hybrid" communication system. This research also suggests that despite the rapid acceptance of the digital in the information world, it is possible that little journalism, research, or campaigning is being done where the massive audiences really are .

Keywords: Infopolitics, Cyberpolitics, Social media, Political communication, Elections, Campaigns, Media use

Introduction

This paper aims to show the ways in which the most interested agents are informed about politics, contrasting this involvement with how the general electorate informs themselves politically. It analyzes the pattern of consumption of both digital and traditional media. This paper is inserted in a larger comparative study on the use of the Internet in politics in three critical elections held in 2015: those of Argentina, Spain and Venezuela. It is based on a previous investigation of "cyberpolitics" in Latin America, carried out in 2006.

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[1] *Acknowledgements*: This article is an upgraded version, including substantial new findings, of our article "El consumo de información política de los públicos interesados comparado con el del electorado general. Los casos de *las elecciones de Argentina, España y Venezuela de 2015", Revista de Comunicación*, 16 (2), pp. 60-87 https://doi.org/10.26441/RC16.2-2017-A3
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There two main network-uses were distinguished: 1) as a tool for political communication, generally referred to as "infopolitics", and 2) as a tool for organization and political mobilization, known as "cyberactivism" (Fernández, 2008: 23). In an earlier article regarding infopolitics, it was exposed how the most interested agents are informed about politics (Rodríguez-Virgili and Fernández, 2017). The study identified the digital environment as the primary arena for the most active and interested audience to inform themselves politically (Fernández and Rodríguez-Virgili, 2017).

Christopher Arterton pioneered the topic of cyberpolitics in an early 1987 study entitled *Teledemocracy* (Arterton, 1987). Arterton questioned, through empirical research, whether emerging technologies would be able to offer a new form of democratic engagement, one closer to the original Greek ideal. Although his experimental results were not very conclusive, since then, several studies have been done on how the transition from traditional political communication to digital political communication is taking place (Poster, 1997, Mazzoleni, 2001, Bohman, 2004, Holtz-Bacha, 2013, Maarek, 2014).

In 2015 the use of Internet in the Ibero-American[2] region was widespread, reaching a majority of 52% of the total population, a stark contrast to the use of internet in the same region in 2006, when the first study was conducted (average rates of internet use were of 17%). However, there are still significant variations in the various countries that make up the region. It is clear that this significant increase in Internet penetration also suggests an equivalent increase in the use of new media to inform and politically mobilize.

This article offers an empirical analysis of the main findings of the "infopolitical" dimension at the electoral campaign, contrasting the so-called "political geeks" (the publics who are most involved and interested in politics) with normal voters. This article further seeks to identify and define the usual channels of political information for political geeks—such as political officers, journalists, professors and political consultants—during the most intense phase of political information consumption, namely, elections. As such, we investigated the following hypotheses:

- H1: Specialized audiences consume political information in different way than general voters, and there are differences in the patterns of media consumption according to the social media platform used (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or WhatsApp).
- H2: The consumption of political information varies by different countries, both among specialized audiences and general voters.

To address this analysis, we will first explain what is meant by Infopolitics, then recall the concept of critical elections and justify the relevance of the selected cases. Then we will briefly detail the methodology and analyze and discuss the results. Finally, we conclude pointing out key ideas.

Theoretical Frame

The term media consumption refers to the use and habits associated with different media. Given the process of media convergence, media consumption is currently largely subsumed by the Internet, with media content such as newspapers, magazines, radio or television serving as additions to digital elements (Serrano-Puche, 2017). Consequently, infopolitics is understood as the media consumption of political information.

[2] We use the term Iber-America for the region conformed by Iberian peninsula and Latin American countries that were once colonized by Spain and Portugal.

The consolidation of the media as a primary space for public debate has strengthened a mediatized policy model, whereby the media are established as agents of intermediation par excellence between political elites and citizens (Mazzoleni, 2010, Rodríguez-Virgili et al., 2011, Ardèvol-Abreu & Gil De Zúñiga, 2017). This media power becomes especially central in the context of electoral campaigns. However, the characteristics of public space have rapidly evolved in recent years with the emergence of the digital media, which has led to an accelerated reconfiguration of the communicative ecosystem.

The impact of the Internet on political communication has sparked an intense academic debate (Arterton, 1987, Jenkins; Thorburn, 2003, Dahlgren, 2005, Hendricks; Kaid, 2010). Digital media reduces the limitations of time and space, making political information becomes a continuous flow, disrupting even an essential component of the information professions, which have gone from the periodicity as the basis of their task to have to face the realization of "journalism without periods" (Martín Algarra et al., 2013). In addition, the media have lost their quasi-monopoly on political information; it is no longer only offered by traditional media but by different actors such as politicians, citizens, activists, think tanks or civic associations across multiple platforms (Bowman; Willis, 2003, Kelly, 2008). At present, all users are subjected to a greater or lesser extent to different information flows (Newman et al., 2018).

As a result, the power of the media undergoes a continuous process of flexibilization, still maintaining a strong centrality in political communication while the information displayed by the media continues to set the tone and agenda of public discussion (Castells, 2009). However, the proliferation and rapid technological development of contemporary media does not necessarily mean that there is an increase in political information. The set of political information acquired by the user does not just depend on their availability, but is also conditioned by factors such as habit, interest and competition, and is correlated with sociodemographic characteristics such as age, education, nationality, level of Income or professional occupation (Meilán, 2010).

The digital environment has fostered the rise of mass self-communication (Castells 2009), a new social form of communication that, although massive, is produced, received and perceived individually; being Twitter one of its main exponents. This digital use of political information becomes a personalized consumption adapted to the habits of an audience that has also been transformed with the Internet revolution (Medina, 2015). In short, as Deuze (2012) points out, one no longer lives "with" the media, but rather "in" the media.

Digital platforms are changing political information, but they are not replacing journalism and conventional media. Thus, public space is constituted by an incipient hybrid media system (Chadwick 2013, 2017), in which the "old" as well as the "new" media participate and are constantly interrelated. Variables related to personal preferences, needs and expectations are relevant to explain the consumption of information.

With the available political information and the diversity of media provided (press, radio, television, webs, social networks, digital media etc.), individuals select both media and content. How do people choose the political information they have at their disposal? Iyengar and McGrady (2007) suggest three possibilities. The first is that people select through "biased polarization", that is people prefer to find information that reaffirm their beliefs. Another option is that people do not use information regarding other facts when seeking information about "public affairs" that interest them. The third possibility is that those people who are interested in politics might tune in searching for all the available information.

In this context, when studying the online mobilization of Germany, Italy and the UK Vaccari found that the effects of online mobilization are differential, rather than uniform, across different kind of voters (Vaccari, 2007).

In summary, the broad analysis of the academic literature carried out on this subject is intended to provide a background to our study, which helps to understand how the acquisition

of political information varies according to our selected audiences.

The case

Argentina, Spain, and Venezuela held elections in 2015. The three countries are among the most e-connected countries in Ibero-America, having Internet penetration levels that are above the regional average, ranging from 60% of the population in the case of Venezuela to 75% of the population in the cases of Argentina and Spain according to World Internet Stats data (2014).

The analysis of these three critical elections involves an implicit suggestion that is not measured by this paper: cyberpolitics might be increasing the frequency of critical elections worldwide.

Argentina held a presidential election, whereas those of Spain and Venezuela were legislative, the first occurring in a parliamentary system and the second in a presidential system. However, the three contests can be identified as "critical elections" in the sense attributed to it by V.O. Key: "A category of elections in which voters are unusually concerned, in which the measure of commitments and linkage to the campaign is relatively high, and in which election results reveal an acute alteration of the pre-existing segments within the electorate" (Key, 1955: 4).

The critical election also implies "an election in which the depth and intensity of electoral commitment is high, there are more or less profound readjustments in power relations within the community, and new and lasting form Electoral clusters" (Key, 1955: 5). This concept is generalizable and extensible as a definition of a much broader phenomenon of political behavior.

The triumph of Mauricio Macri in the Argentinian presidential elections of November 2015 marked the end of the Kirchner era. The high intensity of the electoral commitment in these elections is verified by the participation in the second round of 81% of the census population. The deep readjustment in power relations and the new electoral groupings took place with the end of the "Kirchnerismo," a political current that had come to power in 2003 with Néstor Kirchner and that was led by his wife, the democratically elected Cristina Fernandez, after his death. Another relevant aspect is that the political panorama was affected by the emergence of a new party, the PRO, which had gained power in 2005. Since the military dictatorship that ended in 1983, only two political parties and their conjectural alliances had reached national power: the Union Civil Radical and the Justicialista Party. The relevance of PRO in the political landscape thus meant that it was the first time in a century that someone who was neither Peronist nor radical reached the presidency of Argentina.

The general elections held in Spain on December 20th of 2015 had a participation of 69.67% of the electorate. They reveal an alteration of the pre-existing segments within the electorate, as for the first time in the history of Spanish democracy four parties surpassed 10% of the votes, questioning the imperfect bipartisanship dominated by the two great political forces, the Popular Party (PP) and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). Indeed, the realignment of political-partisan preferences of the Spanish electorate was evident: for first time, bipartisan PP-PSOE obtained only 50% of the total votes and the sum of the two emergent parties (Ciudadanos and Podemos) obtained over 30%. The results of the subsequent elections of 2016, as the 2015 elections required a second round because of the parties' inability to form Government, ratifies this alteration of the political-partisan preferences of the Spaniards.

Finally, the parliamentary elections in Venezuela, held in December 6th of 2015, can also qualify as critical elections because of the change in voters' political preferences. With a participation of 74.17% of the electorate, an increase of 7.7% over the 2010 legislative elections, the elections to the National Assembly gave the Venezuelan opposition an important

victory. The Mesa de Unidad Democrática (MUD), the main opposition movement to President Nicolás Maduro, reached 112 deputies of the 167 that compose the National Assembly. With 56.2% of the national vote, the opposition seized 72% of the parliamentary representation and closed the long cycle of Chavismo electoral victories, which had lasted 17 years and had won more than a dozen elections.

Methodology

This study explores the data extracted from two different kinds of surveys: the first employed primary data and was conducted among specialized publics of politically active citizens. The second employed secondary data from general voters. Our research included survey-based studies from third parties—that is, the research questions are examined under conditions that are not totally controlled by the researchers.

Four types of specialized audiences were identified among our interviews. These audiences were focused around interest and/or involvement in politics (i.e., "political geeks"): political leaders and elected charges (19.6% of respondents), political consultants (29.5%), political journalists (20.2%), and academics related to public policy and/or political science (30.5%).

To reach these *political geeks*, this study used an online questionnaire. For convenience, a non-probabilistic sampling was conducted through a self-administered questionnaire using Google Forms resources. The survey was promoted through social networks, banners placed on websites of different study partners, personal e-mail invitations and distribution lists of various professional associations, such as the Political Communication Association (ACOP) and the promotion of dissemination through Members of the OCPLA (Organization of Latin American Political Consultants), as well as mailing lists from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. In sum, 528 effective surveys were received. The entire dataset is available for researchers and colleagues.[3]

The dates for data compilation were limited to the days between March 14th and May 14th of 2016. After the deadline for survey responses, it was verified that the Argentinian sample was under-represented regarding the comparative samples (Spain and Venezuela), so a new e-mail was sent only to Argentinian target audiences and the period for these responses was extended until Monday, May 30th of 2016.

Two specific questions were mainly the analyzed for this paper. The first was: *During the electoral campaign held in 2015 in your country, which were the THREE MAIN CHANNELS with which news and political events were reported? (Mark only three).* The response options were: Newspapers, Radio, Open TV, Cable TV, Internet Journalism, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Wedges or Campaigns, Political Militancy, Campaign Acts, Personal Conversations or Other (specify). The second question pointed out the cyber-activism, offering a multiple choice answer with no limit of options chosen: *During the last electoral campaign held in 2015, which of the following activities did you PERSONALLY do?*

The selected method for measuring specialized audiences could have conditioned the results of the study. Using an online questionnaire might imply that the people who answered the survey are a more Internet-active public than the average population. However, it is well known that Internet surveys offer myriad advantages in data collection, including reduced costs, faster survey administration, and those reasons are advantages for the research. In addition, Internet surveys might offer more accurate self-reports (Chang; Krosnick, 2010; Greenlaw; Brown-Welty, 2009; Wright, 2005) as compared with other survey methods.

For measuring the general public consumption of information, we used public opinion

[3] Please contact us at cfperez[at]alumni.unav.es if you are interested in accessing the dataset.

polls with three different sources. For the Venezuelan and Argentinean cases, we worked with polls provided by two pollsters who collaborated with our research and agreed to include in their public opinion studies two questions, using the same wording to those of our online questionnaire.[4] In the Venezuelan poll, the party ID was also analyzed as a variable. For the Spanish case, we used the secondary data provided by the CIS (Sociological Research Center) survey of February 2016, which included a questionnaire regarding the user habits of new technologies.

The questions used to contrast the general population with our selected audiences were not identical in their wording. The empirical method for collecting the data was also different. Both elements imply another methodological limitation in the measurement. For these reasons they are not compared in a unique dataset.

Analysis and discussion

How do political geeks use media?

When asked about the main channels used for political information, there are important differences among the three countries. In general, 61% of the so-called *political geeks* reported having been informed through Twitter (up to 72% for Venezuela and just 39% for Argentina), and 56% through newspaper publications on the Internet (the highest was Spain with 63%, and the lowest was Venezuela with 51%). [see Table 1]

Table 1: Infopolitics: Main channels used for political information

Channels	Argentina	Spain	Venezuela
Political news sites @ www	58%	63%	51%
Twitter	39%	68%	72%
Facebook	34%	13%	25%
Cable TV	34%	3%	28%
Open TV	33%	48%	11%
Printed press	29%	37%	15%
Radio	29%	30%	19%
Personal conversations, face to face	14%	15%	19%
Political lines from party	7%	8%	9%
Campaign political ads	7%	3%	4%
WhatsApp	5%	3%	31%
Youtube	5%	3%	8%
Campaign acts	4%	6%	8%

SOURCE: Elaboration with own data, Ciberpolítica study March-May 2016 in relation to the methods used by the interviewees in the 2015 elections of Argentina (125), Spain (155) and Venezuela (n = 211)[4]

[4] The pollsters were Carlos Fara, who conducted a study in the Greater Buenos Aires area (October 2015), and Jesus Seguias, working with his polling firm Datincorop, whose survey was conducted among Venezuelan population on a national scale (April 2016).

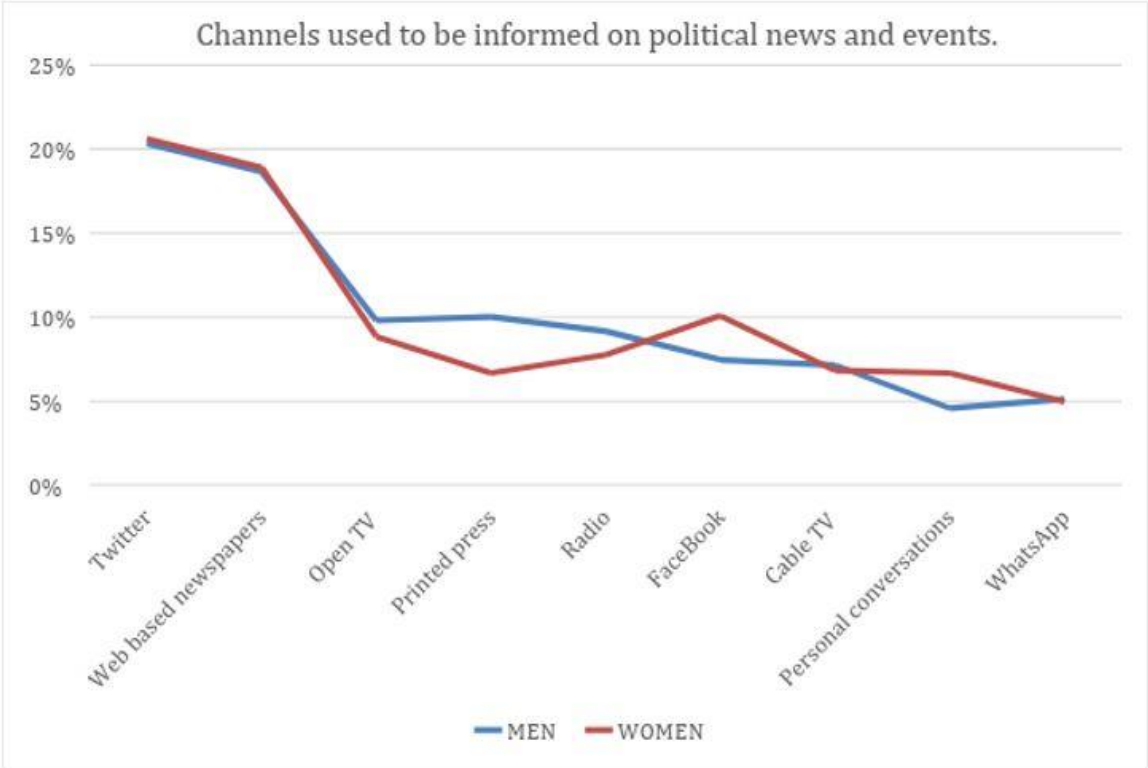
[5] Original question from the questionnaire (in Spanish): Durante la última campaña electoral celebrada en 2015 ¿cómo buscó Ud enterarse de las novedades y eventos? (escoja los tres más importantes)

Subscription TV is very low among Spaniards, and high in Venezuela and Argentina. However, if we add the percentages of television consumption, both in subscription and open signal, it reaches third place with 49.2%. In other words, Twitter (61.4%), periodicals on the web (56.3%), and TV (49.2%) were the three main means by which audiences who were particularly involved and interested in politics inquired during the 2015 elections in Argentina, Spain, and Venezuela.

In a second line of preferences, there is a three-way tie between preferred media when considering the average: 25.9% printed newspapers, 25.8% radio, and Facebook 25.6%.
It is remarkable how the so-called "new media" have surpassed traditional media among our interviewees. Television, which had been the dominant means of communication in electoral campaigns since its widespread growth in the 1960s, only reached third place. The front is now dominated by the so-called "new media," which runs on digital platforms, as the main channels that the audiences chose for informing themselves politically. The emergence of the Internet has led to new forms of access and consumption of political information (Anduiza et al., 2012). In the aforementioned 2006 study on cyberpolitics (Fernández, 2008), printed newspapers were the main source of political information, preferred by 80% of the specialized audience. Nine years later, paper newspapers are down 50 points and are no longer the fundamental source of political information during the campaign, largely surpassed by the different Internet platforms. In that previous study, TV was a very important means of political information even for specialized audiences. When compared with the 2006 survey, the patent evolution mitigates the aforementioned possible methodological bias. Among the same public, and with the same method, traditional media were clearly dominant (Fernández, 2008).

This new pattern of consumption is happening both among women and men. There have been numerous inquiries into the fundamental psychological differences between the sexes, ranging from academic research (Knobloch-Westerwick & Alter, 2007; Nainan Wen et al., 2013) to popular bestsellers like *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* (Gray, 1992). However, when analyzing the patterns of consumption for political information within specialized audiences, our research showed that both men and women seem to come from the same planet: one in which Twitter and digital news sites are very important. [Figure 1]

Figure 1: Main channels used to be informed politically by gender



SOURCE: Ciberpolítica study March-May 2016, n = 528

This collected data verifies that the active and interested people in politics also participate in the "new social operating system" that Rainie and Wellman (2012) pointed out, because they have found on the Internet a platform for contact and exchange of information and can access it in a constant and ubiquitous manner thanks to mobile communication. These new ways of accessing content are therefore based on mobility, immediacy, interactivity, and multitasking.

Channels for activism among the most politically interested audiences

Regarding their personal experience and cyber-activism, the surveyed respondents were asked to answer questions regarding the activities in which they had personally participated in order to be politically active during the campaign. In other words, the use of new means that imply a higher degree of commitment beyond the reception of information. The main responses of the category were, "I tweeted or retweeted political information," and "I searched for information on the Internet about a candidate through Google" (over 60% each). Half of the respondents surveyed included, "I watched political videos online (YouTube or others)," and "I received and/or sent Whatsapps with political content."

Less frequent were, "Visit a candidate's website" (44%), "Read a blog about candidacies and/or political information" (40.5%), "I shared on my Facebook wall some political content of my favorite party or candidate" (37.7%), or "Received and/or sent e-mails to friends or relatives with political content" (37%). In a third range, we could locate those campaigning activities that were pursued by a third or a fourth of our interested audience, such as "I received emails through a mailing list of a political party or candidate to which I had subscribed" (29%), or "I received and/or sent Whatsapps with political content" (24%). Another 24% of the

participants claimed to have taken part in a demonstration or campaign rally that had been coordinated by e-mail.

Less prevalent were other types of activities, such as monetary donations and direct contact; while theoretically important for political action and cyberpolitics, in practice they were rare even among the most politically interested audiences. It has been said that with tools like Twitter, citizens with political concerns can access the realm of traditional communication and attempt to influence politicians and media (Chadwick, 2013), but from our data this possibility seems to be given minimal priority even among the most interested audiences. [Table 2]

TABLE 2: Cyberactivism. Main channels used to activate politically:
During the last electoral campaign held in 2015, which of the following activities did you PERSONALLY do? (Choose the three most important)

Channel	%	n
I tweeted or retweeted political information	**63.4%**	**335**
I searched for information on the Internet about a candidate through Google	**61.9%**	**327**
I watched political videos online	**52.5%**	**277**
I received and/or sent WhatsApps with political content	**52.3%**	**276**
I visited a candidate's political web site	**44.7%**	**236**
I read a political blog on candidacies	**40.5%**	**214**
I shared on my Facebook wall some political content of my favorite party or candidate	**37.7%**	**199**
I received and/or sent e-mails of friends or relatives with political content	**37%**	**196**
I received emails through a mailing list of a political party or candidate, to which I had subscribed	**29.5%**	**156**
I got an email asking for participation in a political campaign act, and I took part	**24.1%**	**127**
I registered on line in a political candidate's site	**17.6%**	**93**
I established direct contact with parties, sending an email or a direct message with my concerns to a candidate	**5.1%**	**27**
I made an online monetary contribution to a party or candidate	**4.7%**	**25**

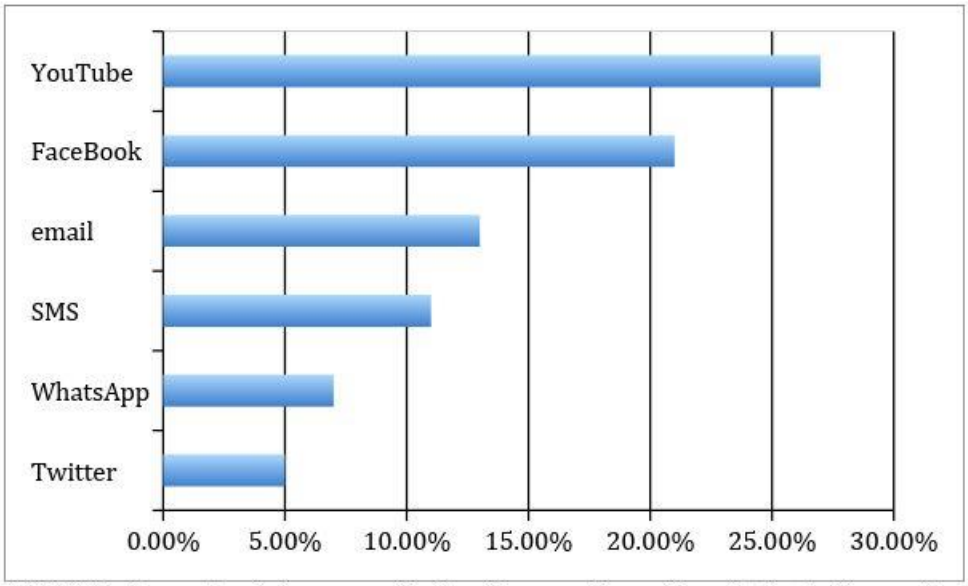
SOURCE: Elaboration with own data, Ciberpolítica study March-May 2016 in relation to the methods used by the interviewees in the 2015 elections of Argentina, Spain and Venezuela, n = 528

Argentina: asking Greater Buenos Aires electors

Argentina has the highest level of Internet penetration in the region, almost 80% for June 2016 according to World Internet Stats. Within Argentina, it can be assumed that the use of digital media for cyberpolitics is even greater in the Greater Buenos Aires (GBA) than in the rest of the country. However, when we compare the use of digital media to inform and politically engage the voters of GBA in the presidential election of 2015, we found a very different

behavior amongst the most politically interested audience.

