Original Article

Spiritualreligiosity in the Workplace between Media and Organizational Logics: A French Perspective

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Abstract: This exploratory research focuses on how mainstream media apprehends religion in the workplace in the specific French socio-cultural and ideological framing through the media coverage analysis of the French Observatory of Religious Phenomenon in Organization's annual survey, published in September 2018. Findings reveal that media operates with a meaning of religion still subject to a conception of *laicity* that corroborate antagonism between science and religion on the one hand, and, secularization as an indicator of transition from traditional society to modern society on the other hand. Managers and companies implicitly use a more elastic meaning, in accordance with the specificities of the workplace and labor market that has integrated a more deinstitutionalizing vision of religion, in the context of the emergence of new religious representations in touch with alternative spiritualities.

Keywords: French Observatory of Religious Phenomenon in Organization, French socio-cultural framing, laicity, mediatization, spiritualreligiosity, workplace

Introduction

The relationships between religion and work are not new. The idea of labor was rejected by religion and was considered a punishment inflicted on the individual by the divinity, imposed upon to atone for sin; this was later re-instated by the Protestant Reformation who opposed the value of the contemplative life and thus, eventually, work has become gradually a sign of human dignity and a value given to the human being by the divine. Max Weber's (2017) The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism, which seeks to show the Protestant origins of the capitalist labor ethic, is a salient illustration of the reconsideration of the historical relationship between labor and religion. Today, these relationships are studied through a set of disciplines at the crossroads of the fields that have invested the various objects of study associated with religion and work. It is an accumulation of research resulting in a solid state of the art (new/public/ management, sociology of religions, public economics, religious studies, organizational studies, etc).

In this context, the present exploratory research focuses on a les discussed aspect which falls within the field of mediated communication: the mediatization of subjects related to

religion and spirituality in the workplace. More specifically, it is a question of determining how the logics of secular and religious media shape and mediate communication about religion in the workplace in the specific French organizational and cultural framing. We examine how the media deals with religion at work during the media coverage of the French Observatory of Religious Phenomenon in Organization's Annual Survey (OFRE, in French), published in September 2018 about management and religion in the workplace. The main question is to show how the media logic is different from the organizational logic concerning the survey results and the report findings at the time when the media was covering the public release of the OFRE report. This research is anchored in the theory of mediatization, the institutionalist tradition. The institutionalist lineage of mediatization (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999; Schulz, 2004; Hjarvard, 2008; Strömbäck 2008) has its sources in the studies on journalism and political communication (Bratosin, 2016). It approaches mediatization as a multidimensional concept that relies on the domination of the media logic. This perspective is based on the presupposition that media dominates the other logics of the society such as organizational, political, economic logics, etc.

The media coverage analysis of the OFRE survey was taken into consideration based on the online press articles published in September 2018 when the OFRE findings[1] entered the public discourse, which reveals that French press operates with a meaning of religion still subject to a conception of secularism based essentially on a rigid perspective of the term. This perspective is liable to the "negative" approaches of secularism that corroborate antagonism between science as an expression of rationality and religion as an expression of irrationality, on the one hand, and secularization as an indicator of transition from traditional society to modern society, on the other hand. Instead, the French companies and managers implicitly use a meaning more in line with the specificities of the workplace and labor market that has integrated and facilitated a more deinstitutionalized vision of religion, within the framework of the emergence of new representations and religious expressions getting in contact with alternative spiritualities.

In order to explain these media representations we delimited in the first part of this article the approaches and perspectives on the conceptualization of religion and spirituality and their impact on organizational and labor studies. Then, we presented the methodological design of media coverage analysis, highlighting the narrow view about religion employed by French media, and underscored the understanding of religion in the workplace according to the results of OFRE's inquiry. Findings and discussion of the results confirmed the scenario stated above.

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[1] Note here that the OFRE enquiry, based on a questionnaire survey, was conducted between March and June 2018. The questionnaire was administered online on a sample of 25.000 executives and managers working in France, non believers and believers including 49.5% Catholics, 27% atheists, 10.5% agnostics, 8.5% Muslims, 2% Protestants, 2% Jews, 1% Buddhists. 1453 complete questionnaires were collected of which 1111 were taken into account. The error margin is 2.94% for a 95% confidence interval. Data mining was completed using SPSS and XLStat software (OFRE 2018, p. 30). This quantitative data was supplemented with qualitative data gathering based on the conduct of interviews and observation of real situations. The dimensions questioned are: the frequency of religious facts in the workplace, the typology of religious facts, the casuistry linked to religious facts, blocking and/or conflictual cases, the density of religious facts (variables measured: frequency of occurrence of religious facts, evolution of this frequency over time, importance given to the religious fact in the workplace, diversity of the facts, diversity of the categories of facts - blocking or not), the religious fact in the company: what is acceptable and what is not, religious fact and behavior, the religiosity and impacts on labor relations, the religious conflict, the management of religious issues at workplace. Additional data was cited in the results and discussions section. For further details, see the report.

Spiritualreligiosity: a pitfall-based approach

The conceptualization of religion is not about the study of faith, of any transcendence and its existence, but a research that addresses religion as a fact. Defining religion is equivalent to defining the religious fact (Willaime, 2010) in order to determine the limits of what we could now consider not religion, especially in the context of the mutations suffered under the impact of secularization and critics of the secularization classical theory and the reversal of religion as spirituality coupled with the directions anticipated by George Simmel (1997-2010) in his work (a precursor synthesis of the approaches developed by Luckmann insofar as it combines perspectives specific to the theory of individuality and to the analyzes of the logic of fully differentiated societal spheres). More exactly, it is all about understanding religion as a historical and social fact at the intersection of four angles of approach: religion as a collective fact (study of the actors), as a material fact (material sources), as a symbolic fact (study of representations and meaning) and as an experiential/sensitive fact (aspects of acting) (Willaime, 2010).

The definitions of religion generally focus on the institutional aspects of the sacred, the real correspondent of religion being henceforth the ecclesiastical institution/organization and not the transcendent, the divine, the absolute, etc. (Zinnbauer et al., 1999). This predilection is due to the decline of religions, directly proportional to the death of God and the advent of secularization. The death of God, this Nietzschean provocation in the Gay Science (Nietzsche, 1950), is equivalent to the disappearance of the transcendent correspondent, an epistemological ideal in the explanatory picture of the world. As such, secularization becomes the denunciation of the set of norms and religious institutions and represents the birth and the development of a society not only without God, but without religious institutions participating in the public debate and interfering in citizen activities, political decisions, the workplace and business sphere. Classical theories of secularization from Durkheim and Max Weber to modern authors (Berger 1967, Dobbelaere, 1981, Bruce 1992, 2002, Pickel 2012) therefore rely on the thesis that more modernity means less of religion. The classical sociological approach addresses secularization as a model which explains the loss of social relevance of religion through the prism of three factors of modernity: a) social differentiation (functional perspective), b) societalization (the shift from the community to the society), and c) rationalization (a rational idea about the conception of the world and action). More precisely, secularization corresponds to the loss of economic, social and political relevance of religious institutions in modern societies (Tudor and Bratosin, 2018; Tudor, 2021).

Nonetheless, the classical theory of secularization has been challenged from within. The notion of "invisible religion" (Luckmann, 1967) decisively impacts the classical theory of secularization which considers secularization as a characteristic of the most developed modern societies. This questioning by the introduction of the thesis that the sacred cosmos of industrial societies is not rationally disenchanted with religion, but populated by believing micro narratives, disconnected from the macro narratives of the religious institutions and major religions, opens the way towards taking into account more complex logics that govern and regularize the belief. The invisible religion makes it possible to entangle thematic and symbolic legacies of historical religions, modern themes of self-expression and self-realization, new spiritualities based on mini-transcendences corresponding to the advent of individualism beyond of any traditional denominational religiosity. This shift of the classical objective approach of secularization (Berger, 1967; Dobbelaere, 1981; Bruce, 1992), brings out a new paradigm on religion through the contributions of Berger (1999, 2001) who revises his initial positions and advances the thesis of a "desecularization of societies" and of religion as a major player in all domains of society (cultural, social, political, economic Berger revised theory is focused on the shifting role of religion as a social actor and on the fact that

contemporary religion has opened up to other forms of faith and practices. These two major contributions made possible to understand the expansion of the ultra-modern concept of the sacred beyond the borders of the institutionalized religions. Each individual has direct access to the treasure of sacred symbols to build their transcendences and systems of meanings in order to give meaning to the world. Luckmann and Berger seized on the shift in understanding of religiosity towards another type of encoding, non-institutional, non-denominational and non-directive. Religiosity represents a spiritual-religious encoding that the individual tinkers with and appropriates, thus becoming his/her new frame of reference in spiritual matters.

This revision amounts to an "expurgation" of the notion of "religion" in favor of the use of the notion of "spirituality". Spirituality currently has the ascendancy over religion in all areas, being not only more positively perceived, but more positively connoted in the literature. Transcendence, super consciousness, etc. become spiritual correspondents for the individual, part of the personal experience of the human being (Pargament, 1997). Malraux's commentary in an interview published in 1946 in Preuves takes this turn: "The critical problem at the end of the century will be the religious problem – in a form quite different from the one we know, just as Christianity was for ancient religions". It poses in nuce the problem of the change of referent and the distinction between religion and something else that does not say its name and which today is referred to as "spirituality". The individualism and the new relationships with "self", the development of the new practices related to the sacred, in the context of the consumer society, the globalization and the digital revolution—all have contributed towards this turning point triggering the replacement of the religious with the spiritual.

The interest for the spiritual is interlaced around several needs:

a) to build an identity operating in all areas of life: in the private and public sphere, in everyday life and at work. This identity, fragmented by globalization, migrations and successive mixing, is being re-created through the spiritual quest in the form of a private identity, uprooted, but which is expressed and lived in a community of affects and emotions (Bratosin, 2018). The identity at work, this center of a secondary socialization according to Sainsaulieu (2014), is being sought from a spiritualreligiosity (Camus and Poulain, 2005), rooted in the personal spiritual experience, an inward search that wants to be connected to the external world by spiritual values and practices that are not separated from natural (ecologism), supernatural, religion, magic or esotericism (River, 1997; Champion, 2000; Camus and Poulain, 2005).

b) to seek and meet the absolute through small narratives of legitimacy, the foundations of the new spiritualities. The collapse of the great narratives of legitimacy, the prerogatives of monotheistic religions, and the end of the "religious" which is institutionalized opened the way to postmodern diluted individualized, "tinkered" religiosity, (Hervieu-Léger, 1999). A religiosity of "poor thinking" (Vattimo, Rovatti and Amoroso, 1983), of multiplicity, of difference and the deconstruction resting on micro narratives, new strategies of the individual and the contextual to support the incommensurable (Lyotard, 1979) and fill the need for meaning. These micro narratives convert the religious into a postmodern spiritual. They are the raw material of the new religious movements, of all forms of spirituality centered on authenticity, knowledge and self-transcendence (Calhoun, 2011) and development and self-improvement programs, very popular in the trainings offered by organizations.

c) to have access to the therapeutic knowledge that gives meaning. The increased fragmentation and specialization of knowledge is driving the individual to look for ways to manage the meaning of life in a comprehensive way. It is all about fulfilling the need for total knowledge that brings order, promotes homogeneity and offers an integrative perspective. For this, the contemporary human beings have advanced the "spiritualities of technique" – yogas, sophrology, rebirthing, bio-energies, etc.— powers of the wisdom (Abel, 1989). Campbell (2007) explains this turning point by examining the context of the 1960s, marked by the civil rights movement, the reaction to the Vietnam War, and the proliferation of a variety of subcultures as well as a counterculture in Europe and North America. It highlights that new institutional and ideological spaces in the West begin to incorporate a variety of beliefs, practices and cosmologies such as the spiritualities of technique. These spiritualities, according to Campbell, lead to a process of marginalization and even replacement of the characteristics of Western civilization with those associated with Eastern civilizations. The West is "orientalized" by the younger generations who carry the values[2] of these Eastern cultures.

d) to have a morality that harmonizes and brings into coherence work, family, society, ecology, etc. The imperatives of total transparency, of equal and free access to everything, the neoliberal model based on the performativity and competitiveness that has taken hold of the whole of life (Foucault, 1994, 2004a, 2004b) – are all part of it.