Figure 2: Use of social networks for political information among citizens of Buenos Aires[5]



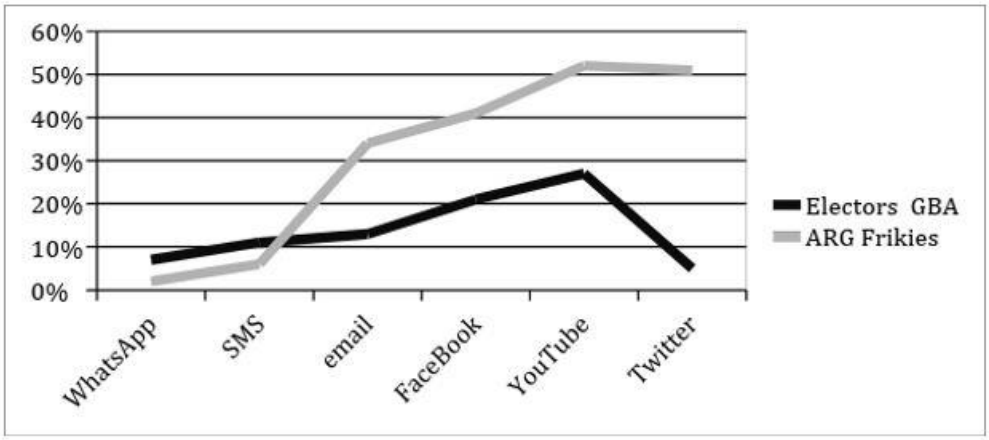
SOURCE: Fara y Asociados, survey in Gran Buenos Aires, with verbatim by Carmen Beatriz Fernández. Question verbatim: "Did you get any political information during the campaign thru...?"

YouTube is the preferred digital medium for being informed about policy among Argentine voters from the GBA (27%), but this figure is low when compared with the statistics reported by the politically interested audience that was surveyed. 52% of the participants claimed to have "watched online political videos (YouTube or others)." Among the most politically interested audience, 37.7% shared campaign information on their Facebook page, in contrast with 21% of GBA Argentines who shared political information from the campaign through the popular social network. [Figure 2]

Perhaps most notorious is the contrast between the voters of Greater Buenos Aires and the most politically interested audience regarding Twitter as a means of political information during the campaign. While only 5% of GBA Argentines said that used Twitter to inform themselves about politics, this figure increased to a staggering 51% among those most interested in politics during the 2015 campaigns. [Figure 3]

[6] Technical info from CARLOS FARA Y ASOCIADOS poll: Universe: Argentinians voters, over 16 years from Gran Buenos Aires. N: 316 Dates: 17 to 19 October 2015. Polling method: Semi-probabilístic at homes GBA. Sex and age quotes Error: +/- 5.5 %. Confidence: 95 %

Figure 3: Comparison between voters from GBA and the most interested publics in 2015



SOURCE: Authors' compilation comparing data from the 2015 Ciberpolítica Survey with Carlos Fara, GBA survey, April 2016

These findings support our initial hypothesis. The Argentinian case suggests that there are differences in the patterns of media consumption for political information among general public and the most interested audiences (H1). These differences are mainly found in Twitter, Facebook and YouTube environments. While specialized publics rely more on social networks as source of political information in general, the gap is bigger for Twitter, and shorter for Facebook and YouTube.

The role of Twitter as a tool for political communication has continued to grow both in Latin America (Fernández, 2012) and Spain (Rodríguez; Ureña, 2011; Campos-Domínguez, 2017), taking into account that Twitter is not exactly a media, but a platform where users share and comment information for different purposes. Journalists have standardized the use of Twitter to promote their work and keep track of information (Lasorsa et al., 2012). Twitter is a way of accessing the traditional media in a digital version, not only to follow their corporate profiles, but also because the common practice by journalists of linking their content to external media, directing traffic to internet websites, even occasionally recommending content produced by their competition (Noguera, 2013). In addition, many politicians use Twitter because it allows them to address mass audiences and interact with the electorate without the mediation of journalists (Casero-Ripollés, 2008; López-Meri et al., 2017). Twitter serves them as a way to generate news and gain media presence in an attempt to impose their own agenda over the media agenda (Strömbäck, 2008) and even to control public discourse (Broersma; Graham, 2013).

However, our study suggests that the use of Twitter as an instrument of infopolitics and cyberpolitics among regular citizens is less relevant than among the more interested audiences. For the Argentinian case, although literature suggest that voters comment on political issues on Twitter (Gainous; Wagner, 2014; Parmelee; Bichard, 2012), including filtering and hierarchizing information (Bruns; Highfield, 2015), our survey shows that these uses are not quantitatively comparable to those of a more politically interested type of audience.

Spain split between two planets: Twitter and Facebook

We used secondary data from the Center for Sociological Research (CIS)[7] in order to contrast the audience´s behavior for Spain. In the survey conducted in February 2016, after the electoral process of 2015, a questionnaire regarding the use of digital media and social networks was included.

When comparing Spanish politically interested audiences with the population in general, a different pattern of information consumption is indicated, not just regarding rates of Internet penetration but also regarding their use and intensity. [Table 3]

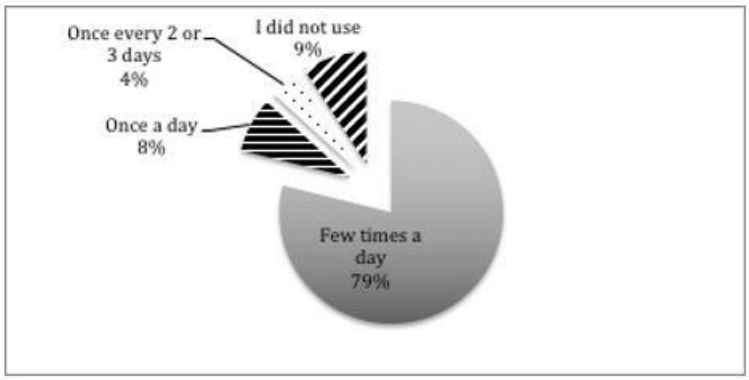
Table 3: Frequency of connection. Among Spaniard connected to social networks, how often do they connect?

All the time	17%
Few times a day	33%
Once a day	25%
3 to 5 times a week	11%
1 to 2 times a week	7%
From time to time	3%
Barely never	4%
Non answer	1%
N	**1.148,00**

SOURCE: CIS February 2016, n= 1.148

As for the use of media, regular Spaniards kept television as the preferred means of communication for political information while the politically interested audience relegated it to third place. There are differences in use of social networks. According to the CIS survey of March 2016, 46.3% of Spaniards used social networks intensively (a few times a day). [Table 4]

Table 4: Frequency of connection. Among Spaniards Especially Interested in Politics, how often did they check Twitter?



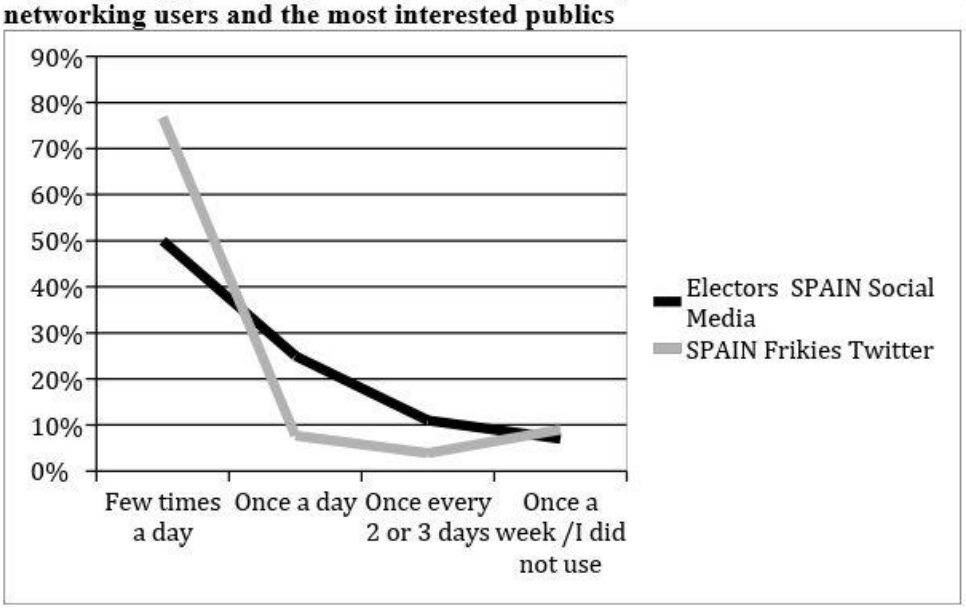
SOURCE: Own data of the study Ciberpolítica 2015, n = 155 Spanish answers of the total of 538

[7] The Center for Sociological Research (CIS) studies the variations of Spanish public opinion since 1963. It carries out periodic surveys, usually with a bimonthly frequency barometer, having the data available for the public on its website. Although not identical, the questionnaires have a standard design, constructed from the same skeleton while adding different themes and questions.

When the Spanish CIS inquiries about social networks related to the communication technologies, it asks in a generic way, grouping Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others within the same category of response. Almost half of Spanish respondents used social networks. The CIS poll also asks about favorite social networks. Among Spanish citizens, Facebook monopolizes the preference of social networks, with 91.5% of respondents selecting it as their favorite. The CIS does not specifically inquire whether Facebook is used or not as a source of political information, but this preference is very striking when contrasted with that of more specialized audiences. In our survey of this particularly interested public, Facebook was only minorly important in the Spanish elections with barely 4%.

There are remarkable differences in the habits of instant messaging among different types of users: while 79% of our political geeks from Spain check their Twitter account few times a day, just 50% of social media users from Spain do the same [see Figure 4]. We expected that our specialized publics might behave differently from the general population, but they are also different from social networking users, and they express a much more intensive use of digital media in general, and of social networks in particular, as useful vehicles for informing themselves politically. These findings support our RQ3 on different intensity of social media use between both types of audiences.

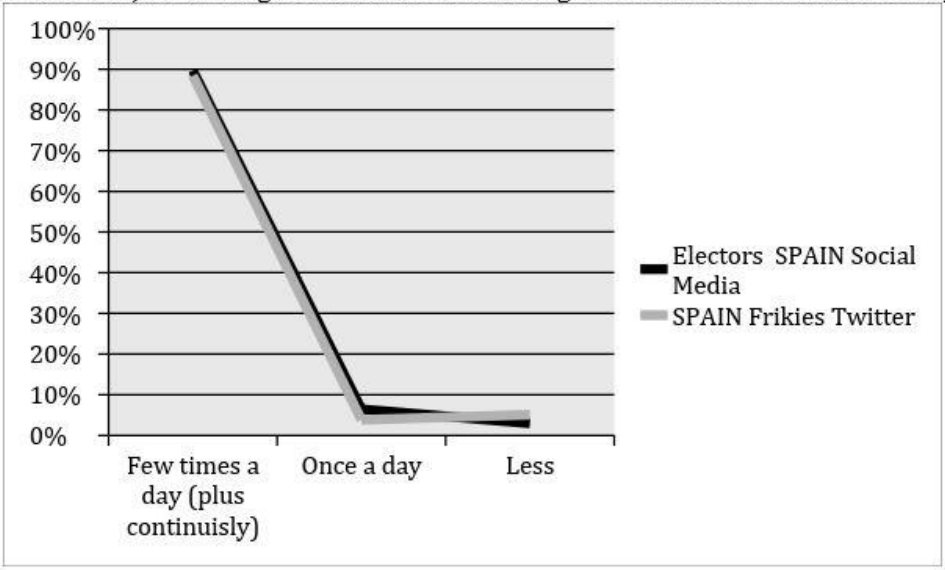
Figure 4: (Spain 2015) Contrasting frequency of connection between general social networking users and the most interested publics



SOURCE: Authors' compilation comparing data from the 2015 Ciberpolítica Survey (n = 155 Spanish answers of the total of 538) with CIS February 2016, n= 1.148

However, when using instant messaging to communicate (mainly through WhatsApp) the Spaniards behave similarly. There is an intensive and massive use of instant messaging among *geeks*, those especially interested in politics, very similar to the behavior of the general population. Among our interviewed political specialists, 88.5% of Spanish political geeks check WhatsApp several times a day, while the CIS survey found that among Spaniards in general, 90% check their WhatsApp either continuously or a few times a day (Figure 5).

Figure 5: (Spain 2015) Contrasting frequency of instant messaging checking (WhatsApp and others) between general social networking users and the most interested publics



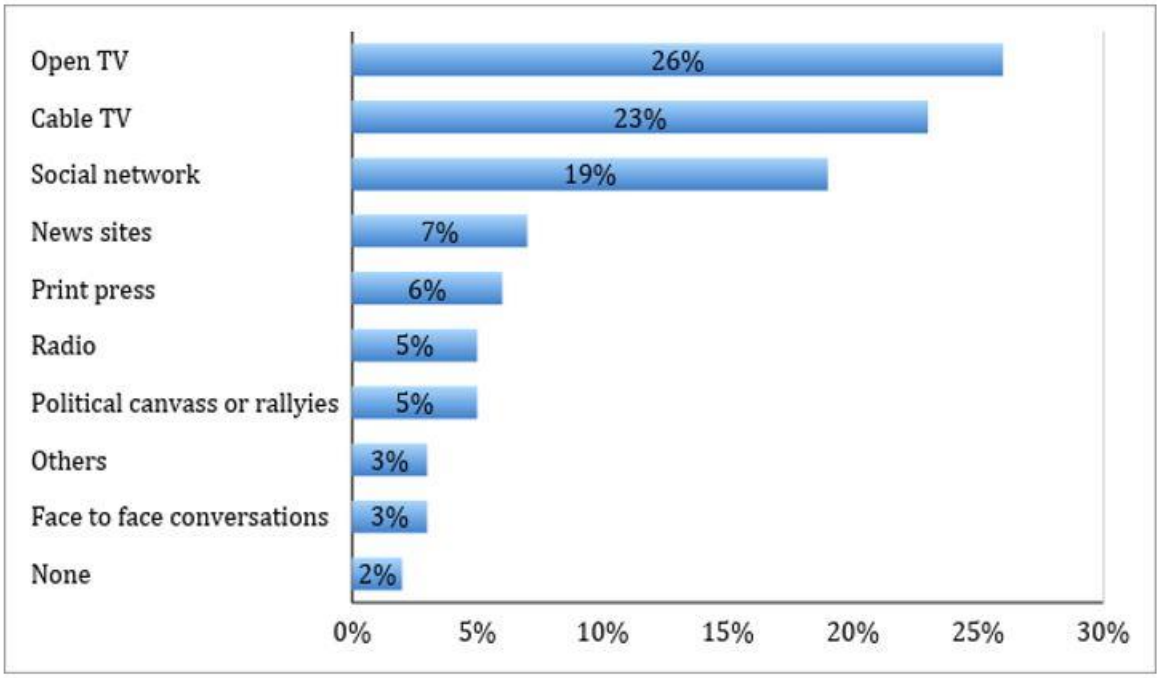
SOURCE: Authors' compilation comparing data from the 2015 Ciberpolítica Survey (n = 155 Spanish answers of the total of 538) with CIS February 2016, n= 1.148

In short, in Spain most interested publics use instant communication platforms similarly and as intense as any other WhatsApp user. Unlike what happens with social networks (Facebook, Twitter and others) in which the behavior of the average voter is different and less intense than that of those particularly interested in politics, affirming our H2. .

Venezuela migrates from TV, but political preference makes a difference

After the Venezuelan legislative election, voters were asked in a nationwide survey about their most-used means to inform themselves on electoral events (Datincorp, May 2016). In Venezuela, TV is still the main medium chosen by normal voters for political information, with 26% of voters reporting the use of open signal TV, where contents are controlled, to a greater or lesser extent, by the national government. However, a similar number (23%) do so through cable channels or subscription TV, including foreign production channels such as CNN, TVE and Antena 3. Social networks plus news sites on the Internet together make up 26% of respondents. (Figure 6)

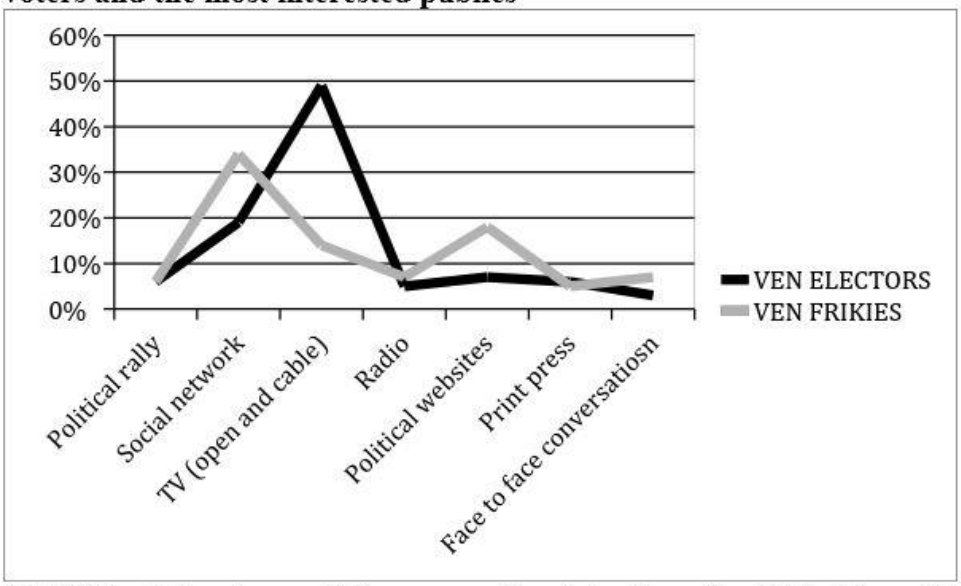
Figure 6: (Venezuela 2016) During the last parliamentary elections, which channel was the most used to find out about the electoral process?



SOURCE: Datincorp Venezuela, using verbatim suggested by Carmen B. Fernández, April 2016

This clear predominance of TV, which almost half of the country's voters prefer for information about political issues, is a variable that differs from our survey. For the public particularly interested in politics, TV is not an important source of political information. Among general electors, the frequency is three times higher than among the specialized publics (Figure 7).

FIGURE 7: (Venezuela 2015) Contrasting sources of political information between voters and the most interested publics



SOURCE: Authors' compilation comparing data from the 2015 Ciberpolítica Survey with Datincorp Venezuela, national survey, April 2016

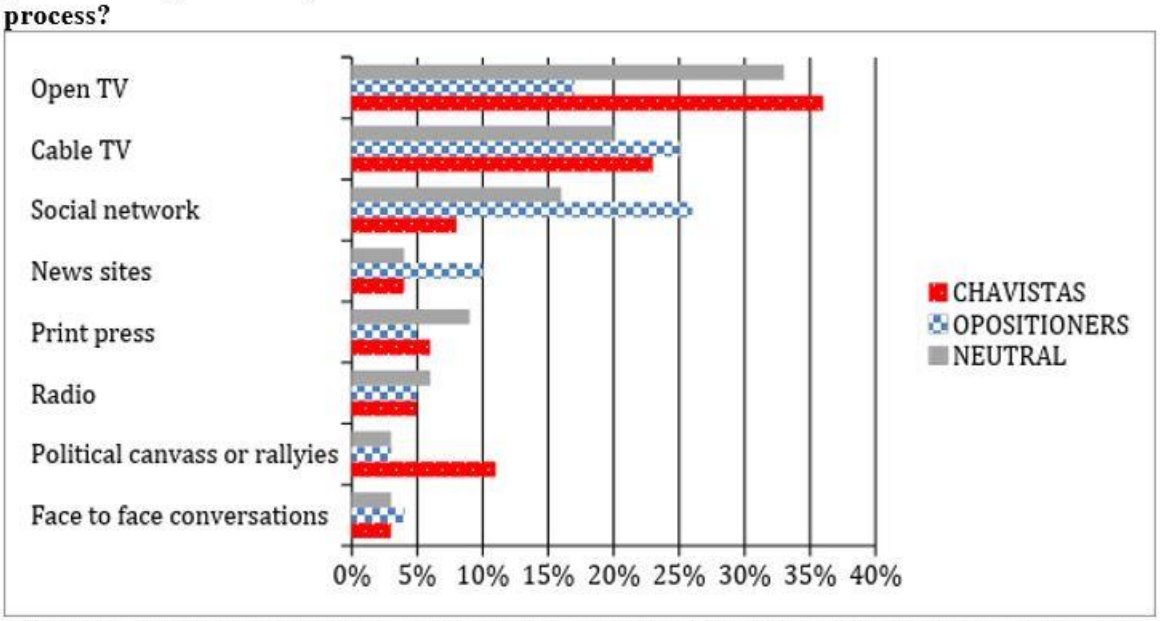
The contrasts between citizen voters and specialized public are remarkable in the Venezuelan

case. However, it is even more interesting to analyze the data of citizen infopolitics according to the voter's political preferences, as we pointed out in a previous article (Rodríguez-Virgili; Fernández, 2017).

We found that TV channels, whose editorial management is mostly dominated by the government, are used as source of political information mainly by those who are supporters of the government. While 36% of government supporters (dotted bar in Figure 8) use open signal TV as the main political information channel, only 17% of opposition supporters (checkered bar) do the same, and 33% of those who perceive themselves as "neutral" or "non-aligned" (in gray). Regarding social networks, exactly the opposite occurs: 26% of opponents report themselves politically through RRSS, while only 8% of the ruling party does the same.

These results confirm the theory of selective exposure. This theory states that the consumption of media is determined by the predispositions of the audience, which seeks to confirm or reinforce their opinions in the media content (Lazarsfeld, Berelson; Gaudet, 1948). That is, citizens seek information as closely as possible with their previous ideas about reality (Stroud, 2010). There has been recently a return to this theoretic approach of selective exposure. In the Anglo-Saxon context, it is based on two premises: the multiplication of channels to obtain information, and the emergence of a new model of journalism far removed from objectivity that promotes partisan exposure (Goldman; Mutz, 2011, Stroud, 2011). This phenomena has also been detected in Spain (Berganza; Martín, 2001; Humanes, 2014). Both premises are also fulfilled in the Venezuelan case in the 2015 elections analyzed in this study.

FIGURE 8: (Venezuela 2016) Source of information by political preferences. During the last parliamentary elections, which channel was the most used to find out about the electoral process?



FUENTE: Datincorp Venezuela, national poll, verbatim from Carmen Beatriz Fernández, April 2016, n= 1.207

Conclusions

This research aimed to analyze the way in which the actors who are particularly interested in politics are informed during the electoral periods, compared to the way in which the ordinary voters are informed. To do this, primary data were obtained for three critical elections in 2015: those of Argentina, Spain and Venezuela. Our primary data was then compared with secondary data on the use of media by general voters from three different external sources.

After analyzing the data of the three cases, it can be affirmed as a first conclusion that habits and sources of political information of the specialized public differ significantly from those of voters in general during the electoral campaign, confirming our main hypothesis. In none of the three countries does the general population behave similarly to the public especially interested in politics. When analyzing the use of social media as source of political information, there are differences among the two publics: while general voters use mainly Facebook, political geeks rely heavily on Twitter. The use of Twitter as an instrument for infopolitics and cyberpolitics among regular citizens is less relevant than among the particularly interested audiences.

As a second conclusion, there is a shift of the center of gravity of the campaigns towards the digital world, which in turn is reflected in the changing habits of the global consumer towards the digital media. The comparison between our tracking studies on cyberpolitics quickly identified this displacement (Fernández, 2010). This was even more noticeable in 2015, both in the specialized publics and in the normal electoral population. Therefore, it was observed that political information advances towards media convergence and a consolidated or "hybrid" communication system (Chadwick, 2013), which intermingles the "old" as well as the "new" sources of information and in which the variables related to personal preferences, needs, and expectations are relevant to explain the consumption of information. This displacement, which reinforces the digital as a dominant political information environment, accelerates the schedule of politics and has serious implications for the budget distribution of campaigning.