Moreover, we note that the "no religion" majority in France, reaching more than 50% of the population (Pew Research Center, 2018a), attach themselves to a "floating religion" that refuse the institutionalized inheritance of the great religious narratives, but not the spiritual element, the religious as such. Empirical research conducted through extensive surveys has shown that there are groups of people who claim to be "spiritual but non-religious" (Pew Research Center, 2018b; Pew Researcher Center, 2017), "non-practicing and non-religious" – nevertheless believing in a spiritual force, in a higher power – or even "non-practicing Christians" who believe in a God but who do not resemble the one described by the Bible or by the Church (Pew Research Center 2018a). Even if these categories of the population present symptomatic tendencies for a split between religion and spirituality, ranging from meaning to practices, customs, attitudes and behaviors, it is also to be considered, according to the same studies, that there are two plausible significant interlacing hypotheses relating to André Malraux's commentary: that of an evolution of the religious and an awareness of the religious by other forms, expressions, and representations, etc. more or less unconventional (Hill et al., 2000), and that of a permanence of elements specific to religion. Recent studies in the fields of socio-anthropology of work, religion and organizations have documented the existence of a new career profile synthesized in the concept of "new careers" (Al Ariss, 2010; Pringle and Mallon, 2003; Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2011; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005). The highly educated population of Europe is particularly impacted by this emerging profile. Opposed to the "traditional careers" of the Fordist and Taylorist period, new careers are characterized by many changes throughout the life of individuals, both in the organizations and in the fields in which they work. These new careers imply a different approaauthorch to religion. Their generational[3] evolution occurs in a flexible economic environment that pushes individuals to be autonomous, creative and assume the need for continuous change (Bauman, 2013), which leads them to focus on a perpetual discovery of the many facets of their

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[2] See the discussion on value as dogma and deliberation developed by Dacheux and Goujon (2020).
[3] See the synthesis of Rožukalne (2020) on the concept of "generation".

strengths and interests. They manage the meaning of life so that at the same time they can rebuild the unity of themselves, despite the fragmentation they adopt and practice. Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) describe this new logic of career building, simultaneously rooted in self-retreat and the search for religious without religious affiliation, but believing and clothed with uncertain religiosity, such as "the new spirit of capitalism". This spirit opens up to a private religiosity, not only as a mean of production of meaning for economic endeavors, but more precisely, it explains this paradoxical cohabitation of the weakened traditions and the new spiritualities consolidated on the "most vivid imaginations" (Abel, 1989). The erosion of traditional religious forms has generated other forms of religiosity in contrast to the established religion based on the consolidation of traditions. In the new spirit of capitalism, the most memorable and solid traditions are not being reinforced, they rather overlap with the spiritual experience of the most profound religious "off track" (Lambert, 2000).

Research conducted in management and organizational studies focusing on spirituality and religion highlights the same questions about the intertwining and schisms of the religious and spirituality. This occurs regardless whether it is about topics related to what religions say about work (discursive approach), or it is about religious phenomenon in organizations and its influence on the management and the organizational functioning (Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Karakas, 2010; Galindo and Surply, 2010; Honored, 2014), or it is about organizational spirituality and spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003; Voynnet Fourboul, 2016). Markow and Klenke (2005) have inventoried more than seventy definitions of spirituality in the workplace, all of which refer to criteria common to religion. We highlight the definition adopted by Fahri Karakas (2010) following his study of a corpus of 140 articles about spirituality at work. He defines spirituality "as the journey to find a sustainable, authentic, meaningful, holistic and profound understanding of the existential self and its relationship/interconnectedness with the sacred and the transcendent. Spirituality is distinguished from institutionalized religion by being characterized as a private, inclusive, non-denominational, universal human feeling; rather than an adherence to the beliefs, rituals, or practices of a specific organized religious institution or tradition" (Karakas, 2010, p. 95). This definition highlights the same pitfall characteristic of the conceptualization of the religion-spirituality duo, that is to say the problem of the separation. Many theoretical and empirical research findings show the difficulty of separating the two naturally, even if there is an explicit intention to reduce the scope of religion (Hill et al., 2000; Voynnet Fourboul, 2011). We also observe the epistemological impossibility of defining spirituality without appealing to elements of the order of the sacred which are part of the institutional meaning of religion (for example, certain practices present in the way of experiencing the spiritual and the relations with the transcendent such as prayer, meditation, celebration of the sacred time, etc.).

Starting from these theoretical perspectives that fuel the polarizations in the conceptualization of the religion and spirituality, with effects on the understanding of the sacred even in the sense of the risk of its complete dissolution in ideologies, we put to the test—through a practical context that articulates the media treatment of religion in the workplace and investigation of the religious phenomenon in organizations—the hypothesis that there is a meaning entanglement of the spiritual and religious and that the French media favors a rather narrow meaning of religion, historically inscribed in the French concept of secularism and in the logic of secularization as a passage to modern society where more modernity means less religion and more rationality (Willaime, 2006). This working hypothesis is also supported by contrasting approaches to secularization, classic theses (Berger, 1967; Dobbelaere, 1981; Bruce, 1992, 2002; Pickel, 2012), based on the loss of relevance of the religion in society, and anti-theses, based on a revised vision that points to the polysemy of the secularization and its ideological connotations, where modernity does not mean renunciation of religion and where religion plays an important role in society, else –

since it is being experienced differently than before—it is taking different forms than before (Martin, 1969; Berger, 2001; Beyer, 2016) (see discussion above).

Methodological clarifications

We conducted a content analysis of online press coverage of the French Observatory of Religious Phenomenon in Organization and the Randstad Institute survey, on the one hand, and of the survey per se as it appears in the report by OFRE, on the other hand. The corpus was constituted primarily of the data drawn from the content of the French online mainstream press (laic and religious), published in September 2018, and then secondarily from the data from OFRE's survey, The media corpus includes nine articles published in nine online newspapers: Les Echos, Marianne, La Croix, La Dépêche, Le Parisien, Le Figaro, L'info Évangélique, Aleteia and Le MuslimPost. The main criterion used for the choice of the nine online newspapers was the representativeness in terms of: a) institutional and political orientation of the media[4], b) geographic coverage (regional and national), c) media practices and d) social, societal and institutionalized functions of the media (secular and religious). This criterion was retained because we were mainly interested in how the media logic shapes the coverage of the OFRE study. The media logic intervenes mainly: a) in the selection and accommodation of the news according to the presentation and interpretation schemes and b) in the adaptation of information to media form and content (Altheide et al. Snow 1979). Regarding the corpus of articles, the choice was made according to three aspects simultaneously taken into account: 1) avoiding redundancy (elimination of the short articles, press releases or notes which reproduced the same framework and which did not engage the editorial team and the journal), 2) selecting representative articles that present developed analyzes of the survey, and 3) selecting articles that present broad comments on the study results.

The data has been analyzed by using a qualitative methodology – the qualitative content analysis – allowing comparisons (delimitation, search for analogies by resemblance-dissimilarity, identification of elements having something in common) and categorizations (tracking of constants redundant themes, relationships, comprehensive syntheses) to clarify the relationships between data (media publications and survey results), themes (religion-spirituality) and the hypothesis to be tested (Tesch, 1990). Content analysis is focused on the "production/reception" of the media message content as a universe of production of meaning (Wolf 1992) and allows a better understanding of the differences between the specific ways in which the religious/spiritual issues in the workplace are being mediatized in different countries and their impact on the public representations of these issues.

The content analysis was preceded by a pre-analysis phase, which primarily included the choice of the corpus by means of a floating reading in order to understand the documents and delimitate the field of research (Robert and Bouillaguet, 1997; Savoie-Zajc, 2000; Bozorova, 2019) and, subsequently by formulating the hypotheses, the objectives and the indicators (Bardin, 1977).

The chosen indicators for examining the articles included: the title of the article, the topics covered (the objects of media coverage), the framing (the way the media chooses to present the survey, and the aspects they choose to discuss and emphasize) and the character of the coverage (critical, neutral, positive). The interpretative approach used was aimed primarily at decontextualization by identifying topics and contents for a recontextualization

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[4] The notion of media here refers to the written press (online version). Media in the broadest sense includes old media - television, radio - and new media, i.e. all digital media.

by positioning with a view aimed at identifying and interpreting the meaning produced by the media and concluded by the OFRE survey. This approach also aimed to grasp the discursive issues in the socio-communicative construction of reality (through content analysis) as well as to apprehend the "secular" sociological reasoning of the media through which they produce their universe of understanding and interpretation (Goffman 1973; Garfinkel 2008) of the religion at work in the workplace.

Results and discussions

The results show the following trends:

a) the titles of the articles are mainly positive, resuming, as such, the salient results of the OFRE survey (for example: "Employees no longer hesitate to ask for holidays during religious celebrations"—Le Figaro, "Religion at workplace: a study which dismantles the preconceived ideas"—La Dépêche, "Religion becomes ordinary in organizations – La Croix). All of the religious media formulate titles that highlight the positive results of the study: "Religion, a reality that is commonplace in companies" – Aleteia, "Companies have become accustomed to religions" – Le MuslimPost, "France: religion becomes a routine at workplace, according to a study" – L'info Evangélique. A single article, published by Marianne, "Religion at workplace is commonplace and conflict cases increase", is built on an opposition without nuances. Les Echos title "The management of religion remains a challenge for managers" by putting forward the idea of a potential conflict, without being critical.

b) the objects of the media coverage generally revolve around the "banalization" of religion in the workplace, that is to say that religion has become a reality like all the others in the organizations (Le Parisien, La Croix, Le Figaro, La Dépêche, Le MuslimPost). Les Echos and Marianne are exceptions to this trend. They emphasize the theme of conflicting consequences caused by the presence of religion in the workplace.   Representative excerpts: "Increase in conflict cases. The share of 'conflictual' cases is however increasing, with 9.5% of 'observed religious facts' in 2018, against 7.5% in 2017 ("Religion at work 'becomes commonplace' and conflictual cases are increasing", Marianne, September 26, 2018).
   "In the vast majority of companies, expressing religious affiliation in the workplace is not a problem. And in nine out of ten cases, it does not interfere with its proper functioning. This is the main lesson of the sixth edition of the annual study on the religious fact in the workplace (...) ("Religion becomes commonplace in the workplace", La Croix, September 26, 2018). "However, what was still exceptional a decade ago has now become commonplace. What are the consequences? How do these facts and behaviors impact the functioning of the organization, the performance of work and the relationships between employees? A first important element which emerges from the survey carried out is that the religion in the workplace is not very confrontational and disrupts little the functioning of companies" ("Religion in companies, is not problematic for the most part", Le Monde, September 26, 2018).

c) framing focuses on the two dual categories of the manifestation of the religious affiliation established by the survey: a) the personal facts, non-disruptive facts of the operation of the organization, and b) the transgressive facts with disruptive potential. Only Marianne and Les Echos focus more on the transgressive aspects and attribute to

them a particular importance which is, moreover, very nuanced by the results of the OFRE survey.

  Representative excerpt: "For the third consecutive year, the rate of people questioned who have already observed the existence of religious facts in their workplace during the year has stabilized at 65%. These 'facts' include requests for absence for religious holidays, prayers during breaks, wearing religious symbols, refusing to perform a task or work with a woman…" ("Religion at work 'becomes commonplace' and cases of conflict increase", Marianne, September 26, 2018).

d) the attitude with respect to the objects of the media coverage is, as a rule, positive. Two articles are rather neutral (Le Parisien, Les Echos), one is critical (Marianne), six are positive (Le Figaro, La Croix, La Dépêche, L'info Évangélique, Aleteia and Le MuslimPost).

  Representative excerpts: "In the vast majority of companies, expressing religious affiliation in the workplace is not a problem. This is what the sixth edition of the annual study on religious fact at the workplace, conducted by the Observatory of Religious in Organization (OFRE) and the Randstad Institute, and published by La Croix on September 26, estimated. ("France: religion becomes commonplace at work, according to a study", L'info Évangélique, September 27, 2018).

  "According to the Observatory of Religion in Organizations (OFRE) and the Randstad Institute, cases relating to religion in the workplace are still rare in companies. The expression of religious affiliation in the workplace is not a problem for the majority of companies and nine out of ten companies claim that this does not interfere with the proper functioning" ("The companies have accustomed to religions", Le MuslimPost, September 26, 2018).

  "Time off requests for religious holidays dethroned the wearing of visible religious symbols in the classification of the main manifestations of religion in the workplace. This is one of the findings of the latest study, published on Wednesday, by the Observatory of Religion Phenomenon in Organizations (OFRE) and the Randstad Institute. 'Unlike in previous years (2016 and 2017), the wearing of visible religious symbols in the workplace is no longer the most common manifestation of religious affiliation (19.5%). It gives way to requests for leave for religious reasons (21%)', notes the study. According to the authors of this survey, time-off requests, like the wearing of visible signs, fall into the category of 'personal facts' characterized by the individual behaviors that express the religiosity of the employee without disrupting the functioning of the company. They oppose to the 'transgressive facts' which disrupt or call into question the functioning of the company (refusal to work with a woman or under her orders, refusal to carry out tasks, proselytism ..." ("Employees no longer hesitate to request time off during religious holidays", Le Figaro, September 26, 2018).

The OFRE survey operates with a definition of religion which relies on a phenomenological approach, but which nevertheless admits its limits. Religion, according to the report, resides in a) the manifestations of personal facts (individual behaviors that express the religiosity of the employee without disturbing the functioning of the organization such as the wearing of religious symbols, time-off requests, arrangement of working time, prayer during breaks, cf. OFRE, p. 10) and b) the manifestations of transgressive facts (facts that disrupt or call into question the functioning of the organization: refusal to work with a woman or under her orders, refusal to perform tasks, proselytizing, prayers during working time,

idem). Nevertheless, the study recognizes that "the behaviors of the individuals who express their religiosity at workplace are more nuanced and more varied than this dual classification. For example, the wearing of a religious jewel may be the expression of the person's religiosity, the affirmation of a community belonging, a habit or a way to remember a loved one. Depending on the reactions it provokes, on the part of managers and colleagues of the employee in question, depending also on the position of the latter – the same fact may generate very different situations" (Idem). The practical context leaves outside a set of aspects and important elements that do not fit into this definition. The OFRE perspective of religion relying on the dualist approach of religion, however, highlights the fact that this perspective is not sufficient to account for the diversity of expression, representation and manifestation of religiosity today which is freed from institutional authority especially with the advent of the digital emerging media (OFRE, 2018; Tudor and Herteliu, 2017; Tudor, 2021). Therefore, the OFRE study underlines that religiosity is a more complex phenomenon, not limited to institutional and institutionalized manifestations, thus joining the characterization of the current religiosity made by Beyer according to which religion "(…) can be and is increasingly multi-formed, multi-modelled, and multi-present: it takes more forms that are lived by, institutionalized, and recognized than before; it comes in different strengths in each of those different forms; it can be clearly institutionalized or less clearly institutionalized and still it could be lived and recognized as religion; it can be sensate, cognitive, performative, or any combination of these in different proportions; it can be clearly bounded and exclusive, or not" (Beyer, 2016, p. 247). Consequently, in the discussion of the findings, the OFRE survey takes into account the contemporary transformations of religion, the shift towards an individualistic religiosity that is individually built and "tinkered" with the most diverse borrowings. The increasing favorable percentage concerning the presence and expression of religion in the workplace in France (71% of respondents cf. OFRE, 2018, p. 8) and, therefore, its "banalization", i.e. no longer considering religion fact as an exceptional phenomenon in French companies (cf. OFRE, 2018), could be explained through the prism of the integration and acceptance of new forms of religiosity in the workplace, now not limited neither in the imagination of employees nor in the imagination of management to institutionalized and institutionalist religious practices and symbols of traditional religions. This result of OFRE could be considered as symptomatic for a beginning of the emancipation of French employees from a certain vision of French secularism (laïcité) which is based on the rejection of all religious expression in public spheres (organizational, media, institutional, agoric, etc.). Nevertheless, the mediatization of the OFRE study shows that the media logic does not overlap with the organizational logic concerning religiosity as revealed by the findings of the survey presented above. The media corpus analyzed tends to treat the religiosity at workplace through the prism of a conception of the modern French secularism where the public spheres (organizational in this case) should exclude any expression and representation of the religious/spiritual. From this perspective, the religious and the spiritual are exclusively relegated to a practice in the private sphere. However, secularism has evolved since relations with the religious/spiritual have changed in the context of the contemporary ultra-modernity (see above). The public spheres are not reduced to the domain of the sovereignty and state regulation; they include not only all groups in society, but also all forms of expression and manifestation of the religious/spiritual and the secular (Willaime, 2009). The mediatization logic of the OFRE survey operates with the same restrictive sense of secularism which is limited to a narrow representation of secularism (Bratosin and Jauffret, 2018) depending on the circumstances, concerns and interests (Baubérot, 2014 ; Bianco and Euvé 2017). This is a secularism with two facets: the ignorance (Lauret, 2015) and the forbidden (Baubérot, 2014). The secularism of ignorance is hostile to religion; it excludes it and ignores all that is at once, spirituality and religion altogether. The secularism of the

forbidden is also stigmatized, discriminated against and excluded in terms of effects, but it is rather a response to Islam. It is not a laicity "without culture", but a laicity of the prohibition of "wearing" of religious signs and of the judgment upon all that has to do with proselytism. The mediatization of religion, and particularly of religion in the workplace, rests upon these two exclusive representations. During the media coverage of the OFRE survey findings, the French media logic operates implicitly with a narrow understanding and sense of religion, inheriting the legacy of two models: the French secularism, and the classic secularism, where religion and society are incompatible and where there is a tension, a conflict (quite perceivable) between the logic of rationality and the aspiration to spirituality (Voynnet Fourboul, 2011). There seems to be a lack of interest for examining the new manifestations of religion or its emancipation from the religious institutions (the current trends), especially in the context of the rise of digital media, and the reorganization of religions getting exposed to new forms of spirituality. Therefore, we do not observe any openness on the part of the media – based on the results of the survey – for a proper discussion of religion (and the religious phenomenon) at workplace in the context of new emerging spiritualities, as different forms that are being transformed and updated by religious expression.

The media reports the results of the survey highlighting with one or two exceptions, (Marianne being the illustration of the negative framing through a rigid vision of secularism that highlights the transgressive aspect of religion at workplace although diminished by the study), that religion is not a frequently conflicting subject in the workplace (the most conflicting being politics and working conditions). At the same time, these framings tacitly promote interpretations and symbolic constructions of religion that maintain an institutional perspective regarding its elements (prayer, signs and religious symbols, religious holidays, etc.). Nevertheless, these same elements are currently deprived of their institutional character because they have become cultural symbols (religious holidays as pointers of culture), spiritual symbols (prayer, religious signs), or rationalized spiritual forms stripped off their solid tradition by the growing offer of the market of spiritual products (Hill et al., 2000; Beyer, 2016). This dissolution of religion towards other forms and expressions inheriting the language of religious institutions, but with modified contents, is not captured in the media analysis, but it seems present, always implicitly, in the precautions (quite weak) that the coordinators of the study undertook and in the very results of the survey that reveal a paradox. Indeed, the "banalization" of religion in the workplace as well as the acceptance of the existence of the religious practice, explicitly considered as private, but tacitly accepted to occur "in public", in the public sphere of the social ties which is the organization, expresses a paradox. Religion, an always embarrassing and "bad" question in terms of public display (the principle of secularism at work and a vision of secularization that cleanses the society of religion), is less and less problematic and therefore non-transgressive and "not bad" to become a sort of "banalization of evil" when it comes to the corporate experience. This paradox, ignored by the media, but which seems implicit if one looks closely at the results of the survey, is likely to be explained by the transformations religion is undergoing, particularly in contact with the offer of the liberal spiritual market (Beyer, 2016) and the permeabilization of organizations to the spiritual offers originating from new forms of successful spirituality (Oriental beliefs, yoga practices, Feng-shui, bioenergy, holistic medicine, New Age, sophrology, etc.). To illustrate this, we are referring here to the demand for religious holiday leave or the request for organization of working time, which is not considered a disruptive factor at workplace (OFRE, 2018), whereas the holiday is traditionally a religious pointer of institutional nature (materialized in the ecclesiastical calendar of the sacred time) more than the prayer or the wearing of a religious sign. However, we consider that this evolution of religion in contact with spirituality (also intimate in nature, but privileged because it exists without normative and legal prescribers) as well as what the spiritual markets are offering

(rich, multiform, favoring an imbrication between religion and spirituality) make possible this new configuration, without any underlying tensions, and explain the craze for the spiritual in the workplace (see the explosion of alternative forms of religiosity mentioned above, the increase of organizational trainings focused on personal development and scholarly interest in the study of spirituality at work). Religion and spirituality are intertwined because every form of religion involves the spiritual, every form of spirituality and religion appears in a social context, and any form of religious and spirituality supposes the search for the sacred (ultimate divine being, ultimate truth, ultimate reality as perceived by the individual) with emotions, thoughts, experiences, and behaviors specific to the sacred (Pargament, 1999; Hill et al., 2000).

The empirical studies demonstrate that even though, in general, individuals see spirituality as an individual, non-institutional, less rigid and less formal form of the sacred, they do not make absolute separation between religion and spirituality. They are entangled, especially given their complexity (Pargament, 1997; Hill et al., 2000). More precisely, the spiritual also encapsulates a deinstitutionalized, reorganized religion, a religiosity of postmodernism (Allen, 2005; Dreher, 2003). In the organizational context, the discussion is even more complex because it is about new self-practices as well as new (invisible) forms of spirituality that are part of the tendency to articulate a new type of neoliberal governance becoming widespread in the world through forms of cultural and economic globalization. The new forms of "private" or "invisible" religiosity, which have emerged in the recent decades throughout Western Europe, tend to model themselves on consumer culture and to mimic the horizons of individualistic ontologies developed in postmodern societies with renewed meanings of religion.