There are similarities in the use of WhatsApp among both studied groups. It was remarkable that even though we found a different pattern of information consumption between citizens and specialized audiences (H1)—and in social media use, with regard to the immediacy of information—the use of instant messaging usage habits is similar. This is particularly true in Spain, where the massive use of instant messaging to communicate among ordinary voters coincides with a similar habit of instant messaging amongst specialist audiences. As a result, it is still an open question to what extent both elements—the speed of information transmission and the incidence of new formats in campaign budgets—affect the volatility of the policy and the vertiginous nature which generates the political changes in the three countries under study: Argentina, Spain and Venezuela.

The increase of relative importance of the new media is coincident in the three countries analyzed. However, there are important differences, particularly because the phenomenon seems to be more intensely accelerated in Venezuela. In that case, the audiences have switched from the analog to the digital world faster than the overall general trend. There might be a deliberate response of the audiences to resist the control of information by the national government. The intensive use of politics 2.0 in Venezuela is related to the government's consolidation of control over the media, along with the theory of selective exposure. As such, it is very striking that the normal voter continues using the TV as their main source of news media, distinguishing between public and private outlets.

As a third conclusion, digital migration seems to be more accelerated among specialized audiences than among ordinary electorates, partially reinforcing H1. The data of the descriptive analysis indicates that Twitter, periodical web publications, and open signal TV are the three main channels used by political geeks to be informed during the elections under study. But even in this adaptation to media convergence, there are impressive divergences among countries, affirming our second hypothesis (H2). Voters in general more frequently use Facebook and WhatsApp than specialized audiences do. The most remarkable case in these differences is Spain, where the public especially interested in politics uses Twitter with great intensity, while general Spanish voters prefer Facebook. In Argentina, 61% of those interested in politics use Twitter, while only 5% of the general Argentine voters surveyed acknowledged using this social network. YouTube is the preferred digital medium for being informed about policy both

among Argentine voters and political geeks, which is not the case in Spain or Venezuela.

However, as was pointed out, this is just a preliminary analysis: the use of data from diverse sources deprives standardization and is a weakness of our study, preventing definitive conclusions. With these first conclusions, it seems appropriate to continue investigating the differences between the two analyzed populations and to interpret what these inequalities mean in terms of the respective frames of reference. What are the implications of having a professional political class with such different information habits than the electorate? Is it relevant that those who exercise political journalism prioritize their sources of information differently from that of the citizenry? Is it simply an observation related to a greater intensity of use linked to the professional biases of the studied publics that have no greater qualitative importance? Or, on the contrary, can the very different pattern of information sources lead to the generation of very different frameworks of interpretation of reality, between "normal" voters and voters especially involved with the world of politics?

This research suggests that despite the rapid acceptance of the digital in the information world, it is possible that little journalism or campaigning is happening where the large public audiences actually are—i.e., on Facebook and WhatsApp. Even in the academic field, the social platforms preferred by the average voter are not sufficiently investigated. Undoubtedly, the study of infopolitics will have to be further investigated and future research needs to be done to assess if these tendencies are reaffirmed or refuted.

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Too similar to be different? 'Syrian refugee' coverage in the Turkish and Norwegian popular media[1]

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Abstract: As the number of migrants and refugees continues to rise worldwide, so too has anti-immigrant and anti-refugee rhetoric become an increasingly alarming problem that politicizes the topic. This article analyzes and evaluates media representation on refugees/asylum-seekers in two different countries which have distinct media system as Norway and Turkey. The findings show that media coverage of migration is a salient theme. While the 'visibility' of migrants is not lacking, the voices that are heard in the news are still political actors after seven years of the 'crisis' in both countries. Unexpectedly, this persistent finding has triggered the politicization of this theme in both countries despite their great disparities.

Keywords: Syrian refugees, news, migration, content analysis, politicisation, moral panic

Introduction

Today in a globalized world, the media play a pivotal role in the increasingly complex elaboration and analysis of information about international and domestic issues. As Walter Lippmann explained in his seminal book "Public Opinion", we more than ever rely on media to explore and define the world around us to construct "mental images" and to form "our realities" (1922:18). The media play a fundamental role in bringing important issues to the attention of the community (Fourie, 2007: 202), constituting reality and representing the "other" in the coverage of international events (Jaber, 2016). In the contemporary world, issues such as the Arab Spring, terror in Middle East or Greece's economic crisis, which are perceived as international problems, suddenly become a domestic issue and hit countries at home, such as Syrian refugee flows, terror attacks in major European cities and Europe's economic crisis. The body of the three-year-old Syrian boy, Ayan Kurdi, pictured lifeless and face-down on the

[1] The research in this article was presented at The Turkish Migration Conference from 23 to 26 August 2017 in Harokopio University, Athens, Greece.

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Turkish coast was a turning point to stop referring to refuges as 'cockroaches' or a 'swarm'. This led to the domestication and mediatization of Syrian migration in many European countries whereby the distinction between international and national issues became increasingly blurred. The images of Ayan Kurdi caught global attention over just 12 hours, reaching 20 million people worldwide through 30,000 tweets (Vis and Goriunova, 2015: 5). However, the change was short-lived as resarchers found no conclusive evidence for changes of attitudes or behaviour regarding the refugee issue (Parker et al., 2018).

The Syrian refugee flow has made the domestic suddenly international while international politics has become an integral part of domestic affairs. Therefore, knowledge about the world has become important, with the news media being a critical intermediary or "transmission belt" (Risse, 2015:18) that translates international politics into an understandable context for the wider public. People rely on news to get information through discussions in the public sphere, develop opinions, constitute their own judgments about the world and relate them to domestic politics.

This background regarding the media have also shaped theories of agenda setting in the literature since 1970s. According to these theories, "the public learns the relative importance of an issue from the amount of coverage in the news media" (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). The selection of topics, priming them – i.e. placing them on the front page, framing issues by covering them from particular perspectives (Entman, 1993), and using more and diverse sources for news stories can shape people's perceptions and affect their judgements and opinions. Through its news coverage and framing, the media cause a "change in the standards that people use to make their evaluations" (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987: 63). There is consensus on the relationship between news coverage of current events and their impact in shaping public opinion (KhosraviNik, 2010; Kokkonen, 2017; Kolukırık, 2009; Doğanay et al., 2018, Toker, 2004), especially if a sparse 'information environment' presents a biased message that can easily cultivate certain attitudes and create expectations about a particular issue (Gerbner et al., 2002; Vergeer et al., 2000, Toker, 2015).

The 'Syrian refugee crisis' [2] started in 2011 and peaked in 2015, when an increasing number of refugees and migrants, mostly Syrian, but also Afghan and Iraqi, began to seek asylum in European countries. Consequently, this issue became a prominent media event. As the flow of refugees and migrants has continued to rise worldwide, there has been increasing anti-immigrant/refugee rhetoric and negative attitudes in receiving countries, which has encouraged a new political populism since 2015 (Berry, 2015; EJN, 2015; Goodman et al., 2017).

The interchangeable use of the terms 'migrant' and 'refugee' is one of the most common language errors in the media's daily coverage (WACC Europe and CCME, 2017; EJN, 2015; Efe, 2015), according to United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), this politicizes the issue.[3] This matter because the media have manipulated these terms to convey a political message

[2] Although we acknowledge that labelling refugee inflows as a 'refugee crisis' is problematic, the refugee flow and its surrounding events are commonly referred to as 'refugee crisis' to capture media and political attention globally. To be consistent with the way events have been framed in the media context, we used 'refugee crisis' for practical purposes (Krzyzanowski et al., 2018; Triandafyllidou, 2018). I would like to thank one of the reviewers for reminding of this crucial point.

[3] According to the International Organisation for Migration's definition, a migrant refers to someone who moves freely, temporarily, or permanently from one place or country to another. In contrast, a refugee is forced to move because of persecution, war, or a humanitarian disaster, so states are obliged to provide them with protection under international law. The third term, asylum seekers, refers to refugees seeking protection from war or persecution who apply for refugee status under international and national laws (IOM, 2004; EJC, 2015). The important point here is that there is no such concept in law as an "illegal" migrant. A more valid term would be "undocumented" migrant.

(Berry et al., 2015:12). The problem is that, if the media fail to represent the refugees and their struggle adequately, it "takes attention away from the specific legal protection refugees require and can undermine public support for refugees" (Edwards, 2015). For example, the 'Syrian refugee crisis' is not just the recent movement of the masses to the West, it is also part of a changing global migration debate.

This article analyzes and evaluates media representation of refugees/asylum seekers in two European countries with contrasting media systems: Norway and Turkey. The main aim is to determine if the portrayal of refugees in the two countries' popular media is similar despite having different media systems. Two newspapers with similar ideological positions were selected for analyzing media coverage and the representation of Syrian refugee-related news items from January to June 2017.

These two countries have totally different media systems and levels of press freedom. Turkey has seen a substantial decline in press freedom over the past decade, which intensified after the 2016 coup attempt through aggressive use of the penal code, criminal defamation laws and antiterrorism legislation to jail many journalists and punish critical reporting of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP). The Freedom House Report (2019) gave Turkey just 31 points and listed it among 50 countries that have been unfree since 2018. In Turkey's case, this was because of deeply flawed constitutional referendum that centralized power in the presidency. The press was particularly affected by the crackdown, with more than 150 media outlets, including newspapers, television and radio channels, news agencies, magazines, publishing houses, and news websites, being forcibly shut down and having their assets seized. Meanwhile, 145 journalists have been detained, which made Turkey the world's worst jailer of journalists for the second year in a row. More than 2,700 media workers were fired and 54 journalists had their property confiscated. Wikipedia remained blocked across Turkey in 2019 while the mainstream media, especially television, reflect government positions and routinely carry identical headlines.

The second country, Norway, has one of the world's most open media environments. Freedoms of expression, media freedom, and the right to access government information are guaranteed under Article 100 of Norway's constitution. The Norwegian media and journalists are free of censorship and political pressure in deciding their editorial policy. The 2006 Freedom of Information Act provides for access to government documents and data requests through an online portal. Hate speech can be punished with up to three years in prison. The Freedom House Report (2019) gave the country 100 points and labelled it as free. With more than 200 newspapers expressing a diversity of opinions, Norway also has one of the world's highest rates of newspaper readership.

Although we are describing two distinctive European countries, they received the largest numbers of refugees in Europe in terms of the number of immigrants per inhabitant. In addition, while neither are EU members, they are part of the EU sphere and have received recent refugee flows. We would like to determine whether there is evidence regarding the general finding that popular newspapers generally follow similar representation patterns in conveying an us-and-them categorization making similar lexical choices to define Syrian refugees, covering their stories with similar themes. After 7 years of Syria's civil war and the refugee flow, we wondered whether the refugee debate has evolved towards the integration of immigration or whether it is still covered as a humanitarian tragedy in itself or a threat to host countries' way of life due to the significant economic burden. We hoped to find that the Syrian refugee flow has become a more mature, stabilized or naturalized issue with diversified information among NGOs, citizens and politicians in both countries.

With more than 3.5 million Syrians and another 365,000 refugees and asylum-seekers of various nationalities (DGMM 2019, UNHCR 2019), Turkey currently hosts the most Syrian refugees. Similarly, the number of immigrants per inhabitant in Norway is amongst the highest

in Europe due to the Syrian refugee flows (Brochmann and Kjelstadli, 2014). During 2015, the number of asylum seekers rose to 30,000, compared to 10,000 in 2014 (Øvrebye et al., 2016; UDI, 2015). Both countries are part of the EU sphere and have received recently increased refugee flow.

Turkey recently adopted legal norms and regulations, launched a registration database and plans to create a healthy public sphere with varied and diversified actors in the media. Regarding Norway and the other Nordic countries, however, some claim that their historical reputation as "the model of a tolerant, egalitarian, multicultural welfare state" is changing (Schierup and Alund, 2011). Norway is still a unique champion of humanitarian aid programmes, and always supports and defends human rights conventions (Borevi et al., 2017). Thus, it might be expected to cover the refugee issue and create a working public sphere for discussions as an example to the rest of the world. There are a few comparative studies in the literature regarding the Syrian refugee-related media coverage of countries with different media systems, cultures and political will. One recent study compared the Norwegian newspaper, Verdens Gang (VG), with the Spanish opinion daily El Pais (Franquet Santos Silva et al., 2018). This article examines how two major newspapers in Spain and Norway covered the 'refugee crisis' in Europe between October 2015 and March 2016. Based on a quantitative and comparative content analysis of the Spanish newspaper El Pais and the Norwegian newspaper VG, the study finds that more than 50 per cent of the stories in both newspapers on the 'refugee crisis' concern political and administrative issues. Moreover, both newspapers rely mainly on politicians and governmental institutions as sources in more than 50 per cent of all news stories. The article emphasizes the politicization of the issue and the need for further comparative country analyses to discuss its findings within a broader perpective. The relative invisibility of refugees (in El Pais 12.2 per cent and in VG only 6.2 per cent) in the news stories studied by Franquet Santos Silva et al. (2018) provoked our curiosity to compare another two contrasting countries that have hosted the most refugees recently.

This article is structured as follows. The next two parts explain the 'Syrian refugee crisis', with a special focus on media-related research and agenda setting theory. After describing the data and methodology, the last part presents the qualitative and quantitative results of the media analysis by comparing the country-specific findings before summarizing the differences and similarities in their coverage of the refugee issue.

The 'refugee crisis' in the media

Goodman et al. (2017:105) define a crisis as "a rarely occurring event which challenges the existing order". Syria's civil war and the sudden flow of refugees into neighbouring countries and Europe resulted "in a collapse in the legitimacy of existing ways of working and the production of new lenses for seeing social problems" (Habermas, 1975), which created currently the term of 'refugee crisis'. As the definition of 'crisis' clearly expresses, this sudden, major movement of population from the Middle East had not been seen in recent history. It led to the politicization of the migration debate in Europe, to these people being called "a waste product of globalisation" (Bauman, 2004:66) or a control mechanism of political elites.

Countries varied in their reactions. Hungary closed Europe's border to the refugees by building a razor-wire fence (Zoltan-Kekesi, 2017). Turkey built a 911-kilometre-long wall along its Syrian border. Lebanon imposed visa-like restrictions in 2015 while the Lebanese media have contributed to hate speech against refugees (EJN, 2015: 79). Estonia, Lithuania and Portugal declined all asylum applications in 2015 (Eurostat, 2019). A Bulgarian television channel used as a headline the Bulgarian prime minister's statement that "Islamic State is flooding Europe with refugees" (EJC, 2015). The leading Turkish daily Hürriyet's headline on

28th September 2014 was "Too many Syrians and no apartments for us" while another national daily, Sözcü, offered the extremely nationalist headline of "The man hunting the refugees with sticks" on 31st July 2014. This negative trend was also seen in Turkey's social media in that the topic "Syrians back to home" was a trending topic on Twitter (Corabatır, 2016; Memisoglu and Ilgit, 2017), which signalled increasingly negative perceptions in Turkish society.[4]

Nationalist coverage was not only seen in neighbouring countries', as the popular English daily the Sun published a column by Katie Hopkins on 17th April 2015 titled "Rescue boats? I'd use gunships to stop migrants", which was clearly hate speech. 48 hours later, a mass drowning happened in the Mediterranean Sea. Besides hate speech in the media, political figures have capitalized on the global 'refugee crisis' electorally as there has been an undeniable rise in xenophobia and Islamophobia in Western countries (Deardorff Miller, 2018). In response, the Carta di Roma agreement in Italy urgently called for more responsible coverage of the recent 'refugee crisis' while the editors' code at Ipso in Britain also warned media practitioners to adopt better, more objective media coverage of refugees (EJC, 2015). Meanwhile, various panels, forums, migration reporting guidelines and an alternative course curriculum for journalism students has enabled more criticism and discussion of the role of the media in the 'refugee crisis'.[5]

The first wave of research on Syrian refugees tried to map the issue, mostly dealing with the sudden flow of war refugees and the responses of host countries and their public (see Yazgan et al., 2015: 186-7). The second group mostly analyzed the situation in the refugee camps and refugees' legal and bureaucratic obstacles. The third wave dealt with the rights of Syrian refugees and their difficulties to access facilities in education, healthcare, and employment in host countries (Kutlu-Tonak, 2016:130). As these diverse areas indicate, the Syrian refugee issue is a dynamic process and related to varied sub-themes and areas, including public opinion formation and the role of the media.

Media analysis in Turkey has revealed problematic and ideological coverage that signals the politicization of the refugee theme. Göktuna-Yaylaci and Karakuş (2015) applied content analysis to selected newspapers from 2014 and concluded that newspapers' political stance and their attitude toward the government significantly affected their news content, specifically by making the coverage a political message with the humanitarian aspect of the crisis as a complimentary theme (Göktuna-Yaylaci and Karakuş, 2015:249). Instead of focusing on human disaster, their news coverage focused on the overcrowded of hospitals, streets, and schools with refugees. This clearly scapegoated refugees in Turkish society and encouraged people to forget the inhumane conditions of war faced by the refugees. Similarly, other researchers have highlighted problematic coverage in the Turkish media, including criminalizing, hegemonic language, and even hate speech (Ataman, 2014; Kolukırık, 2009; Doğanay et al., 2018).

Although these researchers have revealed negative media representations regarding refugees and the dominance of government sources in Turkey's national media (Kolukırık, 2009; Doğanay et al., 2018; Pandır et al., 2015), there are also humanizing frames, varied sources representation, and positive coverage of Syrian refugees associated with the community journalism efforts of local media in Turkey (Kaya, 2017:365, Erdoğan et al., 2017). There are

[4] According to a recent survey, 82% of the Turkish public had a negative perception of Syrians (Erdoğan, 2018). Similarly, a European Commission report in 2006 remarked that the "public perception of migration tends to be increasingly negative throughout Europe" (Beutin et al., 2006: 2).

[5] The European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF) organized a panel in 2016 that claimed that the refugee issue had increased distrust in the media, through accusations of biased reporting in Europe. In 2016, the World Forum for Media Development acknowledged that migration is one of the biggest challenges facing the news media, and called on the media to put ethics at the centre of their coverage. EJN has created news migration reporting guidelines for journalists while UNESCO created a new course curriculum for journalism and media institutions to equip journalism students with the new social journalism skills (Banda, 2015;Possetti, 2015: 81).

also a few researchers who read scarce news coverage as a sign of a positive perspective (Erdoğan et al. 2017:5), and who describe media representations as "precarious but with a high societal aspiration" (Tunc, 2015: 59). They underline the pivotal positive role of the Turkish media in not being an inflammatory factor in this controversial subject (Tunc, 2015). Pandır et al. (2015:1) also reached a similar conclusion that the Turkish media depict the issue ambivalently with positive or neutral news coverage through visual narratives that reproduce social regret in Turkish society.

When the refugees began crossing the Turkish border in 2011-2012, the media initially covered the issue from a supportive, humanitarian perspective. Aid to Syrian refugees has been affected – and sometimes exploited – in political struggles between Turkey's governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) and CHP, which has called for a diplomatic solution to the Syrian conflict. As a result, the refugee issue has polarized Turkey's population and political parties since 2015 (Ahmadoun, 2014). During 2015 and 2016, after failing the Turkey-EU deal and the possibility to give Turkish citizenship to Syrian refugees, their access to higher education became the main theme. This deal and President Erdoğan's statement in a refugee camp on July 2nd, 2016, offering citizenship created an unsustainable naturalization policy (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2018) or 'moral panic' (Cohen, 1973) within society, which created an 'us versus them' perception that fuelled negative media framing and hostile public attitudes against the refugees. Different media groups in Turkey also represented the Syrian refugee issue according to their political affiliations (Atasü-Topçuoğlu, 2018). For pro-government media, the most preferred frame was Turkey's sacrifice whereas it was short-sightedness for the opposition media (Erdoğan et al., 2017).

Media representation of refugees in the European media offer an even worse picture (Berry et. al, 2015). The most visible characteristics were to represent the refugees as a "unified faceless threat", categorizing them as good or bad, dehumanizing, othering, giving less space to their views, using marginalizing language, associating them with negative themes, and using unfavourable lexical choices (KhosraviNik, 2010:23; Kokkonen, 2017; Goodman et al., 2017: 112). Philo et al. (2013) reported that the hostile nature of coverage of the refugees ignores the asylum seekers' own voices, which again makes it difficult to see the problem as a human rights and equality issue. Although sympathy increased toward Syrian refugees after the drowning of the Syrian boy Ayan Kurdi on a Turkish beach, this changed following the terrorist attacks in Paris that killed 130 people in November 2015. There was a sudden change in refugee/minority-related rhetoric to present them in negative and problematic ways in the media.

A few broader studies have compared media coverage across different countries on the Syrian refugee theme, reporting biased, negative coverage that intensified after 2015 (Berry et al., 2015). The Ethical Journalism Network's (EJN) report (2015) also accused the media of failing to raise the alarm about the refugee flow before 2015, letting politicians hijack media coverage with hate speech (Freedman, 2018), producing sensational news content and confusion regarding the terms, and allowing falling standards with unreliable or ill-informed news content.

To sum up, all the researchers discussed here emphasize the importance of examining how refugees are represented in media to reveal how the 'Syrian refugee crisis' has influenced public debates. Moreover, nearly every article emphasizes the need for comparative studies to expose how such representations vary between countries, areas, and political orientations. Therefore, the present study aims to analyze media coverage in two geographically, politically, and culturally different countries to identify any concrete coverage patterns or country-specific perspectives.

Turkey's newly written refugee story

The rights and obligations of individual asylum seekers and refugees are governed by the 1951 Geneva Convention and general international humanitarian law. Turkey is among the signatories of the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees. However, alongside a few other countries, it maintains a "geographical limitation" to the Convention and its 1967 Protocol, which means it does not grant refugee status to asylum seekers from outside Europe as part of a two-tiered asylum policy (Kirişçi, 2014). Following extensive preparations, Turkey's parliament approved the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (Yabancilar ve Uluslararasi Koruma Kanunu– YUKK), which is the first comprehensive law to cover both foreigners and those who need international protection in Turkey (DGMM, 2019). However, Article 62 of the law retains the geographical limitation. Therefore, Turkey has not granted 'refugee' status to fleeing Syrians while non-Europeans can only obtain 'conditional refugee' status. It is important to underline that the conditional refugees' residence in Turkey is temporary. They can only stay until their resettlement in a third country.

Towards the end of 2011, the Turkish government declared its support for the opposition in the Syrian civil war and adopted an open-door policy for those fleeing Syria by applying a temporary protection regime for incoming Syrians. When the first flow of Syrians occurred in 2011, the Turkish authorities welcomed them into Turkey without requiring a visa. Those with passports were allowed to stay for up to 90 days whereas those without documents were placed in so-called 'guest camps' (Gümüş and Eroğlu, 2015). Turkey currently hosts the most Syrian refugees globally, with approximately 8 % living in camps whereas the others mostly live in ten major cities spread across Turkey. They have no structured educational activities and only limited access to livelihood opportunities. Turkish society's attitude toward the Syrians is not as positive as the government's.

Recent research on Turkish opinion regarding Syrians indicates that most people have pessimistic and mostly negative attitudes. Thus, 82% of participants defined Syrians as either "trouble makers" (39%) or a "burden on the country" (43%) (Erdoğan, 2018). The issue has for the potential to create political and social controversaries in both Turkey and Europe, as evidenced by the popularization of the issue by extremist political parties in many countries in their election campaigns. Newspaper headlines, news coverage, and thematization are all important data for analyzing this issue in the public sphere.

Within this framework, examining coverage of Syrian refugees in Turkey and Norway will help us to understand and compare the two societies' perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives through media representation. This study therefore compares articles from newspapers in each country to discover whether there are differences in each country's representations of refugees.

Research design and method

The main objective of this study is to determine how the mainstream/popular media in Turkey and Norway, which represent two distinct European media models, represent and mediate their accounts of Syrian asylum seekers and refugees. We would like to determine whether there is evidence regarding the general finding that popular newspapers follow similar representation patterns in conveying an us-and-them categorization, making similar lexical choices, and giving less space and voice to the victims (KhosraviNik, 2010). This article analyzes and evaluates media language and the thematic representation of Syrian refugees/asylum seekers in two popular newspapers in Norway and Turkey - Verdens Gang (VG) and Hürriyet - to track

the differences and similarities of the media coverage and sourcing. The main hypothesis that the two countries' popular media portrayal of refugees is similar, despite having different media systems.