The mediatization of OFRE's survey with a tendency to privilege the factual, the meaning given to religion in the French context of secularism and the difficult relationship between intimacy/private and public management, focuses on an interpretation limiting religion to work as compared to the one used in the survey. The media framing, phenomenologically staged, considers the process of religious individualization as a positive and emancipatory process insofar as it has generated an autonomous personality capable of constructing its own objective, thus enabling the individual to determine his/her sphere of privacy and live his/her transcendences in accordance with a prescribed, normative, legal framework that firmly separates public and private. The framing of the corporations encompassed by the survey is biopolitical (a term borrowed from Michel Foucault). Religion ceases to be a social issue and has a critical impact on the way of life. The organization's approach is implicitly influenced by the new expressions of spirituality, inscribed in the cultural narratives and transformations aimed at promoting a specifically entrepreneurial value system, as well as ideologies centered on transcendence and amplification of the self—a crucial element of the consumerist culture (Calhoun et al., 2011). As Foucault (2001) suggests in The Hermeneutics of the Subject, new self-practices are radically different from both the ethics promoted by traditional Christianity (emphasizing lifestyle changes and opposition between moral and immoral behavior) and the Protestant ethic analyzed by Weber (2017), according to which daily self-restraint is the catalyst for capitalism (Dardot and Laval, 2014). The self-promotion by the neoliberal corporate logic is proactive and competitive, centered on the evolution of an entrepreneurial subjectivity that is deeply atomized; it never produces an integrated religious community and social cohesion based on religion. This could explain the rejection of any transgressive (wrong) behavior at work, not in the name of secularism as the French media framings are inclined to suggest, but for the sake of its proper functioning – an indicator that is also taken into account by the survey (OFRE, 2018). This could also explain the rationale for the increase in the percentage of religious phenomena, which according to OFRE, no longer

produces tensions at workplace and would elucidate why the "banalization of the religious evil" is not a very sensitive point.

Focusing on the psychology and individualization of the religious experience, organizational religiosity is based on individual techniques founded on a complex motivational and communication apparatus that helps the individual to develop an entrepreneurial spirit capable of raising entrepreneurial challenges. This clarifies, moreover, certain results of the investigation (which are not necessarily discussed as such). The focus is all about the fact that religion is less confrontational as opposed to organizational behaviors, work ethics, working itself, and politics.

Conclusions

We examined in this article the mediatization of OFRE survey findings by French mainstream online newspapers. We have found that there is a looming propensity for media discourse (even if it reflects positively and factually the results of the survey) to approach religion both in direct connection with the institutionalized religion and in a relationship with a negative vision of secularism. This vision operates with the intimate/private-public dialectic, it empties the public sphere of religion (whereas religious personal events occur in the very space of the social bonds within the organization) and it is indebted to the "restrictive" approaches that combine opposition between religion, society and secularization. Although OFRE's survey itself retains a narrow definition of religion, it notes that there is an expansion of the religious phenomenon that can take into account the spiritual and the transformations of developed religiosity in contact with alternatives forms of religion. But it does not name it explicitly and the media coverage does not analyze it either. The analysis of media content also shows us that the central and sensitive point when we talk about religion is always its institutional and confessional aspect, without any reference to the current transformations of religion in terms of practices and forms of belief. This is the case for organizations if we consider the results of the OFRE survey, but less so for the media logic on the principle of secularism, and more for the prescriptive, normative logic of the law governing the institutionalized religion at workplace (French El Khomri law). A survey, conducted in 2015 on a sample of 5,764 people in search of spirituality in France, led by the GERPSE (Study Group on Emerging Spiritual Research and Practices), illustrates a certain need to get out of this dialectic. It shows precisely that out of 100 people in active spiritual pursuit, 25 consider themselves outside any religion and 60 consider themselves Christians (claiming to belong to a culture or spirituality but not to a particular church). This, as the study indicates, "blurs" the traditional landmarks: "Henceforth religions, religious, spiritual are presented in a new way, blurring the traditional landmarks" (Quête spirituelle, voies singulières, 2015).

In this context, our exploratory study could be a basis for questioning the media treatment of religion at workplace—since by its educational vocation—the media is better placed and expected to conduct the necessary work of updating the information on the issues in question with the most recent developments and trends. At the same time, it could constitute an opportunity for a revision of the correspondents of religion in the workplace through the prism of profound transformations related in particular to the new neoliberal order and the impact of the digital revolution, bringing with it the liquidity of institutions and organizational flexi-structures (Bauman, 2013). Empirical studies show that the permeability of organizations and institutions to these transformations has given way to a mutation of the interest for religion, differently reconstructed, emancipated from the institution, more centered on the self, without duty and moral obligation, compatible with the spiritual because

it finds itself connected with a feeling of transcendence, with a deity or many, with an initial emotion (Breton and Le Breton, 2009).

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Original Article

The transnational discourse of political protests: setting the agenda through social media

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Abstract: This article analyses the role of social media as a transnational discursive space and the impact of networked communication on the formation of the traditional mass media agenda regarding political protests that began in June 2019 in Hong Kong. The aim of the present research was to indicate the degree of impact of the dominant themes in networked communication during the anti-extradition bill protests in the transnational network discourse and the impact on the news media agenda, taking into account the activity of user-generated network traffic around the published content. The research was based on two theories shaping the perception of political protests in an international context - theory on transnational discursive spaces and theories of agenda setting. The research was carried out using quantitative content analysis and confirmed that global social networking sites Facebook and Twitter are important channels in creating transnational discursive spaces that affect the news media's agenda. Findings show that social media plays an important role in organizing political protests, and is a tool for establishing transnational discursive spaces; despite the fact that the protesters used applications protecting their data for communication, with the assistance of information and integrated collaboration by other entities. The results obtained contribute to the research on media studies which highlight the role and importance of social media in the process of communicating about political protests.

Keywords: social media, political protest, agenda setting, transnational network discourse, Hong Kong, anti-extradition bill, one country-two systems

Introduction

Social media is an important channel of communication during social and political protests. Numerous studies have revealed that social media is the primary communication channel for both activists and other participants involved in and observing the events (i.e., Lievrouv, 2011; Castells, 2012; El-Nawawy and Khamis, 2012; El-Nawawy and Khamis, 2013; Chao, 2014; Piechota and Rajczyk, 2015; Srinivasan and Fish, 2017; Piechota, 2018). Content made available through social media is an important source of information about demonstrations abroad. Meta-analysis confirm that, apart from the information and integration function, it is

impossible to unequivocally define the role of social media during events and also to confirm that using it *a priori* determines the effectiveness of the protest. For a protest to be successful, other conditions must be met such as an active civil society which, through acts of civil disobedience, demonstrates both its opposition and its demands (i.e., El-Nawawy, Khamis, 2012; Boulianne, 2015; Jost et al., 2018).

The protests that have been ongoing since June 2019 in Hong Kong have become a platform of analysis due to Hong Kong's special position in international political and economic relations. Namely: (1). the legal international status of Hong Kong as an autonomous region of the People's Republic of China, where the use of global social media channels is not prohibited; (2). the importance of Hong Kong in international economic relations; (3). the use of social media by users in a way focused on guaranteeing their safety (no identification of the leaders and organizers of the protest), which caused a different creation of network content than before and also activated other entities to take over the role of creators of transnational discursive spaces.

The purpose of the presented analysis is to highlight the importance of social media in establishing transnational discourse platforms during political protests, and in shaping the agenda-setting process in selected news media.

Hong Kong's Status and its Importance in International Relations

Pursuant to the British-Chinese declaration of 1984 – the so-called Hong Kong Basic Law adopted by the Legislative Council of the former British colony – Hong Kong was granted the status of a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China from 1997-2047. With the exception of autonomy in foreign and defense policy, Hong Kong and Macau currently operate under the Chinese political concept: "one country - two systems" (Hughes, 2000 p. 47). However, Hong Kong is characterized by religious and economic freedom, a well-functioning civil society, an open media system and a strong local identity than strictly Chinese political and cultural identification. (Fung, 2008, pp. 195-200).[1]

Table 1 below describes the two largest protests that have taken place in response to attempts of Chinese political influence over the past five years. The table provides the motivations and effects of the protests.[2]

Table 1 - protests in Hong Kong against Chinese political influence in 2014-2019

Name and duration of the protest	Reason for the protest and its organizers	The effects of the protest
Umbrella Revolution 26 September - 15 December 2014.	The reason for the outbreak of protests was the announcement that the election of the head of the local government in 2017 will not be conducted democratically, some candidates will be selected by the	1. The protests were violently dispersed in December 2015, 2. During protests and during the dispersal nearly 1,000 people were arrested and almost 500 were injured.

[1] The latest identity survey of June 2019 indicates that 53% of the population identified themselves as Hongkongers, while 11 per cent as Chinese. 12 per cent identified themselves as "Chinese in Hong Kong", and 23 per cent as "Hongkongers in China". When asked if they were proud of being a national citizen of China, 71 per cent said "no" and 27 per cent said "yes". 90 per cent of people in the age group 18-29 answered "no" – more information can be found here: (https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/06/28/hongkongers-identifying-chinese-record-low-10-youth-proud-citizens-poll/ - 30.06.2019)

[2] Under the assumption that the protests that started in June 2019 are ongoing

	Election Committee reporting to the PRC government. The organizer of the protests was Occupy Central with Love and Peace - an organization of civil disobedience, around which mainly students of Hong Kong universities were associated.	3. The status quo was maintained, the protests ended in the defeat of the demonstrators. 4. The local identity of Hong Kong residents was strengthened, and involvement in creating pro-democratic political parties and civic groups protecting the democratic system of the region has been increased. 5. In subsequent years, persons responsible for organizing and participation in the Umbrella Revolution were sentenced and imprisoned, including one of the most famous activists in Hong Kong - Joshua Wong.
Anti-extradition protest since June 2019.	The reason for the outbreak of protests was a bill that would allow Mainland China to extradite Hong Kong suspects to the PRC. Hong Kong residents were afraid that the proposed bill would allow China to prosecute political opponents in a place that so far had been a safe haven for opponents of the Chinese Communist Party. Protests, according to not only city residents, but also representatives of the international community are all the more justified because the justice system in the PRC does not respect human rights. The protests did not have a single organizer, people are spontaneously organized to take to the streets (according to estimates, more than two million city residents took part in the march on June 9). In the course of the protests, Joshua Wong, the most famous Hong Kong activist, co-founder of the Demosistio group and became the voice of the protesters, also present abroad.	1. The protests are ongoing despite the fact that according to the position presented by Carrie Lam – head of administration, work on the legal act has been suspended. 2. Protesters call on the head of the Hong Kong administration to resign as well as to reject the extradition bill altogether. 3. Supporters of the pro-Beijing government policy took to the streets of Hong Kong – there are fewer demonstrators, but they point to the existence of deep divisions within the local society. 4. The protests took on different forms – from marches and occupation of administration buildings and other public facilities (such as the airport) to clashes with the police. Throughout the entire period, information and integration activities were carried out on the internet, and the city's inhabitants were also victims of fake news and disinformation, which were spread by both parties - supporters of the protesters and the pro-Beijing party.

Source: own elaboration

Both protests – the Umbrella Revolution and the Anti Extradition Bill – have been ongoing since June 2019, indicated on the one hand the strengthening of the local identity of Hong Kong residents, and on the other hand illustrated the growing polarization within Hong Kong society. The supporters of the existing autonomy operating in accordance with the constitutional solution "One Country Two Systems" and entities striving for stronger and, above all, faster integration with mainland China (Lui, 2015; Ma, 2015; Lo et al., 2019).

Hong Kong's role in the economy of the PRC is important but not as important as in the 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century, Hong Kong constituted 20 percent of the Chinese GDP and was the main channel of access to foreign capital. Currently, it makes up only three

percent of Chinese GDP and Beijing is able to attract foreign investment on its own (Whalen, 2019).

The Role of Social Media in Political Protests

The organization of political protests is not a new issue. However, the emergence of social media has changed the way in which protests are organized and has enabled the tracking of documented behavior of protesters and other entities involved in the course of events (Castells, 2012; Milan, 2013; Margetts, et al. 2016). The development of technology and the widespread use of social media has resulted in greater participation by making possible the use of geolocation, user-generated content and reconstructing a desired self-image (Thielmann, 2010, p. 5; Trottier, 2014, p. 45; Przegalińska & Jemielniak, 2015 p. 93-105, Piechota & Rajczyk 2015, Lamond & Spracklen, 2015, Garland, 2015). In addition, the functions assigned to social media affect communication processes by strengthening messages and concentrating them in metadata to facilitate information analysis and research on their impact. An important example is the hashtag (#),[3] used to accumulate content that has been assigned the same characters. In the case of political protests, the use of the hashtag has become one of the forms of digital activism (Cammaerts, 2015; Daniels, 2016, p. 515-525; Barberá et al. 2015; Endong, 2018 pp. 36-53).