This study departs from the terminology and classification of Hallin & Mancini's media system approach (2004:143-145) to categorize the Norwegian media in the Democratic Corporativist model with a strong tradition of limits to state power alongside strong welfare state policies and other forms of active state intervention. In line with this classification, the Norwegian media show a high degree of political parallelism, which coexists with a high level of journalistic professionalization, a consensus on professional standards of conduct, and a strongly developed mass-circulation press. The notion of commitment to a common public interest is also high, alongside a high level of autonomy from other social powers. Norway's media forms are all to varying degrees shaped by free market forces while being harnessed, regulated, and supervised by state intervention (Nord, 2008).

The second country, Turkey, represents the southern European media system, described as the Mediterranean or Polarized Pluralistic model (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). The region's recent contested transition to democracy has established distinct patterns of a close relationship between the mass media and politics (2004: 89). Moreover, due to the weak development of the commercial media market and the concentration of ownership, Turkey's media is dependent on the state, political parties, religious institutions, and wealthy private patrons, which inhibits journalistic professionalization (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 90). Since its establishment, Turkey has had a complex political history that has always influenced the media environment. In particular, the state domination of the media has been particularly pronounced during military coups and states of emergency. Yavcan and Ongur (2016) show that the ruling AKP's increasing power during the last two decades has intensified threats to media criticism in collaboration with a neo-liberal economy, which have grown since the 1980 military coup.

The two countries received the most refugees in Europe in terms of the number of immigrants per inhabitant. Turkey currently hosts the most Syrian refugees globally, at more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees (DGMM 2019, UNHCR 2019). Like Turkey, the number of applicants tripled in Norway to reach to 30,470 persons (Øvrebye et al., 2016; UDI, 2015). While neither country is an EU member, they are both part of the EU sphere and have received increased refugee flows compared to recent history.

After high refugee flows to Europe and Turkey in 2015, the acute crisis ended. However, the situation has hardly normalized due to the high-stakes political crisis over refugees in 2017 related to populist and nativist politics in Europe and the U.S. Thus, the migration and asylum 'crisis' continue to dominate the public space and shape national and international politics. Politicians have focused on border controls while migration remains the top issue on the global agenda. As outlined earlier, the role of the media in shaping public opinion is significant here, according to many national and international studies. Hence, it is crucial to focus on media representation of immigrants to understand public perceptions.

To make comparisons and describe the general situation, we selected two newspapers based on their circulation (Pandır et al., 2014) and type (tabloid or quality) (Franquet Santos Silva et al., 2018). Hürriyet is a typical high-circulation mainstream/popular Turkish reference newspaper while Verdens Gang (VG)[6] is Norwegian popular high-circulation newspaper. The analysis unit was the news content of the selected dailies with refugee or Syrian related news items published between January to June 2017. After 7 years of the refugee flow, we expected to find that the Syrian refugee crisis has become a more mature, stabilized, or naturalized issue with diversified information shared among NGOs, citizens, and politicians in both countries.

[6] VG is an abbreviation for 'Verdens Gang', which means 'How the world goes on' or 'The course of the world'.

The LexisNexis database was used to gather 'Syria' and 'refugee' related news from both newspapers. In Hürriyet, 52,390 news items included the word 'Syria', of which 8,403 contained the word 'refugee'. When we searched 'Syrian' and 'refugees' for the first half of 2017, we found 92 news articles. In VG, there were 7,941 'Syria' and 2,380 'Syria' and 'refugee' related news items. When we narrowed down the sample to news articles focusing on the situation of refugees that appeared in the first half of 2017, we found 36 news articles. Since the aim is to understand the media representation of Syrian refugees, we selected just news articles in two dailies focusing on stories centering the refugees. This narrowed down the sample to 128 news articles from the first half of 2017 (92 items in Hürriyet and 36 in VG). Due to its broadsheet format, Hürriyet had two times more articles than VG.

To monitor the representation of Syrian refugees in the news articles, we employed first quantitative then qualitative content analysis. We used the Yoshikoder (Lowe, 2006) open-source analysis system to categorize the news with categories dealing with Syrian-related topics (see Supplementary Table 7). The content categories were established from emerging coding after preliminary examination of the data (Wimmer and Dominick, 2014). The quantification was done at the nominal level by counting the frequency of units in each category. The news items mostly fell into three main categories, labeled as identity/definion of refugees, government and NGO projects for refugees, and issues debated within the refugee theme, such as democray, racism, human rights, and elections. The analysis variables were the the wording used to describe refugees/migrants, placement of the news, gender of the byline, patterns of sourcing (the first three actors in the news), and news items that centered Syrian refugees as the main topic or as a side theme within the news content. Negative or positive attribution in news/headlines (the tone of the article) was also coded, ased on manifest positive or negative wording in the article's headline using a three-point 'tone' scale (positive, negative, neutral). Negative terms included 'misbehaviour', 'failure', and 'ingratitude', 'fugitives', 'criminal', 'smugglers', 'danger', and 'death'. Examples of positive wording were 'success', 'guests', and 'help'. Articles with a neutral tone were factual pieces that avoided opinion or strong wording, personal statements, or anecdotes.

Because an objective, systematic research technique is needed to produce universal statements (Berelson, 1952:18), we found it more appropriate to employ quantitative data collection methods and apply both quantitative and qualitative content analysis to the research material. Since the subject matter, can be grasped better through both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied as complimentary.

Research findings

Of the 128 news articles analyzed for the investigation according to their relevance to refugee-related themes, there were 92 items in Hürriyet including the words 'Syria' and 'refugee', and 36 in VG. As expected, the Turkish newspaper devoted more coverage to the issue since Turkey is the country hosting the most Syrian refugees in the world.

One important finding was that, in 22% of Hürriyet's coverage (20 news articles), the Syrian refugee issue was a complementary to another central theme, such as national elections, EU summits, or NATO meetings, whereas this was only found for 3 items in VG. The most interesting finding is that both Norwegian and Turkish dailies devoted half their news coverage and headlines to positive attributions regarding the Syrian crisis. The items were mostly covered by male journalists (45 male, 10 female journalists) in the Turkish daily but more by females in the Norwegian paper (15 female, 9 male journalists). Similarly, both dailies used refugee related articles from foreign coverage to support their articles.

According to the Yoshikoder analysis of Hürriyet (Table 1), the newspaper included 1,531 migration-related words out of a total of 44,178 words most of which tried to identify or define the refugees and their situation. The refugees became newsworthy if they were involved in a dramatic event, such as a boat accident, or had problems with getting financial or social aid. The refugee crisis was mostly covered from the perspective of the financial or social aid projects of national and international NGOs (15% of words were categorized under this theme). Although the crisis has lasted 7 years, still the least covered themes were democracy and human rights, with only 123 (8 %) words being identified under this category in Hürriyet (see Supplementary Table 7). Instead, the Turkish news environment was dominated by stories about the high service quality of the refugee camps and their achievements, or the refugees' escapes and boat accidents.

Table 1: Coding of Hürriyet and VG newspaper

	Hürriyet (Jan,Feb,March)	Hürriyet (Apr,May,June)	VG (Jan,Feb,March)	VG (Apr,May,June)	**Total**
Migration related words	501	1.030	522	180	2.233
Identity/definition	366	808	345	95	1.614
Project/help/activities	90	144	121	47	402
Democracy/Human rights	45	78	56	38	217
Total words	**13.120**	**31.058**	**19.641**	**8.909**	**72.728**

Interestingly, there were only 702 migration or refugee-related words out of 28,550 words in VG. As with Hürriyet, more than the half of the words were devoted to definition and identity in VG (Table 1) while 23% (168 words) were categorized under the project/activities theme. Also in line with the Turkish coverage, only 94 words (13%) related the refugee issue to the themes of democracy and human rights. Thus, the analysis suggests that newspaper coverage of the Syrian refugee crisis is still in a definition and identification phase in both countries' popular media.

When we further focus on the journalists' word choices of identification, which directly reflect how the situation is framed and influences readers' perceptions about refugees, there is some differences between the two dailies regarding identification. That is, in Turkey, it is mostly Syrian refugees who become news subjects, with the word 'Syrian' used 209 times in the 92 news articles, whereas refugees from other nationalities are rarely represented. In VG, however, 'Syria' the country is mentioned more ofen than the nationality of the refugees, with other nationalities also being less visible. Other researches have also identified the frequent use of the term 'Syrian' in news coverage in Turkey (Doğanay et al., 2018). This preference can be interpreted either as indicating that journalists ignore the rights of the refugees and adopt a neutral position or, on the contrary, that they marginalize Syrians as a general, faceless social category, which is also a consistent finding from many international studies (KhosraviNik, 2010:23; Philo et al., 2013; Goodman et al., 2017: 112).

The patterns of labelling in the Turkish and Norwegian dailies are very similar. The predominant word choice to define the refugees in both newspapers is 'refugee' (346 times in Hürriyet and 139 times in VG) followed by 'asylum seeker' (166 times in Hürriyet and 178 times in VG) and 'migrant' (85 times in Hürriyet but only 25 times in VG). Other marginalizing and othering words, such as 'smuggler' was prefered 21 times in Hürriyet but only 2 times in VG. An important positive finding to note was the low use of criminalizing wording in Hürriyet, such as 'fugitives' (only 6 times) and 'illegal immigrant' (2 times), which might signal an improvement in the journalistic approach to refugees in Turkey. Accurate terminology is

important because it can discredit and weaken credibility. Terms like 'illegal immigrant' or 'foreign criminals' are frequently applied to multiple categories of migrant without recognising the differences between a refugee, an asylum seeker, and an economic migrant, or where the status of the migrant is unknown. One of the biggest problems is the lack of knowledge about the legal aspects of migration, for example about the difference between migrant and refugee, or about these people's legal rights. This is fundamental to avoid giving the wrong impression to the public.

Overall, the terms 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' were the accepted labels used most frequently by journalists in the two newspapers, with no significant differences between labeling refugees in the two countries. Thus, it seems that the identity confusion in relation to the Syrian refugee issue has been settled in the media language in Turkey, although still there is a problem in depicting refugees on an inaccurate and misleading references as people in need and lacking agency, or as a possible threat in Turkey.

The placement of news is also an important variable that gives information regarding the internalization of the issue. In the Turkish daily, the Syrian refugee crisis was still mostly restricted to the national and international pages (Table 2). That is, the issue is equally represented in both local and national pages, and the problem has been internalized with local coverage after seven years. However, it remains barely represented in the education or economy sections. In the Norwegian daily, by contrast. the issue was only presented in the current affair pages without placing in any other sections in the daily.

Table 2: Placement of the news (Hürriyet)

Placement of the news (Hürriyet)	
News section	Number of News
Local news section	33
National/current news section	30
International news section	24
Economy section	2
Education section	1
Technology section	1
Magazine section	1
Total	**92**

The news items were also categorized under distinct themes and frames. Financial and social aid/helping refugees were the main theme, with 21 news items (22 %) in Hürriyet (Table 3). The second important news theme was human smuggling with 16.3% coverage. Democracy and human rights-related news formed the third theme with 13% coverage. Frequently covered issues included Syria's civil war and terror, US president Trump and his migration law. Other infrequent themes were monitoring visits to refugee camps by international NGOs, and activity and celebration-related statements.

Table 3: Themes of the news coverage

Themes of the news coverage (Hürriyet and VG)			
	News (Hürriyet) 92 %	News (VG) 36 %	**Total 128 %**
Project/help/service	23,1	22,2	22,8

Democracy/human rights	13,2	19,4	15,0
Human smuggling	16,4	11,2	15,0
US Migration Law	11,0	25,0	15,0
Terror	12,1	13,9	12,6
Election/summit/conference	12,1	8,3	11,0
Monitoring visits	6,6	0,0	4,7
Activity/celebration	5,5	0,0	3,9
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

The Norwegian newspaper VG has a quite different pattern. In its coverage, the Syrian refugee crisis was mostly associated with US president Donald Trump and US migraton law (Table 3) (10 news items, 25%). As with the Turkish coverage, financial and social aid, and projects were also prominently featured themes, with 8 news items (22.2 %).

Like the Turkish coverage, in VG, the Syrian refugee crisis was only weakly associated with democracy and human rights (7 news items, 19.4 %). Human smuggling and crime were the least prefered news themes after election-related coverage (Table 3).

Besides the main items on the news agenda, the tone of the headlines is also an important factor in analyzing how the main actor in the article represents the refugee issue and how it is covered in the most critical parts of news reports, such as headlines. There was not a wide distribution of negative, positive, or neutral tones in the news headlines between the two newspapers (Table 4). Both covered the Syrian refugee issue with similar numbers of positive and negative headlines (39 negative and 43 positive headline in Hürriyet; 18 negative and 13 positive news headlines in VG). VG had slighly more negative coverage than positive news headlines.

Table 4: Tone of the Headlines

	Hürriyet	VG	**Total**
Negative	39	18	57
Positive	43	13	56
Neutral	10	5	15
Total	**92**	**36**	**128**

As Aeron Davis warns, “journalists can be all but captured by their sources” in their news reporting because they are already embedded in the “issue communities on which they report” (2007: 5). Therefore, the actors in the news coverage provide an important signifier to understand the coverage and its characteristics. Generally, “the range of significant sources and voices in migration news has tended to be rather narrow and often dominated by political elites and state officials” (Berry et al., 2015:127). In line with this, these actors were the most frequently identified out of 212 news sources in Hürriyet (Table 5).

Table 5: Actors in Turkish news coverage (Hürriyet)

Actors of Turkish news coverage (Hürriyet)				
Turkish actors	1st Actor	2nd Actor	3rd Actor	**Total**
National NGOs	16	9	5	30
European/international political actors	5	14	6	25
International NGOs /UN/ UNESCO	7	8	4	19
US actors (Trump, Obama, etc.)	5	11	1	17

R. T. Erdogan	12	2	2	16
AKP actors	7	4	5	16
Teror and crime actors (DAEŞ, smuglers)	6	3	6	15
Byreucrats (AFAD, Governors, etc.)	9	4	1	14
International institutions (EU, AGIT)	4	5	5	14
Syrian citizens	3	6	5	14
Non available and others (companies, etc.)	7	2	0	9
Security forces	4	4	0	8
Mayors	3	3	1	7
CHP actors	2	0	2	4
Turkish citizens	2	1	1	4
Total	**92**	**76**	**44**	**212**

The most frequent category was national NGO actors in 16 news articles out of 30. However, although national NGOs were the most frequent individual first actor category, President Erdoğan and other AKP politicians together make 32 actors in total, thereby exceeding the number of national NGOs. Erdoğan was also featured more frequently than any other political sources. The third most frequent actor category was European/international political actors followed by international NGOs. Finally, the low representation of Syrian refugees as first actor category (3 as first actor, 14 in total) was a problem. However, the invisibility of ordinary Turkish people in the coverage was a more alarming finding. Turkish citizens were the least represented actor category, with only 4 out of 212 actors (1.8% of total actor representation).

The Norwegian news coverage contained 88 actor sources (Table 6), with US President Trump being the most frequent first actor in 13 news articles (14.7%). Nearly the same number of actor coverage was devoted to national NGOs at 12 actors (13.6%), making it the second most frequent actor group.

Table 6: Actors of Norwegian news coverage (VG)

Actors of Norwegian News Coverage (VG)				
Actors	1st Actor	2nd Actor	3rd Actor	**Total**
US actors (Trump, Obama, etc.)	8	4	1	13
Syrian citizens	2	7	4	13
National NGOs	4	4	4	12
International NGOs /UN/ UNESCO	2	5	2	9
Byreucrats (UDI, etc)	6	0	2	8
Government actors	2	2	3	7
Citizens	2	1	4	7
Other political parties	3	1	1	5
Others (companies etc.)	2	2	1	5
European/international political actors	2	1	0	3
Prime minister	1	1	0	2
Security forces	1	0	1	2
International institutions (EU, AGİT)	1	0	0	1
Terror actors	0	1	0	1

Mayors	0	0	0	0
Total	**36**	**29**	**23**	**88**

Like the Turkish coverage, national and international NGOs were frequently represented, comprising 23.8 % of actors in VG news items (total political actors in VG). International institutions (e.g. the EU) and terror were the most infrequently covered actor categories in the Norwegian newspaper. There were only 2 representations of Syrian refugees as a first actor, although 13 Syrian actors appeared as the first three actors in total (14.7%). Although Syrian actors were not the most frequent as the first actor in the news, they were still more visible than the representation of Norwegian citizens (7 actors, 7.9%). The low representation of the host country's citizens makes coverage of the Syrian refugee problem more complicated without a healthy dialogue between host and guest communities.

Qualitative findings of the analysis

These results clearly indicate the dominance of national politicians (R. T. Erdoğan) regarding the refugee issue in Turkey and international politicians (e.g. Donald Trump) in Norway. In total, 25% of the actors in the Norwegian coverage were politicians or bureaucrats and close to 26.8% in Turkey. We did not find a disproportionate reliance on anti-immigration civil society voices in either country, although both the migrants themselves and citizens tended to be marginalized somewhat less in Norway[7] and far more in Turkey.

Generally, both popular dailies had little reporting that related the 'Syrian migration crisis' with democracy and human rights themes (19 articles out of 128). These articles were shorter and less detailed, and relied on a limited number of sources. Although national and international NGOs were important actors in the news coverage in both countries, national and international politicians and bureacrats dominated as sources for Syrian refugee related news. In Turkey, political actors, especially Erdoğan and other AKP actors, were an important political source. Turkish political actors dominated since, after nearly seven years of crisis, the Syrian refugee issue is primarily situated as a domestically relevant story in Turkey.

Generally, the headlines included similar amounts of negative and positive attribution in both popular dailies' headlines. Hürriyet's slightly more positive coverage may reflect the authoritarian character of the AKP government, which perceives its handling of the Syrian refugee issue as successful while strictly controlling refugee related information in Turkey and giving positive statements from AKP politicians.

In line with findings from the "coverage of migration to southern Europe called as a 'foreign news' story perspective" (Horsti, 2008), our study finds that the coverage presents the issue as foreign news in Norway while giving[7] an opportunity for its readers to engage in the Syrian migration debate (VG, 1 February, 2017; VG, 20 March 2017). Moreover, in contrast to the Turkish coverage, in a few articles, VG covered the daily life of Syrians in Norway, including their integration efforts and cultural experiences (VG, 25 February, 2017; VG, 5 February, 2017). This kind of coverage was absent in Hürriyet, with refugees represented as a faceless group, which could easily create stereotypical images for Turkish society (Hürriyet, 1 June 2017; Hürriyet, 15 March 2017).

[7] Unlike the Turkish papers, VG – even as a popular newspaper – tried to encourage its readers to participate in the debate regarding the Syrian refugees, to send e-mails or SMSs to participate in the newspaper's comment pages.

The crime and human smuggling themes were almost completely ignored in the Norwegian coverage whereas was an important issue for the Turkish media (Hürriyet, 27 February 2017; Hürriyet, 24 February 2017; Hürriyet, 23 February 2017).

The main qualitative finding is that the media coverage in both countries tries to show how much they are helping the refugees while other countries are ignoring the issue (VG, 5 January 2017; VG, 7 February 2017). There are currently 3.5 million refugees in Turkey, of whom only 8% live in camps, whereas the rest live in various cities. However, their inhuman conditions were not covered. Thus, the Norwegian daily, had only one news item in the first half of 2017 mentioning Turkey, which currently hosts the most Syrian refugees (VG, 24 April 2017). The struggle of all border countries regarding the Syrian crisis was also totally ignored in the Norwegian coverage. Instead, the refugee crisis was represented as a problem for Europe, focusing only on Greece.

Regarding the Turkish newspaper's refugee coverage, the main focus was criticism of EU refugee politics for not being accommodating enough while the humanitarian aspects of the crisis remained a side issue. The thoughts and perspectives of Turkish citizens were totally absent, with neither healthy debate nor adequate information available for creating a well functoning public sphere regarding this issue.

Conclusion

By producing more than 5 million refugees, Syria's civil war has caused enormous logistical, political, and financial challenges for the host countries, and created a general sense of instability and uncertainity in all involved countries. In the 'Syrian refugee crisis', given how much we learn about it through the mainstream media, it is important to determine how the media label, categorize, and frame the issue for the society. Through its agenda setting and framing functions, the mass media directly influence public and elite political attitudes towards asylum and migration. In this article, we discussed the media as a societal actor, with Turkey's Hürriyet and Norway's Verdens Gang chosen from the print media environment as two popular media outlets representing two distinct media models: the Democratic Corporativist model in Norway and the Polarized Pluralistic model in Turkey. Although the literature suggests that these two countries have totally different media models, we found no great differences in the two countries' popular media coverage of the Syrian refugee issue in the first half of 2017 regarding the sourcing, issue framing, and tones in article headlines.

The analysis shows a similar ranked acceptance of word choices to describe people arriving from Syria in the two dailies: firstly 'refugee', secondly 'asylum-seeker', and thirdly 'migrant'. Importantly, the variety of different sources reveals that the most frequent first actor was national NGOs in the Turkish newspaper but the international US actor, President Trump, in Norway. In Hürriyet, 85 statements across 92 articles were from politicians (40% of actors) while 40 statements across 36 articles were from policians in VG (45% of actors). This hijacking of media visibility by political figures clearly demonstrates the overrepresentation of political sourcing, which could politicize the Syrian refugee crisis in both countries (WACC Europe and CCME, 2017).

The refugees' relative invisibility as the first actor category in both dailies (2 actors in VG, 3 actors in Hürriyet) shows the tendency to ignore the words of Syrian refugees in news coverage, while the very limited voice that both newspapers give to their own country's citizens is a significant threat to future integration of the refugees in these two host societies.

However, there are also positive findings, particularly the low level of criminalizing wording to describe refugees, positive attirbutions in half of the headlines in both newspapers,

and no alarming or negative framing in either newspaper associating Syrian immigration with threats, such as illegality, economic crisis, crime, or Islamic terror.

The findings show that migration is a salient theme in media coverage, although the 'visibility' of the migrants is lacking. Instead, the voices that are most frequently heard in the news are still political actors, 7 years after the crisis began. Out of 128 news articles, only a handful (19 articles in both countries) focused on the human rights perspective. However, coverage going beyond 'scoreboard' reporting is needed to encourage a deeper understanding of the crisis and a search for solutions.

With detailed guidelines and training, and codes of conduct including the basic principles for refugee coverage might help current journalists. Examples include the 'Roma Charter' of the Italian Council of Journalists' Association and the Camden Principles on Freedom of Expression and Equality of Ethical Journalism Initiative (EJI). Although both Turkish (Basın İlan Kurumu, 1994) and Norwegian journalism initiatives have accepted codes of conduct (MediaWise, 2003), we found no reference in them to refugees; neither were there additional guidelines to ensure that reporting on asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, and victims of human trafficking is balanced and accurate.

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VG (February 25, 2017) 'En solskinnshistorie' [A sunshine story].
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VG (February 5, 2017) 'Flyktet fra Aleppo – gjør suksess med syrisk mat i Oslo' [Escape from Aleppo - make success with Syrian food in Oslo].
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Supplementary Table 7: Dictionary for coding

Turkish Dictionary	Norwegian Dictionary
Words forCategorisation	**Words for Categorisation**
Identity Related Words	**Identity Related Words**
Suriyeli	Syrian
Göçmen	Invanndrer
Mülteci	Migranter
Muhacir	Smugler
Ensar	Asyl
Kardeş	Flyktninger
Komşu	Barn
Sığınmacı	Kvinne
Misafir	Junge
Kaçak	Arbeitsledige
Kaçakçı	**Project/Help/Activities**
Kadın	Prosjekt
Çocuk	Hjelp
Genç	Euro
İşsiz	Integrering
Project/Help/Activities	Utnytting
Proje	**Human Rights/Democracy**
Hizmet	Rasisme
Yardım	Populisme
Harcama	Demokrati
Entegrasyon	Mennesker rettigheter
Uyum	Frihet
İstismar	Flyktningkrisen i Europa
Human Rights/Democracy	Asyl-debatten
Irkçılık	Tyrkia
Popülizm	
Demokrasi	
İnsan hakları	
Özgürlük	
Kriz	

Original Article

The Holocaust May Be Important, But It's No Longer Original: Representations of the Holocaust in Slovak Theatre Reviews from 2000 to 2017

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Abstract: This article reports findings from a qualitative thematic analysis of 142 Slovak theatre reviews published from 2000 to 2017 about 25 Holocaust dramas staged in Slovakia. Until 2015, most Holocaust dramas employed the "Brechtian" estrangement effect, but since the beginning of 2015, Slovak theatre has shifted towards the use of realistic representation. Dramas employing the estrangement effect were in their reviews considered to be original artworks, and the social value of these plays was emphasized, while realistic representation was considered to be outdated and unoriginal. With the emergence of unoriginality in reviews, the attributed social value of these dramas diminished and the interest of reviewers in the Holocaust drama faded. The subsequent quantitative analysis supports these conclusions.