When organizing political protests, primarily global social networking sites are used, such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. Levinson (2010, p. 108) calls social media "the defender of democracy" due to its importance in publishing online reports of statements or events that subsequently trigger an avalanche of further facts. Local activists use global websites in an attempt to appeal to global public opinion and influence the virtual community, causing interest and involvement in online activism, and thus disseminating protest and aggregating support. Sykulski (2019, p. 110) emphasizes that currently a significant part of public debate is transferred to the internet and the virtual reality environment creates an "extra territory" in which civilians are at the center of the conflict and are expected to take a stand. Łoś (2017, pp. 115-116) indicates that in the case of authoritarian states, governments usually ignore domestic public opinion during political crises, but the costs are too high when an issue becomes internationally salient. Thus, global social networking sites are becoming a channel of influence on international public opinion and also affect the image of those in power in the place of protests. The magnitude of the protest, expressed in the number of protesters, may indicate a lack of legitimacy of the government to continue exercising power. Activists, thanks to global channels, increase the reach of information, which allows them to attract new followers; they shape the platform of free discourse beyond state control. As a result of framing – conducting a targeted emotional narrative – they shape an alternative image of political leaders whose decisions they protest. According to Mercea (2016), interested users follow activists to global social media services. Thanks to the aggregation of interest by protest leaders, the impact of the content generated is increased due to the individual involvement of demonstration participants in the form of creating and disseminating the content they create in the form of photos, videos, comments, memes and manifestations of street art as a tool supporting local activism. Along with technological development, activists are looking for new effective communication services with which they can achieve their goals, while at the same time eliminating threats, especially those resulting from participation in acts of political resistance in authoritarian and quasi-authoritarian states (Piechota and Rajczyk, 2015; Kusenok, 2015;

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[3] The hashtag, marked with the symbol #, is used on social media platforms. It enables the audience to get involved in a particular topic, to disseminate information or opinions, which can lead to protests

Hubenko and Wall, 2018, p. 148). Communication channels that mainly gain importance are the ones that protect user data, encrypt connections and prevent identification. The Telegram messaging service used by activists during the Hong Kong protest in question has such features, which is a challenge to Chinese authorities who have limited ability to monitor network activity and repress activists and protest organizers.[4]

In 2018, a group of researchers used metadata from various studies to identify the role of social media in protests. The conclusion from the findings pointed to three important social media functions during the protests:

1. It allows for the transmission of information necessary to coordinate protest activities – transport logistics, turnout, police activities, medical service, and legal assistance
2. It is a medium of transmission of content emotionally engaging and motivating support from protestors or to speak against them. Such content included: messages emphasizing moral indignation, social identification, effectiveness of the group's operation, but also fear of legal consequences
3. The structures of Internet social networks vary depending on the context determined by other factors, e.g., political ideology affects success or lack of success during the implementation of a specific protest (Jost et al., 2018, pp. 111-112).

Technological development strongly affects the choice of specific communication channels as well as the content transmission tools used. However, as has been shown in comparative studies conducted in countries with different political and media systems,[5] social media in each of the protest sites (Ukraine and Taiwan) played a similar role during the very acts of resistance and were the main channel of communication (Piechota, 2018).

Social Media During the Anti-Extradition Bill in Hong Kong

Taking into account the various forms restrictions on mass media after 1997 in Hong Kong – usually censorship or self-censorship (Meng, 2018, p. 13; Chan, 2019) in newspapers and web portals – social media sites create a platform of free discourse, performing the function of independent media (Lievrouv, 2012; Castells, 2012; Edwards, 2014, p. 63; Piechota and Rajczyk, 2015; Majorek, 2017; Piechota, 2018).

Activists during the protests that began in Hong Kong in June 2019 took advantage of the previous experience with the Umbrella Revolution. After the events of 2014, when the protest leaders were arrested, tried and imprisoned,[6] the events that started in 2019 did not reveal specific and explicit leadership, did not generate the organized structure of the social movement that originated in Hong Kong, and during the protests, digital news media was not used to identify both the protest organizers and their participants. The events in Hong Kong, at the time the research was carried out, had already lasted two months and for an external observer they assumed the nature of self-organized spontaneous events, based on innovative forms of transmission of the message accompanying demonstrators (e.g. organization at the airport in Hong Kong, demonstration of elderly people remembering the period of the British rule of Hong Kong and the demonstration of families with young children, putting pressure on

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[4] https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-48802125 - (13.08.2019)

[5] Comparative research was carried out in Ukraine and Taiwan, taking into consideration protests that took place there in 2014: the EuroMajdan and Sunflower Revolution.

[6] 20-year-old Joshua Wong was sentenced to eight months in prison, his older colleagues Nathan Law and Alex Chow to 10 months. The sentences were not given for political engagement but for "rowdiness, lawlessness and creating social turmoil."

European and American politicians to pay attention to human rights during protests). Protesters appeared in a specific place, demonstrated and dispersed, including the fact that in the first weeks of protests they were tidying up the places where demonstrations took place. Activists used communicators, primarily Telegram,[7] which allows data encryption, and the popular WhatsApp messenger and internet forums to announce where the course of events were set. Popular websites such as Facebook and Twitter were not used to organize subsequent events, and the use of Octopus cards was discontinued.[8] Leaving digital traces would allow the cardholders to be identified, which could potentially lead to restrictions placed on them. It was also common for people participating in events to prevent identification by covering their faces and using lasers to interfere with police recordings. Two portals and their social networking sites have become communication channels reporting on the course of the protest. The first was the independent and pro-democratic Hong Kong Free Press website (hereinafter HKFP).[9] The portal is an English-language internet newspaper allowing users to subscribe to the newsletter, running news websites, including the ones on Facebook (over 110,000 fans), Twitter (116,000 followers), and on its YouTube content channel (3,621 subscribers).[10] It was established as a network and civic response to the 2014 protests. The newspaper positions itself as a defender of democracy and human rights, and its content indicates that Taiwan and Macau are also in its area of interest. When analyzing the content of the newspaper, attention is drawn to the content architecture, which clearly distinguishes topics by positioning them as to the place (Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau)[11] and themes, including a separate tab dedicated to politics and protests,[12] as well as opinions added by journalists and commentators. At the time of the protests, the portal's activity in its social media channels focused solely on the issue of protests, becoming a source of information about the protests, aggregating social, financial and logistic capital as well as disseminating information on a global scale. At the same time, the reception of protests by the international community was presented, illustrated by evidence of support for the events in Hong Kong from other parts of the world. The newspaper created its own content in a variety of forms – film coverage, photos, shared memes, articles and opinions – by the newspaper's commentators and other people.

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[7] Telegram (TON - Telegram Open Network) was created in 2013, its creator is the Russian, Pavel Durov, who previously founded the Vkontakte service popular in the countries of the former USSR. It is estimated that Telegram is currently the fastest growing social network in the world, mainly due to the protection of user data. The telegram has no central computers and servers on which data is stored. The website is based on a distributed, decentralized platform, co-created and verified by the users themselves. It is an ideal tool for opposition groups in authoritarian countries, e.g., in Iran or Russia.

[8] A name card popular in Hong Kong allowing the user to pay for small purchases, transport services, etc.

[9] Hong Kong Free Press HKFP – "With attacks on journalists, advertisers withdrawing from media critical of the establishment along with the existential pressures facing the wider industry, it is ever more vital that the territory has an independent platform for critical voices to be heard.Our mission: We aim to be the most independent and credible English-language news source in Greater China. We seek to amplify the voices of the voiceless, not the powerful. And our platform will act as a monitor should Hong Kong's core values and freedoms be threatened. The HKFP team is fully committed to reporting the facts, without fear, favor or interference. Free of charge and completely independent, HKFP launched in 2015 amid rising concerns over declining press freedom in Hong Kong. It was the city's first crowdfunded media outlet, and the fastest-funded, biggest crowdfunding project of its time. HKFP is home to a mix of breaking news, original reporting, features and interviews, providing a direct platform for expert voices, citizen contributors, NGOs and advocacy groups." (https://www.facebook.com/hongkongfp/) (accessed on 27.06.2019)

[10] Data on the number of people who follow content as on June 27, 2019.

[11] Hong Kong and Macau function as autonomous regions, according to the principle of one state, two systems, and the Republic of China is an independent state, treated by the PRC as a rebellious province.

[12] https://www.hongkongfp.com/category/topics/politics-protest/ (accessed on 27.06.2019.

During the protests, the community established in 2016, Demosisto,[13] was also important, acting as a social movement seeking democratic self-determination in Hong Kong. According to the declarations of the founders, among whom is Joshua Wong,[14] the goals of the movement are to be achieved through direct actions such as referendums and peaceful means of pressure. The movement is primarily on two global social networking sites – Facebook and Twitter,[15] of which Facebook is a platform of internal discourse – materials are shared in Chinese, while Twitter is in English. During the protests, the activity on Twitter consisted mainly of sharing retweets from news media, activists' retweets, and HKFP's retweets. Content created directly by Demosistō was rare. The Demosistō movement on the internet (most often through Joshua Wong) communicated information about events. On behalf of the protesters, he turned to EU and US politicians calling for influence on Hong Kong's authorities to respect human rights during the riots, but it was not identified as the organizer of the protests, and the movement was only identified as a local and pro-democratic subject of public debate in Hong Kong. To sum up, the content of both sites determined the choice of research location, which was implemented by analyzing the original content made available in English by HKFP on global Facebook and Twitter services enabling the use of content on an international scale.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The considerations contained in this article are based on two theories shaping the perception of political protests in an international context – the theory of transnational discursive spaces and the theory of agenda setting. The theory of transnational discursive spaces is based on two important aspects. The first is the assumption that there is a global public space in which global discursive spaces are created. The second is the assumption that the geographical expansion of transnational public opinion is caused by the media, in recent years primarily social media. The theory of transnational discursive spaces is a development of the theory of public space of Jürgen Habermas (1989, pp. 73-74), which assumes that public space is characterized by: free access of citizens and their exercise of their rights, including the possibility of assembly and free expression of opinions. Social media as a platform for discourse enables access for everyone so that they can express issues relevant to their own needs while accepting the importance of issues relevant for the community. Public opinion is formulated in the discourse process, which, thanks to its reach, can potentially have a global character. According to Castells (1996) and McQuail (2009), international communication using social media creates a

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[13] "Demosistō- Demos (ˈdeːˌmɔs), its origin from Latin and Ancient Greek δῆμος, carries the meaning of "the people," "the commoners" and "the citizens," and constitutes the etymological roots of the widely used term democracy in English today. While democracy, or, δημοκρατία ("dēmokratía") in Ancient Greek, represents the "krátos of the demos" (the rule of the people), we believe that the key leading us to this final goal lies in an essential stage of perseverance, struggle and endeavor - the rising up of the people – and that, is what defines our mission. Sistō (ˈsɪs.toː) is a Latin word, first person singular, for standing - standing up, standing still, standing firm. What we imply is that it is we who are the demos, and it is we who shall stand and fight, even if we shall be the last one to stand alone. Together, Demosistō represents our mission to recognize, to awaken, and to mobilize each and every member of the community of Hong Kong in rising up against injustice. Through embodying the people of Hong Kong, we strive to stand up in our resistance against tyranny and hegemony. We strive to stand firm in our persistence of the struggle for liberation from oppression. We strive to stand still in our insistence on freedom and equality." (https://www.demosisto.hk/about?lang=en - 14.08.2019)

[14] The most famous activist from Hong Kong, who since 2012 (then a 15-year-old student) has been organizing protests against Chinese influences limiting Hong Kong's autonomy, was one of the leaders of the "Umbrella Revolution" after which he was tried and sentenced to prison. He was released already during the protests in 2019.