Keywords: Holocaust, theory of social representations, theatre, thematic analysis

Introduction

In the theatre, the proximity of stage and auditorium creates an intimacy, an emotional bond, between the actors and the audience (Rokem, 2000). This bond elicits trust and allows the audience to become immersed in the world of drama. As Claude Schumacher (1998) notes in his introduction to *Staging the Holocaust: The Shoah in Drama and Performance*, a play that succeeds in depicting the Holocaust is one that the audience finds disturbing, outside of its comfort zone, and that leads to reconsideration of its assumptions about history. There are however nuances between the attitudes towards Holocaust representation in different artworks. In his analysis, Jiří Holý (2014) describes two main approaches to aesthetic representations of the Holocaust: in the first, the Holocaust is portrayed through the use of reality effect. The events in such artworks are represented as a faithful reconstruction of the

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past, often based on authentic details and resources (e.g., diaries, newspaper articles, photographs, interviews). Representations of this nature enable the audience to forget that it is engaging with a work of art and suggest a realistic image of the past. This kind of representation therefore employs so called reality effect (Barthes, 1968). The reality effect emerges when the audience considers the presented events to be real and truthful. Moreover, the reality effect reassures that the represented world exactly corresponds to the ideological schemes we have created about it, schemes that therefore seem natural and universal to us (Pavis, 1999).

In contrast to the reality effect, the second approach to Holocaust representation employs the estrangement effect (Holý, 2014). In artworks that employ estrangement, we are reminded of the fictitious nature of the work. The estrangement effect explicitly points to one or more formal elements of the artwork and deconstructs them. The audience is therefore aware that these artworks are not a valid imprint of historical reality, but merely a sign, often referred to as poetic (Jakobson, 1963). The poetic sign is autoreferential and deconstructs its own codes (drama can explicitly represent itself as a drama or a movie can refer to its actors as actors etc.). The estrangement effect is therefore considered to be the opposite of the reality effect. The typical treats of these artworks are relativization of the boundary between good and evil, absence of heroism, representation of rather boring everyday life in contrast to dramatic events, grotesqueness, and black humor. In theatre, the employment of estrangement effect is often connected to German playwright Bertold Brecht, who considered the estrangement effect to be the one of the most important principles in his own practice. This kind of theatrical tradition is therefore often called "Brechtian" (Pavis, 1999).

From 2000 to 2017, twenty-five plays representing the Holocaust were performed in Slovak theatre. Up until 2015, most employed the estrangement effect, but, from 2015 onwards, Slovak theatre took a dramatic turn towards realistic representations (Mihálová, 2018). This article will explore the effect this major change in style had on the way these plays were received in Slovak theatre reviews. As our thematic analysis will describe, while the estrangement effect was considered to be original and as having social value, realistic representation was considered to be outdated and unoriginal. When plays employing reality effect were introduced, their attributed social value in reviews faded; and as subsequent quantitative analysis will show, the number of written reviews declined. This was despite the fact that audience generally preferred the realistic dramas, which meant that drama employing the reality effect had greater public reach.

Slovak State and the Second World War

On the March 13th, 1938, former prime-minister of Slovakia in the Czechoslovak republic, Jozef Tiso, was invited to discuss the formation of autonomous Slovak republic with Adolf Hitler in Berlin. Hitler proposed either to create independent state subordinate to German policy or to divide the territory of Slovakia among neighbouring states. The independence was declared a day after by Slovak parliament. After the establishment of the Slovak State, the so-called "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" received legal framework and the Jewish population has gradually lost fundamental human, civil and property rights. Anti-Jewish legislation culminated on September 9th, 1941 with the adoption of the *Jewish Code* (Hradská, 1999; Rajcan, Vadkerty & Hlavinka, 2018).

The series of military failures of Germany and its allies in 1943 led to an increase in opposition in Slovak society, resulting in preparation of an armed uprising. The situation was problematized by the growing partisan activity that accelerated the German occupation of the country. The Slovak National Uprising finally broke out on August 29th, 1944, as a reaction

to the occupation of the Slovak territory by German military units (Mičev, 2009) and was suppressed by the occupation of Banska Bystrica by German troops on October 27th, 1944. To prevent the collapse of the defiance, the insurgent army was moved into mountains and continued in guerrilla warfare. On April 4th, 1945, the Soviet Red Army entered the Slovak capital, Bratislava. Exiled government capitulated on May 8th resulting in establishment of the Third Czechoslovak Republic (Lacko, 2008).

Within this timeframe, there were two waves of Jewish transports to concentration camps. Almost 58 000 Slovak Jews were deported from March 25th to October 20th, 1942. However, Germany's efforts to restore deportations in the spring of 1943 were no longer successful. The new wave of transports began only after the occupation of Slovakia by Germany. In eleven transports from September 30th, 1944 to March 1945, there were deported about 13 500 Jews (Kováčová, 2012).

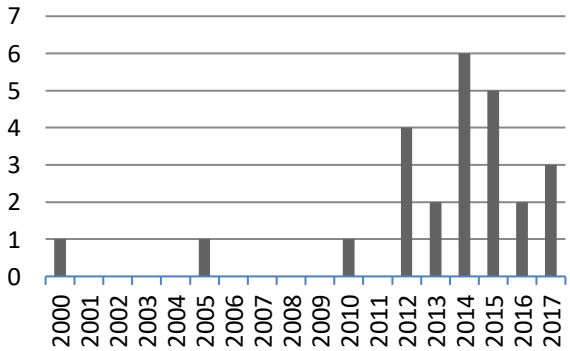
History of staging Holocaust drama in Slovak theatre

The first Holocaust dramas in Slovak theatres were staged directly after World War II with the prevailing interest in the heroic acts, such as escaping from the concentration camps in Peter Karvaš' *Return to life* (1946) and Juraj Váha's *Silence* (1949). Karvaš returned to the representation of Holocaust in his play *Antigona and the others* (1962), when he paraphrased Sophocles' *Antigone* and situated the narrative into the concentration camp.

More plays however depicted the events of the Slovak National Uprising, which has undergone various transformations since the 1950s. The uprising was misused for different ideological purposes related to communistic regime, it was represented as heroic example of the national unity, served as a critique of the "decayed" morals and supported creation of the national identity. For these reasons the theatrical representation of the Second World War during communistic era was considered to be pathetic, kitsch, sentimental and overloaded with illustrative heroism, even though these plays were, by the regime, presented as the depiction of the historical truth (Kročanová, 2014).

After the fall of communistic regime in 1989 and separation of Czech and Slovak republic in 1993, theatres almost ceased staging dramas related to Second World War. Throughout the 1990s there was only one play, Viliam Klimáček's *Fiery Fires* (1996). Klimáček's play took a strong stand against the realistic aesthetics of its predecessors and for the first time introduced poetics of the estrangement effect in drama related to Second World War in Slovak theatres (Svoradová, 2014).

FIGURE 1 Number of Holocaust plays premiered in Slovak theatres.



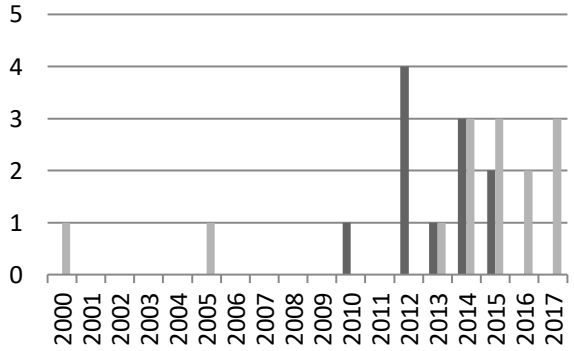
In the 21st century, Slovak theatres began to include Holocaust dramas on their stages in 2012 with the 70th anniversary of the transportation of the first Jews from the Slovak

Republic to the concentration camps; and in 2014 with the 70th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising. As we can see in Figure 1, these dates are associated with an increase in the number of premieres.

Of the 25 Holocaust plays (see Appendix A for the full list) staged in Slovakia during this period, 14 were individual productions. The remaining 11 belonged to one of four thematic series: *Endlosung* (four plays) and *Investigation of the failure of elites* (two plays) in the Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava; *Civil Cycle – Seven major sins* (three plays) in Arena Theatre in Bratislava; and *We will not forget* (two plays) in Jonáš Záborský Theatre in Prešov. The aim of these series was to revisit the Second World War era, open the wider discussion about the responsibility of the Slovak citizens in the Jewish deportations and educate the society about the risks of nationalism and radicalization (Mihálová, 2018).

As we can see in Figure 2, from 2000 to 2017 there were 14 Holocaust plays that employed reality effect and 11 that employed the estrangement effect.

FIGURE 2 Number of "estrangement" plays (darker) and "realistic" plays (lighter).



Plays are employing estrangement effect mostly in the acting, but often use several different approaches within a single performance. They could use irony and suppress the emotions in order to let the audience think rationally about the depicted events; they could play with scene and style of the performances in order to shock the audience and disturb the ordinary assumptions about the history of Slovak State. Similarly to Klimáček's *Fiery Fires* in 1996, also these plays stand in the opposition to the realistic aesthetics of the dramas misused by the communistic regime. However, we can also find the shift in the aesthetics of the realistic dramas. They employ the reality effect mostly to allow the audience experience the intensity (and terror) of the former events in order to prevent their repetition in the present society (Mihálová, 2018).

TABLE 1 Number of Holocaust plays, repeat performances and reviews (average per play).

	Total	**Estrangement**	**Realistic**
Plays	25	11	14
Repeats	798	241 (M = 21.9; SD = 12.5)	557 (M = 39.8; SD = 24.5)
Reviews	142	68 (M = 6.7; SD = 4.7)	74 (M = 4.9; SD = 4.8)

The following sections of the article will report findings from the thematic analysis of the reviews written on these performances. In the Table 1, we can see the number of plays employing reality and estrangement effect, their repeats and reviews written.

The analysis had two main goals:

a) Describe the development of the Holocaust representation in the reviews.
b) Describe the differences between the reviews of "realistic" and "estrangement" plays.

In analysis, all of the 142 reviews were arranged in order of publication date to show how the themes changed over time. The qualitative inductive thematic analysis was conducted using *Atlas.ti* 7.5 by the two authors following the rules of inductive theme construction (Plichtová, 2002). To reduce the risk of distortion in theme construction, we employed the principles of Consensual Qualitative Research (Hill, Thompson & Williams, 1997) where the preliminary expectations of each assessor were discussed before the analysis. As the next step, the data were analysed by each assessor separately. Finally, assessors conducted discussion about the themes and reached consensus. No inter-coder reliability was computed, the results were reached by consensus between assessors.

Representation of the Holocaust as a tragedy of continuing importance

In the year 2012, the topic of Holocaust in the theatres was new and the reviews were solving rather fundamental questions: Who has the right to speak about the Holocaust, and who has the right to portray it? How can we portray the unportrayable, and discuss what cannot be discussed? How can we talk when there is just silence left (Copley, 2010; see also Stocchetti, 2017, for review)? Or in other words: Is there any artistic way of adequately reflecting the terrible experiences of the victims of the Holocaust (Alphen, 1998; Kerner, 2011; Spargo & Ehrenreich, 2009)?

Jean Améry (2009) discussed this semiotic problem in his collection of essays, *At the Mind's Limits*, in relation to his own attempts to describe his experiences of the concentration camps. He thought aesthetic representations of the Holocaust should ask questions rather than provide answers. Améry (2009) thought there was an unbridgeable gap between words and the reality they try to reflect. He came to the conclusion that words could never produce the level of pain they were about to portray (Traverso, 1997). Although reviews agreed with this claim, they thought it was outweighed by the social importance of the Holocaust for contemporary society. We may not be able to depict the Holocaust itself, but it must be discussed and remembered, and, more importantly, never repeated.

Up until 2015, the Holocaust and the Second World War were discussed in respectful and humble terms. Reviews described the Holocaust in strong, emotional language: as the most tragic period in the world's history, the darkest period in history, the blackest point in time, as a monstrosity, or, in other words, as „a time we'd rather erase from Europe's history" (Mišovic, 2014).

The impact of the Holocaust is emphasized, but with a kind of helplessness, reflecting the simple fact that we cannot change our tragic past:

> The past has shown us its perversion, we can silently judge it, but we cannot change anything. One can only forget, but it would force us to repeat our mistakes (Mišovic, 2015).

Reviews directly link history to the present, and reveal the reviewers' doubts about the current state of European society. The reviews ask whether we are able to learn the lessons, whether we can in the end take responsibility and behave better.

> Has humanity learnt from the world wars and become better? Are we not all just prisoners of the Western perception of the world? Because the situation is not looking very optimistic for human kind (Borodovčáková, 2015).

The reviews construct negative representation of present society and warn the audience of what the future might bring. They emphasize that problematic present makes it important for the society to discuss the Holocaust in theatre.

> It's wonderful that now, at a time when all sides once again resound with hatred, the desire to exterminate, and to deny and reject the basic rules of humanity, that we are seeing this type of theatre again (Šnircová, 2015).

The educational role of Holocaust in the society is emphasized and since 2012 serves as a basic argument of why to stage the Holocaust dramas. The representation of the Holocaust itself could be therefore described as a tragedy of the continuing importance. However, as following sections proves, potential social impact of Holocaust dramas is less important than the attributed originality of the play.

The role of originality in receptions of the Holocaust before 2015

Theodor W. Adorno (1977), in his essay *Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft*, stated that writing poetry after Auschwitz was barbaric, referring to boundary between aesthetics of the art and tragedy of the Holocaust. Adorno later reconsidered his views and concluded that, immediately after Auschwitz, one literally had to write (Pickford, 2013). Adorno, after all, did not reject all works depicting the Holocaust. He appreciated those that did not employ traditional aestheticization, or ended with an easily comprehensible moral catharsis or ideological message, but that were designed to be dissonant and disturbing, such as Paul Celan's poems, or Arnold Schoenberg's cantata *A Survivor from Warsaw* (Adorno, 1973; Holý, 2014). As our research suggests, this aesthetic preference is shared by the Slovak reviewers of Holocaust plays. For the reviewers to accept a Holocaust play, it has to be different. As we stated above in Figure 2, most of the pre-2015 performances employed the estrangement effect and the reviewers considered the formal originality of these performances favourably:

> legitimacy [of Slovak Holocaust plays] is often derived not only from the fact that they are the first productions on this theme in our country, but also in large part from the fact that they use language of contemporary theatre (Inštitorisová, 2012).

The originality of estrangement effect was additionally favoured because of the actual difficulty of representing the Holocaust:

> artists are constantly looking for new aesthetic approaches – both comic and tragic – to depict this heavy topic, and it is difficult to portray something that is very hard to understand in the first place (Scherhaufer, 2012).

To discuss the role of originality in Slovak Holocaust drama reviews in more depth, we need to describe the criteria the reviewers use to decide whether a performance is original. By contrast to theatrical reviews, Slovak film reviewers also consider originality important, but there are no criteria for labelling films as original or unoriginal. Film reviewers rely on their

own subjective judgments – their taste – when using the term "originality". There are no reasons or explanation stated in the articles. The term original is therefore used only as an expression of one's own preference, for a film to be described as an original simply means to be favoured by the reviewer (Urban, 2017). On the other side, the originality of a theatre performance is determined on the basis of three separate, yet interconnected, criteria:

a) Inventions in the style of the performance;
b) the presence or absence of emotional blackmailing in the performance;
c) the intensity of emotional experience of the reviewer during the performance.

Innovative style of Holocaust drama

Positively evaluated are only those formal practices that are consciously playing with stereotypes in order to create new and unexpected contrasts. For example in *Uprising* (2014), there are common elements usually thought of as clichés (excerpts from heroic movies or songs, pathetic gestures, emotional photos or sculptures) combined, juxtaposed and used ironically (Krištofová, 2014). As stated above, these practices are associated with dramas that employ the estrangement effect.

By contrast, practices that are considered to be conservative or traditional are viewed negatively. These are mainly realistic performances with the emphasis on the dialogue and emotional immersion of the audience, such as *Leni* (2013), *Champagne for Savages* (2015), *The Silent Whip* (2015) or *Before the Cock Crows* (2017). The reviews are opposed to immersion, because they believe that overwhelming emotions prevent audience from forming its own opinions on the events represented on stage. This is why reviewers favour performances employing the estrangement effect. The cognitive impact of estrangement is valued more than the emotional impact of immersion or catharsis.

> The stage becomes a place of cold alienation and therefore the audience cannot fall into an emotional trap… The peaceful lyricism of production captures the absurdity of a monstrous world in which one person can decide about the lives of many (Juráni, 2013).

The conflict between "realistic" and "estrangement" drama becomes more apparent when we look closely at the expectation of "emotional blackmailing".

Expectation of emotional blackmailing

When making their overall assessments of the originality of the performance, reviews attribute great importance to whether emotional blackmailing is a feature. Emotional blackmailing, the eliciting of exaggerated emotions among the audience, has been criticized, and reviews consider emotionally blackmailing productions to have less artistic value.

> Even a bad play can be turned into a good production, but I don't think this is true of Klimáček's *Holocaust* performed by Arena Theatre. The script is superficial and opens many themes and motifs, but there is no real dramatic tension and it is a black and white point of view ending in mere emotional blackmailing (Mišovic, 2013).

Performances that do not blackmail are always evaluated positively. In fact, the act of avoiding emotional blackmailing can be considered the greatest positive of a performance.

> It is surprising that performance does not attack our feelings. It keeps us in the mood to think rationally over the traumas (Matejovičová, 2012).

Emotional blackmailing is directly linked to reviewers' concerns that the Holocaust is being commercialized and trivialized. Alvin Rosenfeld (2011) describes this as the transformation of the Holocaust from an "authentic historical event" into a "general symbol" and "attraction" (see also Assmann & Conrad, 2010). Sophia Marshman (2005), in her study *From the Margins to the Mainstream? Representations of the Holocaust in Popular Culture*, described the process of the Holocaust becoming the target of popular culture, with a growing number of museum exhibitions and mass tourism trips to ghetto sites and concentration camps. Marshman (2005) attributes this shift to the fact that the "memory of the Holocaust" is no longer primarily based on recollections by Holocaust witnesses, but on inadequate images by filmmakers and novelists who have no direct experience of the Holocaust. Marianne Hirsch (2012) characterizes this generation as the "generation of postmemory". According to Hirsch (2012), however, this generation can learn the memories of their ancestors and therefore "inherit" their terrifying experiences of the Holocaust with a level of detail that affects them as if they were their own memories. Therefore, works by artists bearing Holocaust traumas as the "family inheritance" can provide a trusted and authentic testimony of the events of the Holocaust (see Kansteiner, 2014, for review). Yet, the Holocaust is in many artworks also being idealized so as to bring it closer to the world of today's audiences, and so-called "soft versions" of the Holocaust are being produced (Brown & Rafter, 2013; Holý & Sladovníková, 2015; Skloot, 1982). The events then become banal and distorted, which is something that reviewers seek to protect against.

Strong emotional experience of the reviewer

As we stated above, the estrangement effect is valued more for its cognitive than its emotional impact on audience, forcing it to think about the depicted events, rather than accepting them uncritically. Paradoxically, given the previous two criteria, when emotions are elicited through the estrangement effect, the reviews are more positive and emotional experience is becoming one of the valid criteria used to assess the originality of a performance. This is however only the case with "estrangement" drama, because realistic drama is associated with the expectation of emotional blackmailing.

Stylistically innovative metaphors associated with the death and deportation of Jews are considered to be the most powerful and impressive elements in the productions. The emotional impact of the two Jewish girls acting as clowns and reading invisible lines of the *Jewish Code* in *Holocaust* (2012), the portrayal of dead bodies in *Europeana* (2014) and the scenographic installation of Jewish suitcases in *The Shop on Main Street* (2014), is highly emphasized. Reviewers of *The Female Rabbi* (2012) wondered whether we aren't heartless if we don't cry over the horrors of war. In reviews of *My Mother's Courage* (2012), reference is made to strong feelings and a strong experience related to direct descriptions of the physical state of the reviewer: shivering, an inability to speak, cry. These strong emotional experiences related to estrangement effect are described as overwhelming and are considered to be a proof of the originality of the performance.

Attributed social importance of Holocaust drama faded with realistic plays after 2015

In 2013, *Leni* was the first realistic performance to premier in eight years, followed by *The Kindly Ones* in 2014. Until then, the Holocaust had been seen as both a socially important and

original theme. As has been shown above, these two arguments were used to justify Slovak Holocaust drama. However, this changed with more realistic performances staged: in the reviews, the disappearance of originality also implied a loss of the social influence of the Holocaust. The style of *Leni* (2013) is considered to be outdated, but more importantly, it is the first time we see a change in rhetoric. The piety and humbleness is disappearing, and the Holocaust is no longer treated as something striking:

> when it looks like there might be some deeper analysis of the characters of Leni or Johnny, there are always just *clichés* about Hitler or the concentration camps, the millions of victims, banal speculation about a love affair between Leni and Adolf, all bound up in the most hackneyed scenes from *Triumph of the Will*, ending in endless pitiful scenes from *The Holy Mountain* (Kyselová, 2015).

The Holocaust is becoming common, ordinary topic, and there are signs some reviewers think it has been overperformed:

> Some of us, let's face it, feel almost a direct aversion and resistance to frequently pertracted subject such as the Holocaust is today (Matejovičová, 2014).

In the reviews of realistic plays, Holocaust is represented as fashionable, popular and unsurprising. An increasing number of reviewers wonder whether the topic is still relevant. More importantly, aesthetic criteria take precedence over the social relevance of the theme. If the play is not performed in an untraditional way, with an injection of originality, then the Holocaust itself is considered to be potentially boring topic:

> Sláva Daubnerová – perhaps the most progressive independent theatre director in Slovakia – was a fortunate choice for this production. Daubnerová injected a fresh, original and energetic, yet contemplative, feel to what could so easily have become a rather dull theatre experience (Krištofová, 2014).

To summarize, the originality and social importance of Holocaust drama are strongly connected in the reviews. The plays employing estrangement effect are considered to be innovative in their style and having strong emotional impact. As such, "estrangement" plays are viewed as original. The plays employing reality effect on the other side are considered to be outdated in their style and instead of strong emotional experience are connected to emotional blackmailing. As such, realistic plays are losing the attributed importance of Holocaust for the present society. The quantitative analysis in the following section supports these conclusions.

Quantitative analysis: number of reviews indicates decline of interest in realistic plays

As we can see in Figure 2, from 2000 to 2017 there were 14 Holocaust plays that reviewers categorized as realistic, and 11 that employed the estrangement effect. Looking at the number of repeat performances in Table 1, we can see that realistic plays had an average of 39.8 repeats, while there were 21.9 repeats of "estrangement" plays. The t-test showed that the difference in the average number of repeats for realistic dramas (M = 39.8, SE = 6.6) and "estrangement" dramas (M = 21.9, SE = 3.8) was statistically significant, $t(23) = 2.2$, p = .038, representing a large effect size, r = .42. This shows that the frequency with which audience visited the realistic plays was significantly higher.

However, throughout this period, the number of repeats fell for both groups. The regression analyses revealed that time had a significant effect for repeats of realistic plays, β = -.542, p = .045, R^2 = .29, as well as for repeats of "estrangement" plays, β = -.643, p = .033, R^2 = .41. This indicates a decline in interest of audience in both kinds of production, but as we can see comparing β-coefficients, audience was losing its interest in "estrangement" theatre more quickly.

However, reviewer preferences differed from the audience ones. While the number of repeats indicates a preference for realistic plays, the number of reviews indicates the opposite. The average number of reviews written on realistic plays was 4.9, while the average number of reviews of "estrangement" plays was 6.7. However, this difference between number of reviews for realistic dramas (M = 4.8, SE = 1.3) and "estrangement" dramas (M = 6.7, SE = 1.4) is, due to a small sample and large standard deviation, statistically non-significant $t(23)$ = -1, p = ns.

More importantly, the number of reviews for realistic and "estrangement" plays changes over time differently. While the number of reviews of "realistic" plays fell throughout the period, the number of reviews of "estrangement" dramas remained the same. The regression analyses revealed a significant effect of time for reviews of realistic dramas, β = -.778, p = .001, R^2 = .60, but not for reviews of "estrangement" dramas, β = -.279, p = ns, R^2 = .08. Accordingly, there is a significant correlation between the number of repeats and reviews of realistic theatre, r = .577, p = .031, indicating that the fewer the number of repeats, the fewer the number of reviews. No such relationship exists with the "estrangement" dramas, r = -.03, p = ns, indicating that the number of repeats and reviews in "estrangement" theatre are independent of each other. Even the number of repeats decline, the number of reviews remains stable. This indicates a weakening interest of reviewers for realistic plays, while "estrangement" dramas continued to attract the same level of reviewers' attention.

Conclusion

After the fall of the communistic regime in 1989, for almost two decades, Slovak theatres staged Holocaust dramas employing the estrangement effect with the aim to reinterpret history and deconstruct the common myths about it (Knopová, 2013). In communism, the Second World War was interpreted as a battle between the two general categories, Fascism and Communism, and victory over Fascism became the victory of Communism (Kemenesi, 2017; Ostrowska, 2015). Moreover, the histories of the Czechs and Slovaks after the Second World War written in the Communist era had a tendency to avoid guilt. Since Czechoslovakia was handed to Hitler without resistance in 1938, and before the organized genocide of the Jews began, its inhabitants were often described as "victims of the historical events" (Dejmek & Loužek, 2008). The plays staged from the 1990s therefore tried to analyze the past in more depth, and despite limited options, the art is a representation of the historical truth (Urban, 2015). For the first time, the theatre tried to discuss the role of Slovak state in the Holocaust. This was in contrast to the Czech Republic, it was not considered necessary for the Czechs to engage in self-reflection in relation to the Holocaust; because in their history, Jews were the victims of the Fascists, not the Czechs. But Slovak history proved to be different, since the Slovak state took its responsibility in the deportation of the Jews (Sniegon, 2014).

The aesthetics of the theatrical plays staged after 1989 played the important role in this historical reconstruction. The aesthetics of the new Holocaust dramas were in strong opposition to the aesthetics of the dramas with similar topics from the communist era; the estrangement effect took a stand against the reality effect of their predecessors (Firlej, 2016; Mihálová, 2018). However, beginning with 2013, the reality effect returned once again on the

stages in order to gain a wider public reach and attract more audience; a trend that is otherwise common in the artistic representation of the historical events (Brown & Rafter, 2013; Marshman, 2005; Podmaková, 2018; Skloot, 2012).

The analyzed reviews reflected this shift from the estrangement effect to reality effect and described it as a very negative phenomenon. The estrangement effect was generally considered to be original, because it connected the innovative style of the plays with the very strong emotional experience of the reviewer. In these plays, the Holocaust was considered to be a socially important topic that allowed the general public to reconsider its assumptions about the past. On the other side, the reality effect was bounded with expectation of the emotional blackmailing, and style of these plays was described as conservative, outdated, and thus unoriginal. The number of reviews written on realistic plays declined, despite the fact that audience generally preferred the plays employing reality effect.

The most important change, however, happened to the representation of the Holocaust. When Holocaust dramas first employed the reality effect, the Holocaust itself became represented as a rather boring and unoriginal topic, and the social value of it has diminished. The question therefore remains whether this artistic point of view on Holocaust does not conflict with the general public interest to discuss this topic widely and in the most open manner.

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APPENDIX: List of plays depicting Holocaust in Slovak theatres after the year 2000.

Nm.	Premiere	Title	Author	Director	Theatre
1	20.01.2017	*Before the Cock Crows*	I. Bukovčan	M. Spišák	Andrej Bagar Theatre
2	13.01.2017	*War's Unwomanly Face*	S. Alexejevič, I. Horváthová	M. Pecko	Slovak Chamber Theatre
3	19.11.2016	*Anne Frank*	A. Frank, Š. Spišák	Š. Spišák	New Theatre
4	14.10.2016	*The Diary of Anne Frank*	A. Frank, J. Rázusová	J. Rázusová	Jozef Gregor Tajovský Theatre
5	15.04.2016	*La Romana*	V. Schulzová, R. Olekšák	V. Schulzová	State Theatre
6	18.12.2015	*The Silent Whip*	J. Juráňová	A. Lelková	Slovak National Theatre
7	12.12.2015	*The Hearing*	T. Vůjtek	V. Kollár	Ján Palárik Theatre
8	29.05.2015	*Champagne for Savages*	V. Katcha	M. Náhlik	Jonáš Záborský Theatre
9	20.02.2015	*At Home with Hitlers: Tales from Hitler 's Kitchen*	A. Goldflam	H. Mikolášková	State Theatre
10	16.01.2015	*Cabaret*	J. Masteroff	M. Náhlik	Jonáš Záborský Theatre
11	28.11.2014	*Stars are silent*	M. Kováčová, M. Pecko	M. Kováčová, M. Pecko	Puppet theatre at the Crossroads
12	25.10.2014	*Midnight Mass*	P. Karvaš	L. Brutovský	Slovak National Theatre
13	24.10.2014	*The Shop on Main Street*	L. Grosman, I. Škripková	M. Pecko	Jonáš Záborský Theatre
14	28.08.2014	*Uprising*	M. Čičvák, … P. Lomnický	S. Daubnerová	Aréna Theatre
15	02.04.2014	*The Kindly Ones*	J. Littel, D. Majling	M. Vajdička	Slovak National Theatre
16	28.03.2014	*The Shop on Main Street*	L. Grosman, B. Spiro	P. Oravec	New Stage
17	07.02.2014	*Europeana*	P. Ouředník, M. Dacho	J. Luterán	Slovak Chamber Theatre
18	13.12.2013	*Leni*	V. Schulzová, R. Olekšák	V. Schulzová	Slovak National Theatre
19	08.06.2013	*Rechnitz*	E. Jelinek	D. Jařab	Slovak National Theatre
20	12.12.2012	*Holocaust*	V. Klimáček	R. Ballek	Aréna Theatre
21	08.12.2012	*My Mother 's Courage*	G. Tabori	M. Čičvák	Slovak National Theatre
22	03.03.2012	*The Female Rabbi*	A. Grusková	V. Čermáková	Slovak National Theatre
23	27.03.2010	*It Happened on 1st September*	P. Rankov	K. Žiška	Slovak National Theatre
24	14.04.2005	*Tiso*	R. Ballek	R. Ballek	Aréna Theatre
25	15.04.2000	*The Shop on Main Street*	L. Grosman, A. Vášová	J. Rihák	Astorka Korzo '90 Theatre

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Mar Adentro: Haunting Ability, Masculinity, and Human Rights

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Abstract: Ramón Sampedro, a former seaman and later poet, died in 1998. Now having passed the twentieth anniversary of his death, his work and life return to the spotlight with the attendant issues of disability, trauma, agency and end-of-life. The film *Mar Adentro* or, *The Sea Inside* (Amenábar, 2004), provides a lens with which to view some familial and cultural resonances of disability trauma. This paper critiques the ideological underpinnings of the film, suggesting that the film is haunted by ableist notions of the body. Garland-Thomson's notion of the misfit (2011) is employed to illustrate how the central character is portrayed as a borderline figure between life and death. Kristeva's abjection theory is used to illustrate how the beach is used as a borderline which demarcates the hero's subject/abject position. This paper hypothesises that the use of the beach as metaphor and the use of Galicia as a 'haunted' space, encourages the audience to understand persons with disabilities as 'neither here nor there'; rather, as 'not quite human beings'.

Keywords: Spanish film, Galicia, right-to-die, euthanasia, disability, abjection.

Introduction

"Sea inside, sea inside
In the weightlessness of the bottom
Where dreams come to fruition
Two wills unite
To realize a wish"
-Ramón Sampedro

The film opens with the sound of breathing. 'Now imagine a movie screen opening up before you' says a disembodied female voice while out of the haze a screen emerges and expands to fill the frame, showing a beach and calm sea. Ramón is in his mid-fifties, bald and pallid, living in a bedroom in the family home and cared for his brother's family. A ship mechanic in

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his past, Ramón is seen in flashback as a strapping muscular youth with thick black hair. On a beach outing, distracted by thoughts of his beautiful girlfriend, Ramón dives into shallow waters and is paralysed; his overt masculinity at once the apparent cause of his accident and the ongoing immobility. At the temporal point of the film, it has been twenty eight years since Ramón's accident, and since he has seen the sea. Ramón is now physically confined to the the Sampedro home, outside of the provincial capital of A Corun˜a, near a small town named Boiro. There he lives in a bedroom of the dark old farmhouse, without any near neighbours, tended by his sister-in-law Manuela. Ramón appears to attract an assortment of curious visitors, one of these, Rosa, a single mother, develops deep feelings for him. An attorney from the 'Death with Dignity' group, Julia, herself suffering from an incurable and degenerative condition, becomes Ramón's diegetic love interest. Swept up in his love of opera, his poetic writings, and his good spirits, Julia becomes drawn to Ramón. However, he proceeds with his quest to legally end his life and Julia is left behind, her own health and mental capacities deteriorating.

The film, I suggest, is haunted by ableist notions of the body. In modern cultural production, the forms of agency and subjectivity available to those who are outside the hegemonic 'norm' are often limited; fiction and film are most often created with a mainstream audience in mind and thus can be read as deeply ableist. 'Ableism' refers to the set of beliefs, processes and practices that disability activists have sought to challenge under the rubric of the social model of disability. Investigating ableism does not focus on the construction of disability or impairment per se, but draws attention to the production of a supposed ideal self and body (Campbell, 2009), thus emphasising that disability is socially produced. Interrogating instances of ableism in characterisation and in fictional plots calls for an examination of how (unearned) privilege attaches to those who can conform to the supposed norm. Such a lens interrogates the status quo as opposed to seeking the 'inclusion' of disabled people within extant social structures. The 'dream' of being restored to able-bodiedness and thus enacting a romantic relationship with Julia suggests an ableist stance. Ramón meets Julia in his dreams, flying from his bedroom window across the Galician fields and hills to reach the windswept beach where she is waiting. In this magnificent dream sequence, the audience is placed inside his body while he dreams he is flying and the land moves beneath us to the sound of frantic swish-panning, suggestive of a hurry.

> Ramón: When I'm in the mood, I concentrate and walk I out to the sea. I fly there.

These illusions, common in much of Amenábar's work, serve to highlight the centrality of imagination to our lived experiences while also clearly placing the subject position of the disabled character in the imaginary. The audience is suspended in the moment of flight, vicariously escaping the heavy immobile body of the hero. Flight is a common theme in disability related film as the character associates outdoor open spaces with the freedom of movement which he lacks (*Avatar,* 2009; *The Boy Who Could Fly,* 1986; *Birdy,* 1984). The use of positive parallax (the illusion of space behind the screen plane) spectacularly depicts the exhilaration of movement, escape, and flight.

> Soaring through space… has historically been associated with progress and mastery, both literally and metaphorically, and thus can be used to structure the overall journey of a heroic protagonist. (Ross, 2012: 211)

In this film, the dream of flight is not tethered simply to an explicit wish for mobility, agency and able-bodiedness, but to the freedom and the state of youthfulness and virility that death will supposedly bring. Flight also allows the protagonist to escape the weighty and glum

reality of the old dark Galician farmhouse. This dream-state positions Ramón in a ghostly self; he is neither real nor unreal, operating on the edges of existence. On reaching the beach in this sequence, we find Julia bathed in the hazy glow of sunset, and Ramón's tall frame for the first time bends down over her. In the dream-state Ramón thus overcomes the trials of disability and this provides a narrative arc that at once exposes and reinforces embedded ideologies of the body.

Galicia as haunted space

Galicia has often been depicted as bound by its premodern past, occupying a space in the Spanish imaginary as the dark, rainy, and pagan periphery which is a purgatory, or, a space between life and death. (*The Ancines Woods*, 1970; *The Flower of Holiness*, 1973; *Divinas Palabras*, 1987; *Immortal Sins*, 1991; *La leyenda de la doncella*, 1994; *Dagon*, 2001; *Thirteen Chimes*, 2002; *The Beach of the Drowned*, 2015). This is seen to be because of its perceived lack of political autonomy within Spain, as Baretto writes:

> As an immense corpus of sociological and anthropological writing can attest, even Galician folklore is populated with fantastic and otherworldly figures such as meigas, a´nimas, the Santa Compan˜ a, and trasnos the witches, wandering penitent souls, ominous apparitions, and mischief-makers who blur the boundaries between life and death. While it may have originated far in the past, the idea that Galicia is a land inhabited by the living and the dead continues to capture the imagination of writers and directors alike. (Barreto, 2011)

Galicia can be thus read as a haunted space, not just in its foregrounded mythic allusions, but also by its cultural and political separateness. Galicia, standing apart from the rest of Spain with its distinct dialect, customs and history, can be seen as not fully part of Spain but not fully autonomous, as such the film refers to a contested space, a space where distinction between life and death is ambiguous. "Cinema made in Galicia, then, can be said to exemplify this indeterminate state between life and death" (Barreto, 2011). While Ramón is not penitent, the flashback sequences suggest a yearning for a re-establishment, for belonging to the 'active' world. The tension between dependency and autonomy is played out in the subtle and nuanced relationship between Ramón and Manuela. The issue of autonomy within the film, can be seen thus to allude to the quest for autonomy of Galicia itself, and the need to reconcile the opposing forces of dependence and autonomy, tradition and modernity, and the regional and national within a postmodern Spanish state.

The melancholic depiction of Galicia with its farmhouses and windswept rural expanse, contributes to the positioning of Ramón in a state of hopelessness. Loureiro argues that unlike other Iberian nationalisms, Galician nationalism ''follows the logic of melancholy'' (2003) and has had to draw excessively upon myth rather than recent history in order to differentiate itself from the Spanish state. For Loureiro, the conversion of ''Negra sombra'' by Rosal´ıa de Castro into Galicia's ''de facto anthem, [. . .] a poem about radical lack and absence'' (167) is proof of the degree to which Galician identity is afflicted with melancholia. Used as the theme song of the film, the song posits Galicia and by default its citizens, as melancholic, and as such, lacking, unsettled and yearning.

Interpreting Ramón as a metaphor for Galicia, the movie permits us to think of the Galician subject as a living cadaver, and the decision to live or die as one of political autonomy (Baretto, 2011). Despite the apparent love shared between Ramón and his family, his enclosure within the four walls of the family home is emblematic of the stasis of

characters with disabilities in popular culture. Traditionally, film represents disabled characters in stasis in relation to both the action and in relation to the other characters (Longmore 1987; Couser 2006). Such a directorial choice reinforces ableist ideologies by contending that the able-bodied do most of the action, while the disabled look on. The scene or architecture surrounding them is at odds with the limits of their mobility, the architecture forming a metaphor for a feeling of entrapment. This dynamization of space and place has the potential to create and sustain the sensation of isolation.

> Disability again results in separation from the community…It is portrayed as the inevitable consequence of a serious physical impairment that prevents normal functioning, normal relationships, and normal productivity. (Longmore, 1987:69-70)

The movement, placing and body language of the disabled character has the power to acknowledge power relationships between him and other characters. The entrapment ends briefly when Ramón travels by minibus to Spain's capital for his legal battle for the right to die. In this, his journey moves from the personal to the political. Looking out the window during his bus ride, Ramón sees the average Spanish man and woman in various vignettes of daily life. The bus itself demarcates the outside from the inside, and its journey marks the brevity of Ramón's existence in the everyday realm. Such an overt use of allegory alludes repeatedly to the separateness and the 'otherness' of the character who has disability.

The film's polemic is foregrounded further when, in another instance of allegory, religion is set to war with the secular. A priest who is also quadriplegic visits Ramón in an attempt to convince him to drop his legal battle to end his life voluntarily. Unable to gain access to the upstairs room where Ramón is bed-bound, the wheelchair-bound priest engages in a comic upstairs-downstairs debate on religious rhetoric with Ramón, who retorts: "After we die, there's nothing, just like before we were born." Paradoxically, Ramón seeks institutional approval for his right to die, yet refuses to remain part of society or accede to partial agency through use of a wheelchair. There is further complexity as Ramón is disinterested in the praise for his poetry, yet allows it to be published to further his cause. Gaining the approval of the literary world, he takes up a symbolic position as a maker of meaning, yet he does so knowing that his meaning as such will forever be frozen after his death. Acceding to the symbolic realm with the publication of his book, Ramón allows the book to exist after him; a haunting of his story.

Misfitting

Disability life narratives have the potential to counter the pathologizing and marginalizing representations of disability (Couser, 2006). However, this narrative privileges mobility and able-bodiedness, making it the ultimate quest and the stuff of dreams. Mobility is very real in Ramón's dreams, the endless movement of the sea in contrast to the heavy immobile land on shore. Ramón does not reach the sea, however, and does not engage in a sexual relationship with Julia, choosing death instead, and the freedom from limitation which it brings.

> [He] intransigently insists that he can have no post-impairment sexual life, even though several fabulous women offer themselves up to him as lovers in the film. The film actually suggests that his dogmatic asexuality is one of the chief motivations of his decision to commit suicide. (Garland-Thomson, 2007:122)

As a misfit, he places himself outside the realm of the active subject and so he is restricted to the sea inside; the world of memory and imagination where he 'learns to cry with a smile'. At the end of the film his words "I'll be in your dreams" clarify that the place where he feels he now belongs is across the border in death. Garland-Thomson (2011) introduces the concept of the 'misfit', a feminist materialist disability concept, to articulate the manner in which the lived identity of disability is fixed in place and time. As Ramón chooses not to have a future life, he bases himself in the imaginary scenario of the seaside, the beach which demarcates the line between immersion in new experiences and the heavy ground which weighs him down in his present form. Ramón is caught at the borderline which Kristeva (1982) calls the point of 'abjection'. This paper employs intersections between these two schools of theory while exploring how the sea is used as a metaphor for a virile masculinity, while also providing a means by which the viewer can blame Ramón for his own predicament, first by jumping into the shallow sea and becoming disabled, then by failing to jump into the metaphorical sea of active sexuality.

I suggest that Ramón's failure to enact a 'disabled' sexuality results in his castaway status and ultimately his wish to die. Staying on the beach; the border between past and present, between sexual activity and inactivity, casts Ramón in an individualistic position where improvement depends on his own ability to psychologically overcome; just as in traditional disability narratives where the disabled character must enact the correct amount of self-drive to improve his own position (Norden, 1994; Garland-Thomson, 1997; Darke, 1998; Reeve, 2012). The film effectively masks the myriad social processes which are implicated in the construction of a disability, by placing Ramón's failure to engage in a sexual relationship with Julia at the centre of his alienation from a 'dignified human life'. Ramón refuses to submit to his feelings for Julia and maintain a relationship, so the film depicts him as the master of his own fate. He is depicted as oppressed as a result of his own actions and the psychological inability to move forward with the relationship opportunity rather than being oppressed by the complex web of social, institutional and cultural structures.

According to the social model of disability, disability oppression is created and sustained by attitudes and symbolic barriers, what Garland-Thomson calls 'exclusionary institutions'

> I propose the term *misfit* as a new critical keyword that seeks to defamiliarize and to reframe dominant understandings of disability. *Fitting* and *misfitting* denote an encounter in which two things come together in either harmony or disjunction. When the shape and substance of these two things correspond in their union, they fit. A *misfit*, conversely, describes an incongruent relationship between two things: a square peg in a round hole. (Garland-Thomson, 2011: 593)

The notion of the misfit applies to Ramón in this narrative as his identity is extraneous to normative social behaviour. People with disabilities become misfits in terms of social attitudes but also in terms of material limitation (ibid). Not wishing to use a wheelchair, the four walls of the bedroom mark the boundaries of physical life. The limitation of domestic space which Ramón experiences becomes the metaphoric enclosure of his desires; he cannot break free and get to the sea of his desires. "Misfit, then, reflects the shift in feminist theory from an emphasis on the discursive toward the material by centering its analytical focus on the constituting relationship between flesh and environment" (ibid: 594). Ramón's fleshy body is unable to articulate his psychic desires; he fails to try to enact his feelings for Julia and instead choses to dream of the beach; the borderline between thinking and doing. He is unable to configure his notion of proper masculinity, the material body he has and the spaces

in which he is now confined. As Garland writes, a misfit occurs when the environment does not sustain the shape and function of the body that enters it. (2011: 593)

He chooses this borderline space rather than 'diving in' to the sea and immersing himself in the realm of the living, loving subject. By choosing this borderline space, Ramón is implicated in his own 'abjection'; he rejects the opportunities for love which would bring him back into the realm of active subject. Julia Kristeva wrote of this 'borderline' in her work, *Powers of Horror*. Her work, as part of a body of psychoanalytical feminism with precedence in object-relations theory, discusses the agency and subjectivity that are available to 'others'.

In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva uses the term 'abjection' for that which does not respect borders, positions and rules and that which disturbs identity, system and order (1982:4). The abject is placed on the side of the feminine, as opposed to the paternal, rule-governed symbolic order. Thus the disabled can be affiliated with the feminine as disability's power to disenfranchise individuals lays them vulnerable to patriarchal domination. Kristeva suggests that a woman is limited within the frontiers of her own body and so feels exiled both by the general consensus and by the powers of generalization intrinsic to language. We can surmise that disabled hero experiences such alienation. In this sense, the disabled body is neither fully constituted, nor has the power to 'make meaning' and so as a form of corporeal alterity, is abject. Abjection is the subject's and cultures revolt against the corporeality of subjectivity- its material dependence on others. The corporeal alterity of Ramón's disabled body may be seen as a reminder of that which the subject rejects. Infantilized by the care he receives from Manuela, he lingers in this abject position, wishing for the mobility of his youth but choosing death over immobility. The disabled body can be viewed as a bodily alterity, an organic mutation which is abject to the whole organic subject who functions normally in the realm of the subject. He has already been rejected by his fiancée, who, it seems, took little encouragement to 'move on' and feels incapable of committing to Julia and engaging in a romantic relationship. He chooses his abject status himself; faltering at the line between life and death. The abject threatens life and must be radically excluded from 'life'; either brought back across the border to the place of the subject or mortally excluded.

> Although the subject must exclude the abject, the abject must, nevertheless, be tolerated for that which threatens to destroy life also helps to define life. Further, the activity of exclusion is necessary to guarantee that the subject take up his/her proper place in relation to the symbolic. (Creed, 1993:11)

The symbolic order is separated from that which threatens its stability as the disabled body becomes 'abject' and is allowed a crossing across the boundary only by either assimilation or death. The film in this way asserts the subject position of the able-bodied normative; the disabled body is abjectified and denied 'normativity'. Ramón seeks social and institutional recognition and approval for his cause, yet he refuses to remain part of society or accede to partial agency through a wheelchair. In this way, symbolically he wishes for the subject position and reveres the institutions of the normate subjects. He is disinterested in the praise for his poetry, yet allows it to be published to further his cause. In some sense he accedes to the symbolic realm with the publication of his work; gaining the approval of the literary world he takes up a temporarily symbolic position as a maker of meaning even though he wishes to reject the role of subject by wishing to die. In this complex position, Ramón wrestles with his status as both abject and subject. He experiences both yet rejects both, a subject-in-process, acting out the psychological process of the subject struggling to come to terms with the abject within it.

Disability politics

The Sea Inside, at first glance, seems to argue for the rights of the disabled Ramón to have authority to decide whether he lives or dies; "life is a right, not an obligation." However, the choice of 'death with dignity' removes Ramón from the world in which he may have made further impact.

> Of course, there is undoubtedly something productive happening when mainstream films begin to challenge the stereotype of the feminized or asexual male quadriplegic…But these liberatory representations are accompanied by a set of political limitations that demand greater scrutiny. (Barounis, 2009)

The liberatory representation in this case is a thinly veiled reconstitution of the traditional medical model notion that disabled men are asexual. Ramón removes himself from the complicated position of a potentially active disabled subject when he says "I want to die because I feel that life in this condition has no dignity." Throughout his political struggle to gain this right, Ramón received much public notoriety, a status which precludes 'fitting'.

> A reasonable fit in a reasonably sustaining environment allows a person to navigate the world in relative anonymity, in the sense of being suited to the circumstances and conditions of the environment, of satisfying its requirements in a way so as not to stand out, make a scene, or disrupt through countering expectations. (Garland-Thomson, 2011:596)

Social capital is conferred by the ability to access spaces and establish relationships (ibid.) yet it is Ramón who refuses to regularly use a wheelchair and rejects the possibility of sustaining a relationship with Julia. In this way, society is 'let off the hook' and the misfit is not brought across the borderline into the realm of active subjects, but rejects it himself.