[15] On August 14, 2019, the number of fans on Facebook was 88,500 liking and 97,000 followers (the site is run in Chinese). On Twitter on the same day there were 21,000 followers.

transnational arena of public opinion discourse. Similarly, Volkmer (1999, p. 119) claims that global communication has changed the orientation of public opinion, which ceased to be only an element of the political system of society, but instead became an autonomous global public sphere existing between the state and the global community. This leads to the conclusion that currently public opinion may have a transnational character; in its space there is a discussion about topics important from a global perspective (Volkmer 2014). When determining the subject matter relevant to public opinion, the agenda setting theory assumes that it is the news media, mainly through the process of filtering reality, that creates an image by transferring information of their choice and thus influencing what becomes the subject of discourse in public opinion. Pointing to the relevance of themes, the media therefore can order important topics that shape public opinion and discourse conducted in its space. According to Endong (2018), in the digital age, social media plays a much more important role than traditional media. Journalists, activists as well as users of social media such as Twitter and Facebook take advantage of their reach, influencing and shaping the agenda. According to research findings cited by Endong (2018, p. 39), there are five ways for activists to shape the agenda by using networks:

1. Social Networking Sites' (SNS) users decide what news is important by choosing what to share within their networks (basics agenda-setting effects)
2. Attributes regarding events are issued by SNS users under particular limitations (attribute agenda-setting)
3. In conditions of high uncertainty and relevance, SNS users can directly impact public opinion (psychological effects of agenda-setting theory)
4. SNS are becoming the source of traditional media agendas (sources of media agendas)
5. SNS users are reaffirming their opinions as a result of SNS homophily (consequences of agenda-setting effects); and users influence public figures within SNS (reverse agenda-setting effects).

The agenda setting theory in connection with the development of online media is subject to modification, which allow for new models and expanding the understanding of changes taking place in the world coming from new forms of communication (McCombs, et al. 2014, p. 783). The new agenda setting models includes a network agenda-setting model and a reverse agenda-setting model. The first of the models indicates the possibility of imposing the interpretation of the world view of public opinion by social media, which plays an important role thanks to the possibility of enhancing the effect by using emotional attributes corresponding to the preferences of the recipients (Weiman and Brosius, 2016, pp. 27-29). At the same time, the generated level of interest in the network affects traditional media, which take over topics indicated by network users, treating them as important. This leads to the use of the reverse agenda-setting model, under which the hierarchy of issues important for online public opinion is formed, which causes interest and ordering of the topic in the media agenda (Vu et al., 2014, pp. 675-680).

   Assuming, therefore, that the theory of transnational discourse may affect agenda setting as a result of users' online activity, the research hypothesized that (H1) social media creates a transnational discursive space during political protests by providing a platform for global transfer of information about protests and content confirming their impact on public opinion in a supranational dimension. Therefore, the main hypothesis assumes that social media during protests primarily performs a utilitarian function of creating a virtual space for exchanging content. The additional hypothesis adopted in the research assumes that (H2) it is the amount of information available on leading topics that shapes the media agenda, thus influencing public opinion and the transnational discourse conducted in its space, and not the reported event itself.

The research was carried out based on the content published from June 13-28 on Facebook and June 17-28 on Twitter. Posts in specified topics were categorized and the network traffic generated in connection with their publication was analyzed. [16] All posts and tweets published by HKFP on Facebook and Twitter in the research period were encoded. The coding consisted of manually extracting the content and saving it in two independent files in which the content was coded. The coding consisted of analyzing the text of each of the posts or tweets and then assigning them to the appropriate thematic category. After seven days, the encoding was repeated using a second file. A summary of the results obtained from two data coding processes revealed differences in the categorization of a total of five posts and six tweets (in both cases this information was assigned to different substantive categories). These posts and tweets were added to the category 'other'. The percentage of mismatch in the encoding process was: 2.53% for posts and 1.56% for tweets.

Posts were categorized (the same model was used for tweets) into the following thematic categories:

1. Coverage of protests – materials describing and reporting the protest, events that took place in connection with it were included here.
2. Information on reporting events in foreign media – materials from other media, which were made available on HKFP channels as reports from the Hong Kong protests.
3. The impact of events on the image and activities of Hong Kong politicians – information and opinions that referenced and commented on Hong Kong's administrative authorities in a way that simultaneously formulated opinions and assessments of the situation and responsibility for it.
4. Repressions against activists – this category includes information that concerned both previous repressions against protesters during the Umbrella Revolution, which were recalled in connection with protests, as well as potential threats to the civil movement and political opposition resulting from the introduction of the extradition bill.
5. Effects of protests – posts describing all circumstances surrounding protests, such as commenting on protesters' behavior, devastation, pollution of the city, seizure of public facilities, facts directly related to the protests.
6. Protests in the world – information reporting support for protests from the world - organized happenings, demonstrations, declarations of support by famous and popular persons.
7. Other – this category includes memes, fundraisers for protesters, and other information that was not included in the other categories.

The results obtained because of the categorization were compared with the number and content of journalistic materials published on the internet portals of selected news media (global, regional and national) in the period from June 13-30, 2019. The first period of protest duration was deliberately taken into account. When it was purely local, information about the reasons for the outbreak of the demonstration and the course of the protest was new and original, and at the same time the protest generated no significance outside of Hong Kong. Over time, the escalation of events took place, taking on an increasingly serious course (brutal police actions against demonstrators, directing Chinese military troops to the city limits) and also affecting people unrelated and uninterested in the event (the occupation of the airport by protesters and two-day halt of departures from Hong Kong), which increased news media interest in the situation in Hong Kong. The aim of the research was to find a relationship between reporting events in social media and their impact on shaping the agenda in the analyzed news media. The

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[16] The research was carried out from June 28 to July 3, 2019 – data on network traffic included in the tables was up to date at the time of the study.

selection of news media with content devoted to Hong Kong protests (contained on their websites) that was accepted for analysis included: global news media (CNN International, BBC World, RT, Al Jazeera), European news channels (Politico and EuroNews) and a local Polish daily newspaper, positioning itself as pro-democratic and civil (Gazeta Wyborcza). The media were selected into the sample based on their ownership diversity, which affect the type of content published and their media impact.

The second part of the study shows the number of direct references in the texts of the analyzed information channels to the content published on the HKFP website (the time criterion was omitted here, taking into account all the information for which the portal was the source of the content) and citations listed (directly from social media – Facebook and Twitter and photos also from the Instagram channel), which came from leaders of the Demosistō movement or other people actively participating. This part of the conducted research allowed linking and analyzing the agenda setting of the studied information channels with the communication acts that were conducted on the network by entities communicating about events in Hong Kong.

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of the content made available on June 13-28, 2019 showed that there was no information other than on the subject of the extradition act and related issues on HKFP social media channels.

Table 2. HKFP service content on Facebook (13-28 June 2019).

Theme of posts	The number of published posts	The number of people liking	The number of comments	The number of shares
coverage of protests	65	54 255	4553	11875
information on reporting events in foreign media	3	1680	77	420
the impact of events on the image and activities of Hong Kong politicians	35	17 122	2549	5115
repressions against activists	16	5979	740	1684
effects of protests	25	7238	1734	1684
protests in the world	29	18368	1204	6103
other	25	9059	887	2230

Source: own elaboration

There are several regularities confirming that the HKFP service has been transformed into a service reporting the course of protests and their impact on the environment at the place of protest and beyond.

1. The main content was coverage of the protest, which also generated the largest network traffic. On average, 13 posts per day were published on the website during the surveyed period (15 days), all related only to the subject of protests.
2. An important element of the content were posts in which the image of the Hong Kong administration was presented, especially its head Carrie Lam, as a dishonest person implementing Beijing's orders against the will of Hong Kong residents (this image was comprised of opinions expressed by commentators and published opinions of activists and other people, such as scientists). Noting both the number of posts about this topic and the network traffic they generated, it should be assumed that much attention was paid to the image of local political leaders presenting their attitude and actions in opposition to the dominant majority of protesters.[17]
3. Creating the image of protests in the context of political and social circumstances in which Hong Kong operates (one state, two systems), attention was paid to the repression of authorities against protesters and activists. Reaching for the opinion and also describing the story of Joshua Wong, the HKFP reported the stories of activists, their persecution by the Chinese authorities in the context of the fate that political opponents may face after the introduction of the extradition law.
4. On its Facebook page, HKFP reported the protests that took place in the world as support for Hong Kong events. The posts reported demonstrations of support, which took place, among others in London, Oxford, Frankfurt, Belgium and Switzerland and outside Europe in Vancouver, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra, Hobart, Perth and Adelaide. HKFP also shared that the protests took place as an expression of support for the pro-Beijing policy of Hong Kong authorities. The relations, therefore, were seemingly objective in nature, not limited to merely providing information on the activities of the opponents. However, taking into account the previously mentioned divisions that exist in the local society, such information had the effect of mobilizing and activating opponents. Protesters mainly relied on increasing the reach of posts that they liked or shared. Posts were much less frequently commented on.

In the process of reporting events, various content carriers were used – movies, reports (27 reports were made available during the period under review, which generated over 350,000 original views by June 28. In addition, Carrie Lam's statements regarding explanations and apologies to Hong Kong residents concerning the commencement of work on the extradition act were also made available twice, which received a total of 81,000 views.), photos and memes as well as journalistic materials and the opinions of newspaper commentators. Using the same forms of communication and communication tools during protests, which are used by protest leaders and activists, the effect was achieved by transforming the newspaper's website into a channel covering the protests, recognizing them as the most important information for both Hong Kong residents and other network users tracking the published content.

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[17] These words take on significance in relation to the number of protesters in Hong Kong, which during the demonstration and march on June 16, exceeded 2 million (the number of Hong Kong residents is currently less than 7.5 million inhabitants), which places this protest among not only the most numerous in Hong Kong, but also in the world.

Table 3. HKFP service content on Twitter (17-28 June 2019).[18]

Theme of tweets	the number of tweets	the number of responses	the number of retweets	the number of likes
coverage of protests	91	292	4233	6129
information on reporting events in foreign media	1	7	30	37
the impact of events on the image and activities of Hong Kong politicians	78	281	2005	3130
repressions against activists	35	82	745	916
effects of protests	64	152	1540	2044
protests in the world	87	192	3802	4942
other	29	43	550	874

Source: own elaboration

In the case of Twitter content, protest information was definitely dominant over the period (but it was not the only topic). Unlike Facebook content, tweets were multiplied, the same tweets were posted several times, increasing both the number of published information per day and their potential ranges. Comparing the average number of daily published tweets to Facebook posts, the relationship was as follows: Facebook – 13 posts per day; Twitter – 35 tweets per day. The activity of Twitter users, similarly as in the case of Facebook, was primarily aimed at increasing the reach of the published content, through information retweets and liking. HKFP on Twitter created a discourse platform, but it was negligible compared to the basic goal of users, which was to increase the reach of information. Published tweets (marking was less often used on Facebook) were accompanied by hashtags: #ProtestHongKong; #HongKongDemocracy; #ExtraditionBill; #FreeHongKong; #FreedomHongKong; #g20OsakaSummit; #g20FreeHongKong; #HongKongprodemocracy; #HongKongisChina.

To sum up, content analysis on both HKFP newspaper's social networking sites has identified and defined the perception of protests. The largest amount of information was found for two thematic categories, i.e., reports on events and information whose content shaped the image of Hong Kong authorities. Analyzing the content dominant in messages on both Facebook and Twitter with user activity, which was primarily focused on increasing the reach of content, it can be assumed that the portal assumed the role of the sender of information about events in Hong Kong, thus filling the gap created in connection with the lack of integrated communication conducted by event organizers themselves.