Mar Adentro stays aligned to the factual story and so its trajectory is constrained within factual boundaries. As such, it is not a liberatory film nor does it seek to align itself with disability rights movements. The romantic element might otherwise have been an opportunity to further social model discourse, rather than a denial of sexual possibilities for Ramón:

Ramón: You're sitting there, three feet away, but for me those three feet are an impossible journey.

Wilkerson (2002) exposes the power of medical discourse in the denial of sexual agency to disabled people and shows how disability's perspective has the potential to "be a key component of the liberation struggles of all disenfranchised groups" (2002: 37). New documentary cinema cultivates a disability-identified perspective, a bona-fide disability cinema (Mitchell and Snyder, 2006). Such theory celebrates the subversive potential of new documentary cinema. In these life narratives, the disabled characters have the potential to invent or reinvent themselves in a way that was not possible before. Carving out distinctive identities, such characters reveal assimilation into mainstream society as condescension. Film has had more success than other art forms in this regard; while still not accessing 'mainstream' audiences, new documentary cinema is growing in popularity and 'crosses over' to popular film audiences on some occasions, as seen in the success of *Murderball* (2005).

The Disability Arts movement is tethered to both the new forms of disability documentary film and the ethos of transgressive renaming. The emergence of Disability Arts culture was engaged with the political disability movement of the 1970s and 1980s (Darke, 2003: 132). Using 'art' to explore disabling practices, Disability Art seeks to engage the social model of disability, illustrating the cultural barriers to equality and the lived experience of disability. However, as Darke suggests, the movement has failed to penetrate 'mainstream' culture and remains at the margins, having become "a tool of the 'hidden forces' used against disabled people to legitimize their (our) continued mass exclusion from not just art culture but culture more widely" (ibid: 141).

Some disability-film theorists now see disability's representation as a tool for exposing or interrupting the fallacy of the normate and the current ideologies. McRuer (2010) uses disability in the films *Million Dollar Baby* (2004) and *Murderball* (2005) to critique neoliberalism. He invokes the potential romance between Maggie and Frankie in *Million Dollar Baby*, suggesting that the film is haunted by "a proper sexuality that would provide stability in a world made unstable by the cultural, political, and economic dislocations of the last three decades" (2010: 172). McRuer, a self-styled 'crip theorist', explores propriety, respectability and normalcy, showing that they are in fact fallacies, which ultimately need to be exposed as such. In much of his work we are reminded that human differences cannot and should not be shoe-horned into a homogenizing of human beings, the dangerous heteronormativity and compulsory able-bodiedness that is constantly reaffirmed in film. *Mar Adentro,* through its fantasy of the sea and of the beach as border, risks glorifying that homogenization; sentimentality for the ability of youth and the freedom of movement is deleterious for persons with disabilities and alternative material abilities.

While the motif of the sea is used to create nostalgia in the narrative, it at once implicates both release from disability and physical 'able' activity, both reconstituting ideologies of normalcy. The 'normal' is the producer of pathology (Davis, 1995), so that disability then is a product of a set of social relations, a result of the normal's creating itself as average. This 'normal' is thus the perfect model against which all bodies must be measured and it is assumed, to which all bodies aspire. Davis exposes the idea of normalcy as inherently flawed. In 'Nude Venuses, Medusa's Body, and Phantom Limbs', Davis (1997) develops this theory of normalcy, suggesting that in film, in particular, the normal body is enforced and the 'phantasm' of the body is subjected to normativizing processes. Disability forms one half of the binary, the negative space, a result of a dialectic formed by social conditions and hegemonic forces. *Mar Adentro*, it could be said, is haunted by this phantasm of the normal body and utilizes the dreams of the hero to promote the attractiveness of the lost state of ability. Ramón himself seems to privilege the able body; looking back to the viewer in a nod to normalcy as he leaves his bedroom in the flying dream sequence.

The sea as metaphor

The sea has been out of Ramón's sight for twenty eight years, yet his imagined journeys take him there. Swishing through the sky he imagines flying to the beach where the salty haze and windswept shore enact many of the sensations he cannot now experience. The sea is utilised as a metaphor for all that is lost, and the place where the hero could return in death; the site of his rebirth into ability. He relives the moment of his accident in the sea, yet he is drawn back to it in his dreams; it is at once the scene of loss and the scene of retrieval.

> Julia: Too bad there's no view of the sea.
> Ramón: Just as well. This way I see it when I choose.

The sea's use as a metaphor masks the ableist agenda of the choice between longing to be 'able' and death; "[m]etaphor, it is argued, dresses illness in an allusive language, which allows it to appear through a distorting lens and distances the reader or viewer" (Rivera-Cordero, 2013).

Ramón rejects a wheelchair as to him it is a reminder of all that is 'lost' and he refuses the 'otherness' it would give him. Instead, he lingers in dreams and memory, the sea always present, along with his 'lost' virility, youth and ability. "Ramón portrays a character whose "use" in the film is to preserve an ideology of superior masculinity and assumed wholeness" (Markotic, 2012). Flashbacks of the diving accident occur on three occasions during the narrative, marking this as a pivotal moment of immersion. The third depiction of the accident however, occurs at the moment when Ramón dies. In this version of the memory he is not pulled from the water back to life, but lies inert underwater, submerged in his masculine virility and subjectivity. His wish to die is a wish to return to that state of 'wholeness' at the point where he makes the decision to dive in. Death becomes the dream of return to the sea and the able body of his youth and so at the close of the film he stays underwater.

The film opens with Gene, Ramón's social worker urging him to relax, as he dreams of the sea. The end of the film, however, is narrated by Ramón's own voice, in his letter to Julia. In this way he has finally achieved his 'voice', returned to the sea and reclaimed his masculine power. The actual and metaphorically fluid nature of the sea accommodates Ramón's virile self; it is the material environment he chooses and that which he dreams of, the place where he 'fits'.

Julia is already at the beach, already suffering from CADASIL, a degenerative condition. Symbolically, she remains at the beach at the end of his dream and the film concludes with her at her beach house, being visited by friends. The friends bring her a letter from Ramón, but she does not recognise his name; she chose not to take her own life and so she is now the visual representation of the choice Ramón did not make. She fits here at the beach house, now trapped at the beach/border between active and inactive life, separated from the possibility of immersion in real life; confined to bed, the window to the sea marks the parameter of her existence. Just as Ramón could not physically reach the sea, so Julia cannot now mentally reach it. The sea is again a metaphor for the virility of youth and the robustness of health.

> Sontag reminds us that metaphorical discourse on illness and disability does something else as well: it renders a physical or psychological state politically and socially potent in a way that threatens to exclude the ill and the disabled. When the norm to be defended is presented as a certain kind of health, those who experience disability or disease are seen as abnormal and are subtly excluded. (Rivera-Cordero, 2013: 62)

While the misfits, Ramón and Julia, fall into devalued social categories, their own choices are shown to be the catalysts to their ultimate fates. Neither provide an inspiring story of 'overcoming' and it is ultimately a film which devalues what Garland-Thomson calls "instances of resourcefulness arising from misfits…the productive power of misfitting" (2011: 604). The beach and the sea, vulnerable to the elements and with their unstable material forms, become the best material fit for the misfits. The sea has traditionally been used as a metaphor for the unknown, the unstable and the all-encompassing. The power of sea imagery to inspire sensual memory has been harnessed by film makers throughout the history of the medium.

In the wake of this centuries-old tradition, contemporary cinema exploited the capability of water, visually and aurally, to give a palpable form to human desires and

dreams. Water is often represented or evoked in film as a substance that submerges something that is destined to re-emerge. Through its semantic fluidity, cinema lets the unconscious drift before the eyes of the spectators and infiltrate their limpid gaze. A psychological malaise affects the main characters and has to be washed away with clean water. (D'Aloia, 2012: 91)

The sea is the 'psychic' space where Ramón and Julia can consummate their affection and become engulfed by their senses. Its fluidity can accommodate their misfitting bodies and allow them to be their complete selves.

The sea also plays an important diegetic role in this narrative; it marks the shift in temporal order; before the dive and after the dive. Now, Ramón's passions are all 'at sea', tumultuous, in disarray and unfathomable, like the ocean. The viewer is drawn towards the sea as the narrative moves towards the euthanized ending which Ramón wants. The 'problem' of disability will essentially be effaced by this watery climax; the social structures which ought to accommodate Ramón will be excused as he will float out of sight or sink to the bottom of the spectators' consciousness.

> The point is that water is not only a representational substance that effectively visualises and symbolises the characters' psychic condition, but also a substance in which the film characters' bodies are immersed or drown together with their troubles. The fluid properties of water find an expressive cinematic 'translation' in the choice of precise technical and stylistic solutions with which narrative mainstream contemporary cinema both physically and psychically engages the spectator in a 'water-based relationship'. (D'Aloia, 2012: 95)

The metaphor of the sea is in contrast to the actual physical limitation of Ramón's character in the bedroom of the family home. The mise-en-scene alludes to Ramón's confinement; the close-ups of his face providing the key to his emotions. The many encounters which occur in the room, as well as the dream sequences, dispel any possibility of the visual field appearing constricted however, just as the poetic close ups of symbolic artefacts point to the importance of art and culture in Ramón's life, such as the needle drawing on the vinyl record as it plays an aria. The mise-en-scene of the diving scene is a sepia-tinted memory much like an old photograph. The moment of immersion in the water, however, even twenty eight years later, is clear and lucid; the sea inculcates all of the senses, devouring the spectator in the moment. Physical human form is blurred by the water and the materiality of bodies is lightened, which masks the rejection of the disabled human body. Advocacy and rejection are simultaneously enacted by the wish to return to the metaphorical sea.

Conclusion

Mar Adentro, constrained by its faithfulness to the life story of Ramón, disavows disability rights' notions of the right to a full and rewarding life, instead foregrounding the hero's search for end-of-life advocacy. The film can, in this way, be read as engaging in an ableist privileging of 'normal' bodies and relationships; using the hero's dreams of the sea as a metaphor for lost physical ability and virility. Galicia, presented as a timeless but mystical terrain, is used as a highly suggestive location: trapped in this environment, the hero seizes the freedom of dreams to enact his true desires. As a misfit, the hero concentrates on his dreams and memories, rather than enact a subject position; he rejects the material possibilities of his body such as a romantic relationship and the use of a wheelchair, choosing instead to be haunted by his lost virility. Metaphorically, the border between ability and disability is enacted by the beach. He is 'abject' and so, Kristeva's purification process would suggest that

if he cannot be made 'normal' and interact with everyone else he must 'cross over' and be free in death. The ethical complexities of such an approach are legion; recent work, such as that by Garden (2007) illustrates that patients' sociocultural and personal experience of illness is often at odds with (medical model) biomedical approaches. This results in a dichotomy of disease-centered care versus patient-centered care. Current debates in patient care question whether pathology is responsible for illness and disability or whether doctors and health professionals should focus on the patient's experience of illness. Medical humanities often suggest that the practice in patient care often contradicts any commitment to the patient's own experience and feelings, emphasizing scientific knowledge at the expense of symbolic and affective aspects of illness. (Garden, 2007:551-567)

The narrative thus demands sustained ethical reflection, which cannot be completely addressed in a paper of this length. However, the aim of this analysis has been to illustrate that while this narrative is complicated by the biographical stance of the film, the depiction has some quite deleterious implications for persons with disabilities. The final lines, Ramón's voiceover, confirm that love, virility and death will be attainable together.

> Your gaze and mine, over and over like an echo, repeating silently: "Deeper, and deeper," beyond everything that is flesh and blood. But I always awaken and I always wish for death, my lips forever entangled in your hair.

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Establishing Rules for Ethicists and Ethics Organizations in Academic Publishing to Avoid Conflicts of Interest, Favoritism, Cronyism and Nepotism

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Abstract: A proliferation of publication venues, scholarly journals, use of social media to disseminate knowledge and research results, scientific information, increased international scientific collaboration, a move towards open knowledge and data sharing, recent scandals such as journal editors' coercive citations, fake peer review, peer review rings, data fabrication, research spin, and retraction of articles, several of the latter within the emergence of a post publication peer review movement, are some of the many reasons why publishing ethics are constantly evolving. These challenges have led to the birth of an increasing number of guidelines and recommendations being issued by multiple organizations and committees around the world in light of the recognized need to salvage peer review, and in an attempt to restore eroding trust in science, scientists and their publications. The principal objective of these guidelines and recommendations is supposedly to provide guidance for editors, reviewers and authors to conduct honest and ethical research and publishing practices, including responsible authorship and editorship, conflict of interest management, maintaining the confidentiality of peer review, and other ethical issues that arise in conducting and reporting research. Despite the fact that scholarly publishing is an international enterprise with global impact, current guidelines and recommendations appear to fall very short on imposing any

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obligations on their parent members, i.e., committee members who issue guidelines and recommend solutions for ethical dilemmas especially when such organizations are dependent on commercial publishers who may be paying members. Obviously, financial incentives indicate that ethical organizations or ethicists are not in a power position compared to editors or publishers. Imbalanced guidelines risk that hidden conflicts of interest, cronyism, or nepotism may corrupt the decision-making process or the ethical hierarchy that has been put into place to safe-guard research and publishing ethics. Therefore, the ethics gate-keepers to the integrity of scholarly publishing should also be carefully scrutinized, and strict ethical guidelines have to be imposed on them as equally as their rules are imposed on global academia to avoid the risk of further corrupting the scientific process as a result of the absence of strong exterior regulation or oversight. This theoretical paper highlights signs of favoritism and cronyism in ethics. It also offers proposals for rules (limitations and consequences) to avoid them in science publishing. Our guidelines should be used by academics in the position of authors or editors who may sense, perceive or detect abuses of power among ethicists.

Keywords: organization ethics; ethical dilemmas; corruption; conflict of interest

Global ethics bodies and ethicists are highly self-regulated and not externally moderated

In times of increasing public awareness of scientific misbehavior, it is unsurprising that science is more often being confronted with the accusation of "fake science" (Laine and Taichman, 2017). One major strategy to dispel such incriminations, which are often not only directed against a single scientist or a single theory, but generalized against science *per se*, is to establish codes of ethical rules for all parties involved in the scientific and publishing process. Ethics bodies, including local clinical ethics boards overseeing medical trials (Savulescu et al., 1996), thus have a great responsibility to maintain the reliability of science. Monitoring the validity and verified existence of such ethics bodies is essential (Zoccatelli et al., 2018). However, great responsibility tends to correlate with great power, and power needs to be controlled and monitored, although excessive layers of monitoring may cause excessive moderation and even open up new opportunities for corruption such as black markets that operate paper mills and organized unethical biomedical research, analogous to how over-regulation fostered organized crime (Gettman and Kennedy, 2014). As part of an open science movement that is claiming to work towards a state of greater transparency, openness and accountability in science towards fellow scientists and the public were dominant themes in 2017's 5th World Conference on Research Integrity[1]. Curiously, in 2018, the 6th World Conference on Research Integrity explored better ways of managing research misconduct as one of the new challenges for research integrity[2]. It is thus important to apply codes of conduct and ethics fairly to all publishing-related parties, including ethics organizations. For example, an infographic advertised by the US Office of Research Integrity states that lack of transparency in a laboratory may be equated with misconduct[3]. The research community has the responsibility to apply the exact same principles to not only researchers, but to the research ethics committees that oversee the rules applied to such researchers. In this case, are academics assessing the absence of transparency in ethics organizations?

The global for-profit academic publishers, limited to half a dozen or so oligopolists

[1] http://wcri2017.org
[2] http://www.wcri2019.org/index/programme
[3] https://twitter.com/HHS_ORI/status/882677997639258113

(Larivière et al., 2015), are continuously publishing a large amount of ethical regulations, guidelines and sets of ethical limitations for global academia. However, weak or poorly defined and publicly available rules exist for the (re)election or vetting processes of individuals or groups who create such rules. Such an imbalanced set of rules and power may lead to the creation of powerful ethical cartels[4] or groups that secure their own positions, by voting for themselves, or by having their colleagues in power, either in the same ethical organization or from other ethical organizations, to vote for them. By relying on ethically ambiguous or unregulated zones (Johnson and Ecklund, 2016), such groups tend to be highly self-regulatory, with limited board membership, closed or secretive about their operations or operational procedures, very defendant of their noble positions and ideologies (Cooper, 2012), closed to being regulated by any "inferior", exterior or independent group, highly or over-regulatory (Warlow, 2005). There is a risk that they may also be critical of others, showing impermeable characteristics, i.e., they are not receptive to the inclusion of members from outside that close-nit circle. Such groups may create even more rules and guidelines, each layer more complex than the former. This may ensure and justify their own survival but may lead to the erosion of academics' rights, stripping them of any possibility of questioning an ethical body that becomes self-established or that is voted into power by those whom they claim they are regulating.

The survival of such ethical bodies may involve the suppression of those for whom the rules were created, such as academics (Carlisle, 2017), editors or publishers. If advice or critique is received from the outside, it may only absorb and fortify those rules that are deflected then imposed on academia. The magnitude of this perceived phenomenon is under-reported and cannot be adequately assessed, and is analogous to a situation victimized authors find themselves in when they face editorial abuse of power. For example, Teixeira and Fontes da Costa (2010) reported how editors they contacted, including editors of ethics-related journals, did not acknowledge any person to whom authors could turn to in situations of potential editorial misconduct because "the ruler—the journal's editor—is not ruled", and thus there was not much the authors could do. Under such an atmosphere of highly self-controlled power, usually with hidden personal, professional or even financial conflicts of interest (COIs), ethics cronyism – which is unregulated or moderated at a global scale – is born, expands and thrives. For example, Brogaard et al. (2014) showed, in a survey exceeding 50,000 papers, how colleagues of editors in 30 finance and economics journals published 100% more when they knew the editor than authors without any association or friendship with the editor. For these reasons, and given the porous nature of critical assessment of editors, who have high responsibilities to the academic base, it has become essential for editors to list their actual or perceived COIs (Teixeira da Silva et al., 2019). However, such relationships might not always constitute a negative relationship or cronyism when trusted colleagues are called upon to assist with peer review, for example, provided that such relationships are properly monitored and managed. In publishing, potential abuses of the publishing platform may be easier to detect through citation patterns and analyses, revealing citation rings, in which "cited authors … collude and produce so-called citation rings" (Seeber et al., 2019) or citation abuses. This is not the case with the publishing ethics elite.

At present, aggravating the problem of "increased assimilation of modern science to market capitalism" (Rivera and Vásquez-Velásquez, 2015), by equating academics with clients

[4] Given the proliferation of the so called predatory publishers which charge authors article publication fees, we caution that some of them may collude with ethical bodies to restrict competition and control article processing charges, and thus we use the term "cartel" as outlined by Hamaguchi et al. (2009) who described the harm to society by the activities of cartels: "Cartels, collusions among competing firms, harm the social welfare of consumers by restricting competition in markets. Such market restrictions include entry barriers, market-dividing activities, price fixing, and volume controlling." This definition is not restricted to article publication fees.

and their work as tradable commodities in an open market where ethics or the link to an ethics organization is perceived as a brand that itself forms part of ethical branding (Alwi et al., 2017). Rather, in addition to a moral set of guidelines, global ethics in biomedical research and publishing is currently imposed on global academia by a handful of ethics organizations, none of which are formally externally regulated and controlled, and as Teixeira and Fontes da Costa (2010) argued, there is a "need for effective regulatory bodies so as to achieve and maintain a culture of research integrity by all involved in the process." When an ethics body is not externally regulated and controlled, has no defined, detailed or clear ethical rules accepted by exterior groups, such as academics, or has been dominating the "ethics market" for an extensive period of time, then ethics inbreeding may take place, causing, expectedly, abuses or power, corruption[5] and cronyism, as proposed by Jones (2018, p. 4) who defined cronyism as a willingness to select socially connected candidates (…) over more qualified applicants". Although this might not be the case of university ethics committees that are overseen by university management, but it might follow patterns caused by inbred biases, as may occur with replication attempts by the same team (Ioannidis, 2012). Pearce (2015) provides strong evidence that "nepotism and cronyism damage employees and their supervisors and produces poorer organizational performance." As a result of these abuses or control of power among ethics circles, an ethics monopoly is established, not unlike a publishing or citation cartel. Monopolizing ethics may be a source of corruption, particularly when ethics organizations are given discretionary powers to decide what is ethical and what is not (Klitgaard, 1998)[6], impose their self-created set of ethics upon others, and be resistant to changes suggested by others, or strictly control how much influence outside, possibly competing ethicists or even academics, may impose. When a cause is perceived to be noble within society or academia, then this can lead to "noble cause corruption" (Cooper, 2012), and when discretionary measures become a reason to grab more than that which is specified, or deserved, then this amounts to greed.

Within this context, this paper aims to highlight: 1) signs if ethics-related cronyism is taking place, 2) the properties of such behavior, and 3) the characteristics that define unethical or ethically corrupt behaviors among established ethicists or ethics bodies. This paper does not state the names of any specific ethicists or ethics organization, but aims instead to set a theoretical set of definitions, guidelines and parameters, as well as a set of rules to reign in corruption, to hold ethicists – self-appointed or appointed by others – to the same, or even higher ethical values than those which they impose on others.

Defining the limits of ethics-related cronyism, favoritism and nepotism

Most scientific literature concerning cronyism, favoritism and nepotism has evolved from research in the fields of politics and/or economics. Therefore, we deduced findings from these fields and applied them to the area of scientific ethics. Fitzpatrick (2007) provides a succinct taxonomic basis for distinguishing the terms used in our paper: Favoritism is a form of corruption, but depending on the relation of the actors, it can be further subdivided into cronyism or nepotism. To establish our core definitions, we relied initially on Arasli and Tumer

[5] Graeff and Svendsen (2013) argued that corruption can mean that not everybody is equal under the law, and thus, corrupt actors deliberately violate universally established rules, i.e., norms and aims that are valid for everyone, by superseding them with exclusive rules that promote their own gains.

[6] According to Klitgaard (1998, p. 4), corruption may be represented by the following formula:
C = M + D – R; where corruption = monopoly + discretion – accountability

(2008), online dictionaries[7], and on Google searches as well as searches of several databases[8] to determine how extensively this phenomenon has been recorded in the literature, primarily from previously published concepts in the political and social sciences. Arasli and Tumer (2008) define cronyism as "giving preference to … close friends of long standing … without regard to their qualifications", favoritism as "the provision of special privilege to friends, colleagues and acquaintances, in the areas of employment, career and personnel decisions" and nepotism as "favoritism shown to relatives, by giving them positions because of their relationship rather than their competencies." Favoritism creates advantages for insiders and harms those outside of the group (Bramoullé and Goyal, 2016). Alwerthan (2016) categorizes favoritism – which is also a symptom and warning sign of dysfunctional leadership and/or dysfunctional organizations (Yones, 2009) – as a "positive" form of discrimination, but with the same negative consequences. Without applying this as a blanket principle across all of academia, the active cultivation of open networks that embrace known friends in the pursuit of knowledge commons still needs oversight to avoid these caveats.

Zudenkova (2011) added a more formal representation of the ideas and principles of cronyism by noting that, in addition to private benefits, improving the chance of re-election or reappointment of an appointee are reasons for cronyism from the perspective of the appointer. For example, to secure their own benefits (job, security, authority), an appointer will modify, even contradict their own ideas and views, to align them with the appointee, doing favors for organizations, and surrounding themselves with "social, business, or political friendships" in order to ultimately make personal and professional gains, including non-financial benefits such as travel, meals, gifts, or contracts. The positioning of an individual in a network that derives such benefits may lie anywhere within a range of emotional contagion, normalization, socialization, cronyism or outright corruption, so the only way to ensure that such benefits are not perceived as something more than what they really are, is by declaring them transparently, as we suggest later in this paper.

Ethics-related cronyism is a freshly coined term, despite the long history of ethics in research and publishing. It means the creation and use of privileged positions within the ethics community to secure positions, among established friends or contacts, usually classified as "ethics experts". Our term can also mean the practice of partiality in awarding jobs and other advantages such as titles, prestige, offices or positions, travel funds or other non-academic perks, to friends or trusted colleagues of and within the ethics community. A revolving door of powerful positions becomes established that serves essentially to protect themselves and their personal and professional interests, even if obvious financial COIs are not extant. Should these relationships occur between members of a family[9], this would then be defined as ethics-related nepotism, which is analogous to nepotistic hiring, a behavior that is mostly viewed as ethically suspect (Chervenak and McCullough, 2007). Khatri et al. (2006) define cronyism as "a kind of favoritism based on network ties."