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[18] Given the restrictions imposed by Twitter, it was possible to access the published content only until June 17. Previously published tweets were not available. Thus, it was impossible to analyze the content created at the same time as on Facebook.

Coverage of protests by news media

When determining the content of selected news media, the same information categorization model was used as in the case of posts and tweets posted on HKFP websites. The chart below illustrates the distribution regarding the amount and subject matter of information in the news media in the period June 13-30, 2019. (see Figure 1)

Figure 1. The subject of materials devoted to protests in Hong Kong appearing in   selected   news media in the period from June 13-30, 2019.
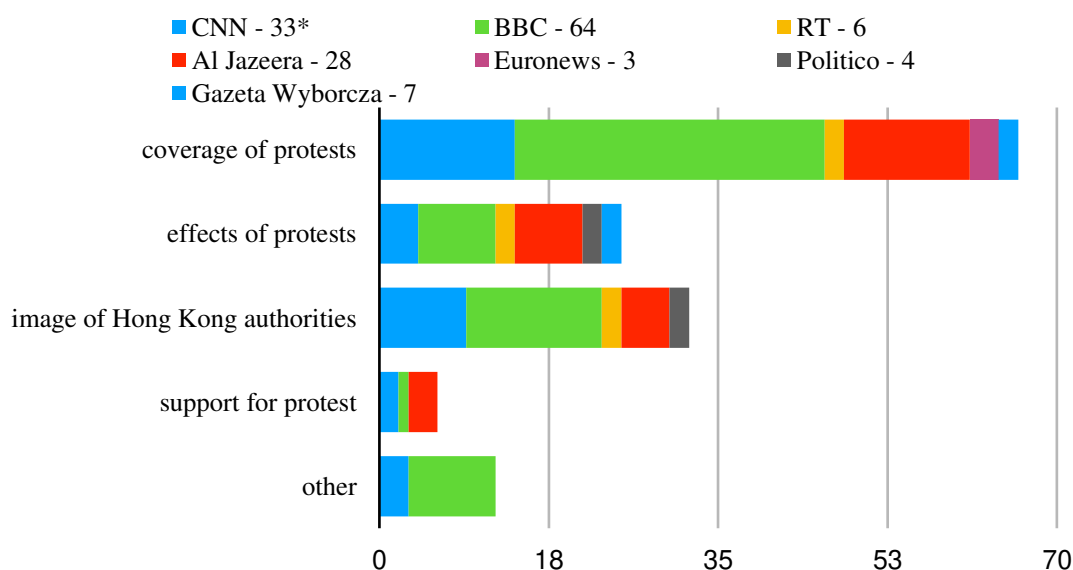
the number of reports that appeared in individual media during the period considered

These data show that news media focused attention on the same two dominant topics that appeared when analyzing user activity in global social media. The news media most often presented accounts of protests (in this case, broadcasts on three global television stations dominated – CNN, BBC and Al Jazeera). Both Al Jazeera and the BBC devoted several materials to the organization of events using social media, indicating how they were used by activists. Attention was paid to the use of applications that protect user data, the important pro-democratic role of social media in the organization of protests was emphasized.[19] The second dominant topic in the news media was the image of the Hong Kong authorities in the light of the information presented, which contained content highlighting the lack of confidence in local authorities and the demand for the resignation of the head of the Hong Kong administration – Carrie Lam, who is considered by residents to be implementing the policy of the PRC in Hong Kong. The opinions published in the news media, which touched upon the subject of the image of the authorities, which lost the reputation and trust of citizens, also emphasized China's violation of the "one state - two systems" principle underlying the takeover of Hong Kong in 1997. Again, the largest amount of information appeared on three global television stations (CNN, BBC, Al Jazzera). It should be noted that European news media did not devote a lot of attention to the events, and they reported the events in a different way to the aforementioned TV stations. Euronews focused on reporting the protests, pointing out the accompanying ideas and the number of demonstrators. Politico, however, drew attention to the events in Hong Kong

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[19] https://www.bbc.com/news/business-48619804;https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-48802125; https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/surveillance-savvy-hong-kong-protesters-digitally-dark-190618104439415.html; accessed 12.03.2020.

focusing on the effects of protests and the image of the Hong Kong authorities. The protests were presented in the context of the visit of a representative of the German government to China, who drew attention to the protests, emphasizing the need to maintain the unchanging status of the region and respecting human rights by the authorities in Hong Kong. He pointed out that this could be a condition for Germany's further cooperation with the Middle Kingdom. Politico also referred to the events in Hong Kong in the context of the G20 meeting, referring to opinions expressed by the Demosisto movement, which proves that journalists noticed the movement as a local political entity, its activity and formulated postulates.

In the Polish daily, the news concerned two topics – protests were reported, highlighting the involvement of people in their course and the effects of events were presented, mainly in the context of the future of Hong Kong.

RT devoted six reports to the events in Hong Kong, which significantly distanced this global television station from other stations (CNN, BBC and Al Jazzera). RT's reports focused on the presentation of the brutality used to pacify student protests (two materials), emphasizing Carrie Lam's apology for the situation of residents and opinions expressed by the PRC, which demanded that the US "not interfere in China's internal affairs" (2 materials) and others. One of the reports was devoted to the cleaning of Hong Kong by protesters after the demonstration – which made this protest different from others (specific examples of events in the US were given)[20] and the second was dedicated to Nike company which was forced to withdraw some of the goods from the Chinese market after declaring support for the protesters by one of the brand's designers.[21]

To sum up, the news coverage of Hong Kong events coincided in the number of materials giving relevance to specific topics with the image promoted by users involved in the Hong Kong protest online. The differences consisted in the way the content was presented, which resulted from framing by individual channels (especially Politico – economic issues and the situation of Hong Kong as the EU's economic partner and RT – content useful for the propaganda of the channel owner). In contrast, global TV stations such as CNN, BBC and Al Jazerra focused on the transmission of content, taking into account a lot of it published on the web in connection with protests, such as street art performance related to the protest, support of the protest by Hong Kong's religious leaders or local celebrities (Al-Jazzera). Global TV stations also focused on Joshua Wong's involvement in protests and his internet activity – calling on Carrie Lam to step down, coverage of the protest of supporters of Hong Kong's faster integration with mainland China (BBC), and finally reports from the G20 where Hong Kong residents demonstrated to draw the attention of world leaders to their problems, information on fake news that activists were spreading (CNN).

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[20] https://www.rt.com/news/462133-hong-kong-protest-clean-up/ (accessed: 16.08.2019)
[21] https://www.rt.com/sport/462724-nike-china-hong-kong-protests/ (accessed: 16.08.2019)

The HKFP portal and the Demosistō movement as sources of shaping content in news media

Table 4 - pointing to the HKFP portal as the source of information about protests in Hong Kong

Media	Date of publication and access to the publication
BBC	20.08.2019 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49403619 21.08.2019 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49419711 24.08.2019 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-49445555
CNN	4.06.2019 https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/badiucao-documentary-reveals-identity-intl/index.html 12.06.2019 https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/11/opinions/hong-kong-protests-government-abuse-judiciary-cheung/index.html
Al Jazzera	12.08.2019 https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/police-fire-tear-gas-thousands-rally-hong-kong-190811100536606.html 11.11.2019 https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/police-fire-tear-gas-thousands-rally-hong-kong-190811100536606.html
RT	none
Gazeta Wyborcza	30.10.2019 https://wyborcza.pl/7,75399,25361078,w-piatym-miesiacu-protestow-hongkong-wszedl-w-recesje-br.html 03.10.2019 https://wyborcza.pl/7,75399,25266298,hongkong-postrzelony-przez-policjanta-nastolatek-uslyszal-zarzuty.html
Euronews	28.07.2019 https://www.euronews.com/2019/07/28/protesters-in-hong-kong-defy-authorities-and-march-once-again 30.08.2019 https://www.euronews.com/2019/08/30/hong-kong-pro-democracy-activists-arrested-ahead-of-planned-protests 30.09.2019 https://www.euronews.com/2019/09/30/hong-kong-protests-expected-to-go-ahead-on-china-anniversary-despite-ban
Politico	none

An analysis of the content published on the websites of the studied traditional media revealed that the HKFP website was the source of information (journalists referred to the website and cited the information posted there) in materials published on the dates presented in the table. Most of them cover a period later than the one that was the subject of the analysis (except for two publications from the CNN, which date earlier than the analyzed period). This means that in the first weeks of protests (June 2019) the website may not have been recognized globally, so it was not an important source of information. It was more often derived from the social activity of Demosistō activists (table below). Over time, however, not only did global services such as BBC and Al Jazeera draw attention to the content published through HKFP, but also local media, such as the Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza. This means that as the events in Hong Kong intensified and gained international character, the importance of the local internet portal increased, affecting media agenda-setting.

Table 5. citing statements published on social media by the Demosistō movement and its leaders

Media	Date and access to publications	Statement in question
Al Jazzera	13 of June 2019 https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/hong-kong-clashes-erupt-protesters-storm-legislature-190612062139226.html	"Isaac Cheng, the 19-year-old vice chair of student protest group Demosisto, told Al Jazeera he saw the decision to postpone the debate as "some kind of victory for Hong Kong people and the protesters," but warned the city's pro-China legislators would be "ready for a marathon meeting" in an attempt to outlast those demonstrating outside"
Al Jazzera	18 of June 2019 https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/06/leaderless-masked-face-hong-kong-protests-190618032833711.html	"By and large, the protesters were young. "They're definitely leaderless," Chow said. "They communicate through social media." Among protesters, the app of choice was Telegram. Police appeared to know this - they had arrested Ivan Ip, the administrator of a chat group with some 20,000 members. But there were dozens of groups like Ip's on Telegram and across the internet. If a chat was shut down, users could easily take their discussion elsewhere. They also used Airdrop, a file-sharing function on Apple devices, to share messages and memes, sometimes with random strangers"

BBC	25.06.2019 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29457900	In an essay posted on his Facebook page (in Chinese) he wrote: "Many citizens have said to me that 'Hong Kong relies on you." "I feel uncomfortable and even irritated when I hear this praise. When you were suffering pepper spray and tear gas but decided to stay for the protest despite the repression from the government, I was not able to do anything other than stare at a meal box and the blank walls of the detention room and feel powerless."
BBC	30.06.2019 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-40453253	"Police later arrested the 26 activists, who were calling for greater political freedoms and protesting against the perceived growing influence of Beijing. They also called for the release of terminally ill Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo. The political party Demosisto, founded by Mr Wong and Mr Law, said on its Twitter account on Friday morning that all its arrested members were released. Mr Wong **tweeted** that he was detained for "breaking the 'public nuisance' law". Police said in a statement the activists had been released on bail and must report back to police in September. They have not been charged, reported AFP news agency."
CNN	16.06.2019. https://edition.cnn.com/asia/live-news/hong-kong-protests-june-16-intl-hnk/index.html	"As American security and business interests are also jeopardized by possible extradition arrangements with China, I believe the time is ripe for Washington to re-evaluate the U.S.–Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992, which governs relations between the two places. I also urge Congress to consider the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act. The rest of the international community should make similar efforts," Wong wrote.
CNN	17.06.2019. https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/17/asia/joshua-wong-hong-kong-protests-intl-hnk/index.html	Tweet of Joshua Wong in the text: "Hello world and hello freedom. I have just been released from prison. GO HONG KONG!! Withdraw the extradition bill. Carrie Lam step down. Drop all political prosecutions!"