In our opinion, ethics-related cronyism[10] is a set of highly unethical behaviors, and may be

[7] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cronyism; http://www.dictionary.com/browse/favoritism; https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/nepotism

[8] http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed; http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/; http://link.springer.com/; http://www.sciencedirect.com/; http://www.oxfordjournals.org/en/; http://www.tandfonline.com/; https://www.degruyter.com/; http://www.scielo.br/

[9] According to Chervenak (2007), nepotism also means "showing favoritism to others who, while not kinfolk, are in some relationship of special significance with oneself or one's colleagues".

[10] Khatri and Tsangde (2003) defined cronyism as "favoritism shown by the superior to his or her subordinate (e.g., promotion, bonus, pay raise, or better job assignment) based on non-performance (e.g., relationship of subordinate with the superior), rather than performance criteria (e.g., objective performance, competence, or qualifications of the subordinate), in exchange for the latter's personal loyalty".

illegal, as it can be perceived as a form of corruption, i.e., abuse of power for personal benefit, even if there are no obvious financial perks or COIs. This is particularly true when cronyism takes the form of corruption between the political elite and an organization and leads to preferential access to government contracts, avoidance of sanctions or protection of prosecution (Moene and Søreide, 2016). It is important to stress that, unlike editorial corruption, where power plays are limited to the members of an editorial board, either within or between journals or publishers, ethics-related cronyism or corruption is limited to individuals who are classified as "ethicists", "ethical specialists", "publishing specialists" or biomedical writers with a publishing and ethics portfolio. Consequently, ethics-related corruption may be displayed by individuals who hold such titles that gives them a perceived – by other academics and society – superior "ethical" position, although it is possible for such individuals to also infiltrate the editorial boards of journals, serve as ethical and/or research or publishing consultants. Such individuals, who live within a reality in which the noble nature of their cause exempts them from the same ethical rules that apply to others, or that they apply to others (Cooper, 2012), need to be held accountable for their actions, as those actions may affect academics, as equally as editors need to be held accountable, as their decisions affect the integrity of the scholarly record and may affect the careers of academics and the reputation of the journal or publisher (Teixeira da Silva and Dobránszki, 2018). Finally, there are academic perks that may be perceived as ethics-related cronyism or corruption, including academic titles, such as (honorary) PhDs, visiting scholarships, honorary professorships, or even academic papers. Regarding the latter category, if two sets of rules are created, one for all of academia, and a different rule for themselves, then this is one of the most unethical behaviors and abuses of power of ethicists, because it creates a double-stratum of values, in essence, one for "us", and one for "them"[11], and would undermine their credibility (Wulf 2012).

Characteristics of personal and institutional ethics-related cronyism and nepotism

Any one of these characteristics may indicate ethics-related cronyism and nepotism, properties that increase as more than quality is observed, but we appreciate that their weighting as well as the boundaries between or within them may be indistinct:

I. Conflicts of interest and bias

1) There is no limit on the period when an ethicist or ethics organization can be scrutinized. Hidden or undeclared COIs in personal, professional, financial, or academic profiles, such as papers, titles, degrees, background, relationships, or positions on editor boards, Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) (Teixeira da Silva, 2017a), undermining the accuracy and thus reliability of ORCID. COI statements that abridge the "last" five years are insufficient, and may or tend to exist to mask older activities, i.e. to hide corruption. Failure to show (i.e., opacity) a full, untainted, and complete historical record, i.e., the entire career, including education, courses, degrees, publications, affiliations, presentations, links to industry, and others, do not appear publicly on the official websites of both that individual and the ethics organization.
2) The existence of in-group bias that includes the lack of power-, intellectual-, or financial-neutral positions. This may include greater tolerance towards individuals with which there

[11] On page 273 of *The Ethics and Compliance Program Manual for Multinational Organizations*, Wulf (2012) cautioned against a situation wherein "policies and the code of conduct say one thing, but everyone is doing the opposite, as this undermines the organization's credibility".

is a close personal connection or that are not critical of faults within that organization or members within it, leading to career-related benefits, while ignoring their faults (Turhan, 2014). This may be the case with academic promotions where positions may be obtained more easily when evaluators on promotion committees are closely associated with the candidate (Zinovyeva and Bagues, 2015).

3) Ease to be influenced by external forces, bodies, interest groups, or individuals, intellectually, morally, financially, or politically, when it suits their image, provides benefits or brings power. Otherwise, such individuals and groups are difficult to influence, and almost impossible to penetrate.

II. Lack of appropriate qualifications

1) Lack of suitable qualifications, e.g., no formal ethics training[12] in a "reputable" (i.e., established and internationally recognized) ethics course at a higher institute of learning. Despite this, appointment to positions of authority, unless the purpose is to advance equality or ensure adequate representation of minorities (Krook and O'Brien, 2010), for example, if the benefits of ensuring the representation of all genders outweigh the benefit of a formal training. Experience with general biomedical editing is not a suitable qualification. Experience in the publishing industry is biased towards the publishing industry, and even though constitutes professional experience with publishing, does not constitute a valid ethical qualification. The same applies to the editing and pharmaceutical industries, as well as to any industry that is directly involved with research or publishing.
2) A small, close group of individuals that protects its own members and the interests of that group and its members, i.e., ethical protectionism, and provide cover up for the lack of qualifications and incompetent performance, or protection of members of the group by other members of the group.

III. Monopolization of power

1) The establishment of more than one group or organization involving the same individuals, and with overlapping objectives regardless of their qualifications, expertise and external affiliations. The election of friends, colleagues, or the same individuals to positions within the same organization, or "sister" organizations, with the objective of sustaining power and positions, i.e., the self-perpetuation of the cycle of inner friends.
2) A too-big-to-fail or a small-enough-to-include-outsiders mentality that usually implies a too-big-to-trust relationship.
3) Control of the "ethics" market to limit the existence of such bodies to friends and a fairly closed and carefully controlled group of individuals. This is equivalent to market manipulation and monopolization. The licensing of morals can result in abusive ethical leadership (Lin et al., 2017).
4) Long term friendships or relationships that tend to extend beyond an acceptable voting cycle of power (e.g., 3 or 4 years).

IV. Controlling public opinion and establishing conflicting codes of ethics

1) An incremental pattern of creation of ethical rules, guidelines or controls delimiting authors' or editors' rights or limits of intellectual expression, thereby limiting the

[12] Wulf (2012, p. 266) argued that individuals not trained in assessing ethics and compliance risks, "may not see the sometimes not so obvious ethical wrongdoing within the organization".

intellectual freedom. A regulatory board of any sort has to release rules and guidelines, and will thus always be limiting the freedom of others to some extent, but what needs to be assessed is whether the limitations placed, in this case on academics, and the content of such rules and guidelines, is reasonable or fair. When authors and editors are not widely consulted, then this constitutes a denigration of rights because the process is exclusionary, and not inclusionary, and an imposition if those very same rules are then applied on the same body of academics who had not been consulted. The ideas that form the basis of such rules are usually prosocial, seeking to internalize their rules as a norm (Gavrilets and Richerson, 2017).

2) The manipulation of public opinion, either through social media, or through marketing-like strategies, such as in congresses, meetings and symposia (CMSs).
3) The creation of CMSs that show aspects of opacity, such as undisclosed COIs, or other predatory (i.e., dishonest or misleading) qualities (Teixeira da Silva et al., 2017).
4) Incomplete *curriculum vitae* that mask certain aspects of a publishing history, or selectively include others (Teixeira da Silva and Tsigaris, 2018).
5) CMSs that usually occur regularly and that tend to have the same speakers, same individuals offering their speeches or opinions, or elected as guest speakers or some other very important position.
6) The regular appearance of individuals on not only the boards or committees of such groups or organizations, but also on the boards of CMSs that are linked to, or organized by, these bodies and organizations. This might also reflect that the same individuals are doing all the work.
7) Creating "rock-star" ethicists, i.e., whose profiles are driven by vanity-based projections of their work, often through prominent social media (e.g., Twitter) campaigns.
8) Opacity and the lack of a response to any question or query from any member of the public. The use of any excuse to not offer a formal response, including lack of funds, lack of personnel, outside of the bounds of the group's functional perimeter, etc.
9) The non-existence of an ombudsman (ombudsperson) that liaises in a non-biased way with the public.
10) The elevation of their own rights and the simultaneous suppression of others rights, usually authors and editors.
11) Lack of personal and professional scruples, as assessed by the ability to bend rules to suit themselves or their colleagues, while ignoring any ethical infringements that they might have.
12) The imposition of values, without choice, or options, can constitute professional harassment if the will of the individual or group that is imposing that rule is being done under duress or coercion, i.e., against the will of the person or group upon which that rule is being imposed. This can also involve, in publishing, a violation of authors' rights (Al-Khatib and Teixeira da Silva, 2017).
13) The involvement of industry or unaccountable money to establish positions, offices, structures, websites, or other structures, intellectual or physical, that fortifies the ethics body.
14) Readers are invited to suggest other characteristics of cronyism and nepotism in ethics organizations.

V. Lack of transparency and accountability

Accountability of "ethicists" and of members of ethics organizations that may be displaying one or more aspects of opacity, or that may be showing signs of COIs, favoritism, cronyism

and nepotism, can be effectively achieved through maximum transparency which increases the probability of discovering unethical behavior and is thus considered to be a powerful tool against corruption (Halter et al. 2009). An increase in transparency can imply a decrease in corruption only if there is a will to act upon accessed information (Kolstad and Wiig, 2008). Curiously, a 2001 review on corruption (Jain, 2001) did not consider accountability and transparency, or the lack thereof, as aspects of corruption. Opacity and lack of accountability arise from the lack of:

a) *Transparency of the structure of the organization*: For every position, detailed qualifications and descriptions should be publicly available. This will hinder both the creation of unnecessary positions and the aggregation of power to a small group of people. It should be clearly stated who makes personnel decisions. Ideally, the names of the applicants for leading positions and their applications (at least for the top-ranked candidates) should be published. Terms should be limited to a reasonable period. Officers should be limited to a maximum number of terms in a certain position. The possibility to "switch" between positions should also be regulated.
b) *Transparency of membership*: A list of members (at least for companies and associations) should be released.
c) *Transparency of the CVs of all leading positions*. CVs and COIs should be publicly available. Qualifications should be matched with the afore-mentioned job descriptions. COIs should be extensive, including financial interests.
d) *Transparency of all benefits of decision makers* during (and some years after) their term in office. All tangible (money, travel expenses, research funds) and intangible (promotions, distinctions) bonuses have to be listed.
e) *Transparency of the financial/economic background of the organization*. Every connection to companies or associations has to be published, as well as grants, or donations.
f) *Transparency of the ties of decision makers and the organization*. It should be clearly mentioned how the relevant people are connected: studying or working in the same institution, co-authorships, or family relationships.
g) *Transparency of decisions and regulations*. Proposals should be discussed in a broader community, ideally incorporating an open peer review process. Results of these processes should be published together with the documented modifications.
h) *Transparency of objections and complaints*. An outsourced party (e.g. ombudsman) has to be nominated for dealing with any objections or complaints. A set of rules should be predefined as to how such issues are handled.
i) *Externally controlled transparency-related regulations* are more effective than that are implemented by an agency itself (Lindstedt and Naurin, 2010).

Limitations for ethicists and ethics bodies to avoid cronyism and corruption

To avoid abuses of power, the amount of power that ethicists and ethics organizations carry must be limited.

1) Limitation to power. This involves the inclusion in an "ethics" position for a limited amount of time, one or two terms, as for a regular governing body, such as 3-4 years. For example, the term could be limited to 2×2 years. This also involves limitation to the number of organizations to which such an individual can belong, so exclusivity to a single organization.
2) Ethicists should not serve simultaneously in an ethics body and on an editor board,

especially if those boards are for for-profit publishers.

3) Ethicists should be elected by a wide circle of academics, including academics related to ethics, as well as members of the wider academic community. Closed door elections of leadership of ethics organizations may represent conryism and corruption, i.e., ethical inbreeding.
4) Rules and guidelines should not be implemented blindly and forcefully. There should be wide consensus and agreement by the academic community on which they are intended to be imposed, and accepted as being valid. The pool should sample a wide topical, cultural, geographic, ethnic, and gender base of academics, from the biomedical sciences, humanities, arts and engineering fields.
5) There must be clear rules, and consequences, for recalling ethicists or members of ethics bodies who violate any ethical rules or guidelines, who fail to disclose their COIs (financial, political, familial, etc.) publicly.
6) Limitation to strength of in-group bias and unreserved personal loyalty (Khatri and Tsang, 2003) by implementing an enforceable policy that restricts "emphasis on insider contacts, ingroup promotion, and actions directed at benefiting the group in a collectivist culture" (p. 292).
7) Ethicists should not act in their capacity in any matter wherein they, or their relatives or friends, have a personal interest or derive personal gains, even what may be perceived as minor gains, such as travel, accomodation, meals, and other perks, gifts or favors.
8) It may be necessary to implement anti-nepotism laws for ethics organizations, which occurred in Italy in 2010, leading to a decline in nepotism among academics (Grilli and Allesina, 2017), although such laws need to apply also to friends and acquaintances and not only family members.

Limitations to the definition and detection of cronyism and corruption

Several of the aspects outlined in this paper, for example, where public relations end and where manipulation starts, are subjective and in some cases highly objective, so defining a subjective limit is not always possible, or viable, because there is wide room for interpretation, and perception may be a matter of accumulating evidence, rather than any one factor or set of factors or evidence. Consequently, it is not always easy to detect the difference between cronyism and networking. Dobos (2017) argues that networking *per se* is unethical because the aim is to get access to positions which one would not obtain without using the "network", thus undermining the basis of "meritocracy". Meritocracy is not a merit-based democracy nor is it connected to democracy in any way. Rather, it is a system where an individual's progress is based on ability and talent rather than on class privilege or wealth (Mijs, 2016). There is always a reason why people with social ties work together or in a hierarchy, but in every case, the "meritocratic" basis has to be fulfilled. As long as the most qualified individuals are doing the job, their friendship status is not necessarily an issue. Usually, a large tract of activity and positions has to be monitored over time, usually a few years, to ascertain if a pattern develops. Nevertheless, cronyism is unethical because it is a sign of abuse of power wherein friends are elected despite lacking the required ethical qualifications, leading to negative consequences. While networking is an ethical behaviour that is characterized by acting in good faith and honest goals sharing (Melé, 2009).

Essential and necessary consequences for ethics-related cronyism

In this paper, a classic paradigm emerges regarding the state of vigilance and/or vigilantism in research and publishing: who is watching those in power (editors, publishers, etc.), the science watchdogs (Teixeira da Silva, 2016) and the ethicists who create and impose ethical rules upon others, and who is looking out for authors, and their rights (Al-Khatib and Teixeira da Silva, 2017)? Ethics in research and publishing, at a global scale, is being increasingly monopolized, without a concomitant reglatory body or without any rules or guidelines to independently verify or safeguard against abuses of power, and the existence of cronyism, nepotism or other unethical acts of abuse, including ethical exceptionalism, in which a two-tier system of ethics is in place, i.e., one for general academia, and another for ethics organizations or their members (Teixeira da Silva, 2017b). It is not only important to set forth the characteristics that can define ethics-related cronyism and corruption, as we have done above, theoretically, it is also important to then assess the activity and behavior of ethics bodies and research and publishing "ethicists" who hold such positions as ethics or publishing ethics specialists, to ascertain whether abuses are taking place. We believe that there must be different consequences when any of the characteristics above are observed. There should be statutes and codes that can treat the abuse of power and corruption as crimes with empowered government agencies and that can effect prosecutions in criminal courts. In this context, we propose the following measures:

1) Immediate removal from position. Any ethicist that violates any of the rules listed above, or is seen to be abusing their power, or engaging in ethics-related cronyism, must be immediately released from that position.
2) A public notice by that ethics body must be published to indicate, openly and publicly, why that "ethicist" has been removed from their position. However, there is the risk of entering a realm of public shaming by uncontrolled science watchdogs (Teixeira da Silva, 2018).
3) Dissolution of an "ethics body" if there are multiple counts of ethics-related cronyism.
4) Ethics bodies should be required to implement transparency in publicizing membership to prevent cronyism and nepotism.
5) As a preventative measure, all members of ethics bodies should be subject to independent random checks. This could be conducted independently by any member of the public, or by established oversight bodies. Ethics bodies should also allow for a robust whistleblower policy that enables any individual, academic or member of the public, to raise concerns. An ombudsman with a neutral position is thus required to handle such claims, set up an independent commission that does not involve individuals with any links to those being accused, and punishment must be announced publicly in accordance with publicly stated rules.
6) Scrutiny and punishment are retroactive, and retrospective, i.e., infringements of ethical rules in the past are prosecutable in the future, while any aspect of the personal and professional past is subject to scrutiny. This approach is a preventative measure, as argued by Wulf (2012, p.264), who analyzed interviews with ethics and compliance officers from different multinational organizations, where interviewees suggested that proper background screening of not only new candidates, but also employees promoted to "a position of substantial authority", would prevent misconduct and illegal behavior in an organization.

Conclusion

Research and publishing have become extremely complex in recent years. The for-profit publishing industry is a multi-billion dollar business, and the grants and funds that are pumped into research projects around the world are most likely also in the tens of billions of US$. For example, it is known that in 2013, the scientific, technical and medical publication market was estimated at $25.2 billion, and that the proportion of revenue from journals accounted for about 40% (Ware and Mabe 2015, p.23). Worldwide, research and development (R&D) investment was estimated at a total of $1.948 trillion in purchasing power parity, with about 40% of R&D deriving from Asia, 19% alone from China[13]. Consequently, research and publishing is competitive and territorial, two qualities that open it up to abuse. By territoriality, it is implied that a specific "zone" of interest will be protected and defended, like a marked territory. Industry has created its own set of values, usually to protect its own interests, and thus industrial bias tends to have some unethical components inherent to it, to favor the industry, over values. However, cognizant that ethics and values have now become an integral part of the research and publishing landscape, publishers are srambling to deal with massive gaps that have occured during decades of lack of ethical oversight. This has led to an explosion of ethics rules and guidelines that has swamped the research and publishing communities, stripped authors of their rights and added a massive ethical burden on the shoulders of editors, who are now held responsible for ethical infractions, while the publishers are relieved of this responsibility to a large degree, all while continuing to reap record profits.

Thus, the time is ripe to implement a set of codes for ethicists and ethics bodies, or any individual who represents the ethical side of an organization involved with research or publishing. As ethicists, they are expected to have the highest, strictest and strongest codes of conduct among all players in research publishing. Thus, these individuals must be held to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism, in public. However, there are currently, very surprisingly, no auto-regulatory or externally regulatory bodies or mechanisms to hold such ethicists and ethics organizations accountable. One reason may be because most of these have been created as a power play, limiting the power of individuals they seek to regulate, primarily academics, research institutes and editors, and thus also journals.

This opinion piece, while in no way claiming to be complete, and aiming to expand the discussion related to this topic, serves as the first theoretical basis for holding such individuals and groups accountable, and should be used as guidance for academics who are in the position of authors or editors who sense, perceive or detect abuses of power among the ethics elite. This set of rules and guidelines for determining if ethics-related cronyism, nepotism[14] or corruption is taking place, will be helpful for academics who may have felt that their rights were undermined by such individuals or groups, or the organizations they represent. Although the legal basis of these aspects would likely need to be explored in greater detail – especially if dealing with clear acts of corruption – later on, this paper sets forth a theoretical basis that will allow scholars and academics from any field of study to hold ethicists and ethics organizations accountable for their powerful positions, and actions, in public, or in private.

Finally, three very important aspects of our paper, which may be equated with possibly perceived limitations: a) it does not name any specific ethics organization that merits attention, because the theoretical principles we propose should apply to all, without exception; b) it does

[13] https://www.iriweb.org/sites/default/files/2016GlobalR%26DFundingForecast_2.pdf. Page 3.

[14] Sandström and Hällsten (2008) showed that nepotism was a persistent problem in the Swedish Medical Research Council whose members gave higher bonuses to applicants who were affiliated with a grant peer reviewer. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that nepotism can be a problem in any organization in the absence of any regulation or oversight.

not put forward evidence of any aspect discussed as observed in any specific ethics organization with the specific objective to maintain the arguments purely theoretical, although we do propose many possible aspects that need regulation, and solutions as to how to achieve greater openness, accountability and transparency in any ethics organization; c) it provides primarily a critical assessment without also indicating positive exceptions, and may thus come across as being biased. These limitations, and many others such as the lack of concrete examples to substantiate certain claims or statement, might be perceived by the reader because the authors' concerns are on one hand about bodies that have been established by corporations to ultimately serve the structures that underpin corporate power in academia, but also about bodies that give the impression of charitable organizations, since they are legally established as such, but that operate within a for-profit context.

Finally, in a biased climate, where ethics organizations fail to protect from corruption in power positions, and in the face of injustice, helpless authors have no means but to use public platforms to publicize past conflicts and disagreements with publishers, editors and ethics organizations, to be heard.

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Open Access Movements: Emancipation or Hypocrisy?

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Dear Readers,

Please, let me add some comments to the worldwide debate on the pages of *KOME: An International Journal of Pure Communication Inquiry* and elsewhere regarding Open Access movements and the fact that some prestigious universities and research institutions declined to renew their subscriptions at major academic publishers. The most famous example here is the German Project DEAL[1] where dozens of leading German institutions quit their former agreements with global publishers to enter into a contract that entails golden Open Access (OA) function; meaning that the authors or their institutions will be charged to pay paper processing fees for the Publishers.

In this short letter, I will try to point out some ethical problems regarding the above-delineated plans. Hungary, this relatively small semi-peripheral country joined this global movement in a very radical way. As opposed to the German, American and Swedish participants of the OA movement, Hungary abolished all its contracts with Elsevier, including not just ScienceDirect but also Scopus and SciVal. Moreover, Hungary did it in a very radical manner since the services mentioned above are inaccessible in all Hungarian institutions: as opposed to the glorified German example, where Scopus and SciVal could be accessed from many institutions and even from public libraries, Hungary cut its access entirely.

Since I am the one who started the argument against this blindfold action publicly,[2] I felt that I must make my arguments clear in front of the global audience, and with this, I would like to attract attention to some very hypocritical statements regarding the OA movement. First of all, one should clearly see that such a thing as free work does not exist in the world-system of global academy, where academic capital is accumulated in not just material but also symbolic forms. Thus, it is rather displeasing when global hegemons of the world of transnational academy state that the beneficiaries of the OA movements will be the scholars of the developing or peripheral countries. As against this musical but unfortunately false statement I have two arguments. First, in the case of a golden OA model, authors or their institutions should pay processing fees that vary from 1.500 to 5000 USD or even more. Of course, the institutions of

[1] https://www.projekt-deal.de/about-deal/
[2] https://newsbeezer.com/hungaryeng/index-tech-science-hungarian-researchers-have-been-cut-off-from-the-scientific-cycle/

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peripheral scholars could not afford to pay these fees so they would be ousted from the central scholarship to an even greater extent than nowadays. So while they might be able to freely and humbly read what their more central colleagues write, they might not be able to contribute as authors. In my opinion, this is the exact definition of central imperialism and intellectual colonization, and I do not think that any responsible scholar would argue that this is what global academy needs. And, even if peripheral scholars were given discount prices for publication fees at central OA periodicals, editors will be counter-interested in publishing too many peripheral articles because the growing number of these papers would go against not just profit but even against the normal maintenance of the journal. With this, central journals would be financially interested in being biased against peripheral scholars and this will be added to the already existent inequalities of the field of global science.

Second, and maybe more importantly: publication practice is only a small aspect of the operation of transnational scholarship since much more powerful agents strive for maintaining or even raising their leading positions.

When the shocking phenomenon that there is almost no one global South educated core staff member at the most prestigious central departments, and peripheral scholars should be subjected to global North reeducation in order to be hired by central HEIs ceases to exist, I will immediately believe in the rhetoric that suggests the promotion of the periphery (Demeter 2018a).

When the well-known fact that leading international periodicals are full of central editorial board members and there are only a minimal number of global South people there vanishes, I will believe (Demeter 2018b).

When scientific production will count more than elite central degrees and credentials when it comes to recruitment, I will believe.

And, when international grants like ERC cease to go almost exclusively towards rich and prestigious central institutions, I will surely believe.

Till then, please do not say that alternative business models like OA will serve the interests of peripheral scholars.

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