CNN	19.06.2019 https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/19/asia/viral-photo-hong-kong-protests-trnd/index.html	"The image is the first result of a Twitter search for "Hong Kong protests," with more than 28,000 likes and 8,000 retweets. It's also been reposted on Instagram by people including Nathan Law, founding chair of the pro-democracy group, Demosisto."
Euronews	17.06.2019. https://www.euronews.com/2019/06/17/hong-kong-activist-joshua-wong-freed-from-jail-to-join-mass-protest	Tweet of Joshua Wong in the text: "Hello world and hello freedom. I have just been released from prison. GO HONG KONG!! Withdraw the extradition bill. Carrie Lam step down. Drop all political prosecutions!"
Euronews	17.06.2019. https://www.euronews.com/2019/06/17/hong-kong-mass-protests-are-just-start-wider-human-rights-n1018211	George Chen „ Hong Kong Police chief clarifies it only holds 5 riot suspects and respects HK people's rights to protest, a rare and clear attempt to ease public frustrations on the police earlier defining HK protest a "riot"
Politico	27.06.2019. https://www.politico.eu/article/the-g20-report-presented-by-demosisto-us-china-ceasefire-moody-macron-trump-vs-india-on-tariffs/	**A message from Demosistō: Hong Kong is a top destination for FDI and the EU is Hong Kong's second largest merchandise trading partner. A proposed extradition law in Hong Kong has brought 2 million citizens to the street, yet the government refused to withdraw the bill and has stigmatized the peaceful protests as riots.**
Politico	28.06.2019. https://www.politico.eu/article/politico-pro-g20-report-presented-by-demosisto-trump-xi-redux-eu-eyes-big-deal-abe-frets	**A message from Demosistō: The fable of the 'boiling frog' vividly describes how freedoms of speech and assembly as well as political participation have been gradually shrinking in Hong Kong since its handover to China in 1997. Ironically, many people around the world might still consider the city is enjoying a high level of liberty unimaginable to many living in mainland China. In June 2019, Hongkongers have spoken up to the world to express their distrust of an undemocratically elected government that ignores the economic hardships of the many underprivileged citizens and that relies on finance industry as the only pillar of development, which can be detrimental to the city's sustainability. Therefore, today, the 7 million Hongkongers call on the international community to support their fight in preserving their fundamental values that have been binding the society.**

Politico	29.06.2019. https://www.politico.eu/article/ politico-pro-g20-report-presented-by-demosisto-china-ceasefire-climate-counterattack-mercosur/	**A message from Demosistō: As you are reading this, the Trump-Xi meeting in Osaka is already over and businesses worldwide are evaluating its influence for them. In the past two decades, Hong Kong has weathered multiple crises and remained as a world financial center — but will this success story prevail?**

The above table contains examples of the impact of content posted on social networking sites used by people associated with the Demosistō movement and the movement itself in the period under consideration. The content of the table confirms that social media was a tool for shaping social impact and influenced the transnational discourse, which was also significant for publications in the analyzed period. This usually happened as a result of quoting opinions or presenting photos in the examined media channels. The content came from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (photos). Research has not confirmed the direct impact of HKFP services (disclosed in reference directly to the content of the portal) on setting the agenda, here content framing resulting from the sender's expectations was more important, however the analysis of hashtags indicated that these overlapped significantly. One global channel which did not mention either HKFP or the pro-democracy movement related to the organization of events in Hong Kong was RT – a channel managed by the Kremlin. As mentioned earlier, the information appearing on the RT website was informative or described curiosities, and in the following months the message was intensified and aimed at achieving the propaganda goals of the sender, in whose interest was neither the promotion of civic groups nor the free press (Piechota, 2020). However, considering the intensification of events and the international dimension, the RT channel could not ignore protest coverage on its news sites.

Conclusion

Social media is a source of information for traditional news media which conveys content by framing it according to traditional media's program line, shared values and in a manner dependent on the interests of ownership and recipient profiling. The main limitation of the study is that the analysis only included English-language channels of communication about protests. Shaping transnational discursive spaces using the studied content was global, although at the same time limited due to the effects of media channel values on the content shared. The content provided by HKFP and the Demosistō movement directed the discourse to specific values. At the same time, other existing and active channels of communication, also networked communication, constructed an alternative messages regarding protests, also shaping transnational discursive spaces in the network, with reference to other values (Piechota 2020). This leads to the conclusion that networked communication is a space for the dissemination of various content, each of which can potentially generate opportunities to shape transnational discourse spaces. Global social networking sites Facebook and Twitter are important channels creating transnational discursive spaces that affect the news media's agenda, despite the fact that the protesters used applications protecting their data for communication, thanks to the taking over of the information and integration function by other entities. An additional important tool are hashtags. They channel emotions in the discourse which give a symbolic meaning to the slogans disclosed in them. Shaping the space of transnational discourse consists primarily of increasing the reach of information, giving importance to the event and arousing

interest in network public opinion by giving meaning to specific topics. In the case of this protest during the period under review, it created the image of the Hong Kong administration in international public opinion. The importance of specific thematic content in social media results from the number of shared posts and tweets, determining the manner in which protests are reported by news media. An important element confirming the role of social media in shaping the transnational discursive space can be seen in posting information about support flowing to protesters in various forms from other parts of the world. This confirms that the protest is of global significance and the information shared through the network affects the attitudes and behavior of individuals and then shapes global public opinion causing interest in news media. Emotions arising from the content of posts and tweets influence the image of politicians taking specific positions toward the protest. Users' network traffic which channels and disseminates emotions is further reported and commented in the news media and in turn shapes public opinion.

The conclusions of the study confirmed H1, which assumed that protesters use social media as a platform for the global transfer of information about protests, and a source of knowledge about their impact on public opinion in the global dimension, as evidenced by various forms of support for the network-reported protest. The space of discourse marked out by social media is informative and emotional in nature, resulting from the amount of information on a particular topic and its emotional channeling through the hashtags used (#). In the context of the conducted research, H2 was also confirmed, which assumed that the amount of published information that can be attributed to a specific topic has an impact on the shape of the media agenda. This is subject to framing by the sender, however, the information that dominates is the result of users' network activity that gives selected topics a dominant meaning. Thus, shaping the agenda with its sources in social media messages is not so much the effect of the significance of the reported event itself, but becomes the effect of attention paid to specific elements of this event by network users giving meaning to selected topics.

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Data Article

Prestige and independence-controlled publication performance of researchers at 14 Hungarian research institutions between 2014 and 2018 – a data paper

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Abstract: This data article describes a dataset showing the five-year performance of 471 researchers from 14 Hungarian research institutions, with a total of 3219 observations. Each observation represent items produced between the 1st January 2014 and the 31th December 2018 by a researcher employed in the sampled research institutions from one of six research output types. Due to a prestige and independence-controlled categorization of research output, and the scarcity of easily accessible, well-structured data curated for research performance evaluation, this dataset can play an important role in new research evaluation policies at Hungarian research institutions aiming to enhance global competitiveness by fostering scientific excellence and innovation.

Keywords: research institutions; publication trends; science policy; scientometrics; Research Assessment: Hungary

Ideas and Aims

Academic performance evaluation has become a key issue in almost all Central and Eastern European countries (Dobbins & Kwiek, 2017; Dobos et al., 2020); among them Hungary (Sasvári & Urbanovics, 2019; 2021), and the topic will continue to challenge policymakers both at the national and institutional level for many years to come. In the Western academic tradition, the measurement of academic performance is orienting toward research indicators (Ennew & Greenaway, 2012; Kaulisch & Enders, 2005). The Western idea of personal academic excellence is closely tied to publishing (and being cited) in top tier journals present in global bibliographic databases, which in turn has a direct effect on academic promotions and winning competitive grants (Bormann, 2017; Demeter, 2020; Ronda-Pupo & Katz, 2018). Staff excellence is also part of the wider context in which research-intensive higher education institutions amass reputational capital within the framework of transnational comparisons solidified in university ranking tables, attracting and securing further agents for knowledge production and earning advantages for their countries and region in the global

knowledge economy (Inzelt et al., 2014; Locke et al., 2018). Until recently—and mainly due to historical reasons—academic excellence in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries was less tied to scientometric indicators and more plagued by informalities compared to the U.S. and Western Europe. Despite having numerous recent examples from the region where central and institutional-level quality control measures were reformed based on output evaluation practices currently in application at Western European institutions, most of the region's academic life (including in Hungary) is still characterized by its communist-socialist legacy (Dobbins 2011; 2015; Dobbins & Kwiek, 2017). This means that most Higher Education Institutions in these countries are still primarily teaching-oriented with a lighter research load, while the highest quality research is produced in the national Academy of Sciences. However, in some, if not most, subfields of humanities and the social sciences, quality control at these Academies is still weak, or not applied with sufficient consistency to motivate performance (Asheulova & Dushina, 2014; Havas & Fáber, 2020).

The dataset presented in this paper was constructed with multiple ideas and aims in mind. The basic ideas behind its compilation are that Hungary needs to develop a national science evaluation policy which prioritizes prestigious research output and international visibility in humanities and social sciences (and in that sense, to become closer to the current standards of core countries in academic knowledge production). At the same time, administrative measures must be taken to decrease the corruptive effects of informalities; that is, various practices mediated through social networks capable to affect and even secure science evaluation outcomes normally based on publicly available, official rules, criterias or policies. In this paper, while acknowledging the constructive power of informalities in the case of an ineffective system held down by obsolate structures and practices, especially in an Eastern European regional context (Darden 2008, Ledeneva 2013), the authors use informalities as a normatively negative term associated with favoritism, cronyism and nepotism. Such informalities provide special privileges to relatives, friends and people with similar ideological/religious convictions and those in one's personal or institutional academic network during the evaluation of their scientific performance.

It is an imperative that in order to minimize the effect of gaming the system, the above two ideas cannot be treated separately, as producing prestigious research as a result of informalities would defeat the very idea of scientific excellence. Therefore, individual- and institutional-level metrics of research output must be controlled for independence. A distinction from publishing only or mainly in reputable journals of national and regional origins is necessary to assure that the research output-based merit of individual researchers or research institutes remain unaffected by the effects of symbolic and social capital most commonly acquired by and at the disposal of Hungarian academics. This would also bring the practice of padding indexed institutional or departmental journals with papers produced by authors connected to the same institution/department to an end and using the journal as a depository where results are published without going through a truly independent peer review process.

In recent times, there were some heavily criticized government-initiated shifts and changes in the Hungarian academic landscape, which continues still today. Government attacks on "liberal" academics and academic circles unsympathetic toward the Orbán government started in the early 2010s (Habermas and Nida-Rümelin 2011), evoking similarly hostile public criticism from government-critical intellectual circles toward academics connected to, or leaning toward the Orbán-regime. Mid-decade Hungarian governmental science policy mainly aimed at favoring applied research in STEM disciplines. The government tried to financially motivate students into economically strategic fields and reserving state funding for such majors, at the expense of other disciplines including humanities, law, and management studies (Marcus 2014). At the same time, new research institutions, grants and scholarships popped up as alternatives to existing, established research institutions and funding, with the aim of building

government-favorable discourses and providing scientific legitimation for the right-wing governing party's political agendas (Karáth 2018, Tóth 2019). Reaching this political goal could not have been done by other means, since social sciences have a long history of being left-leaning, progressive (Rothman et al., 2010; Gross 2013) and irreligious (Ecklund & Scheitle 2007; Yancey et. al. 2015) not only in Hungary, but at a general level in Western academe. This asymmetry leads to political bias, which, according to a model proposed by Honeycutt and Jussim (2020), can affect who becomes an academic social scientist, what questions are asked, how key constructs are measured, how findings are interpreted, what ideas or findings are suppressed, what literature are considered relevant, valuable or important (and therefore, cited), and whether or not the research findings and conclusions will be canonized in a particular field. In this ideologically sensitive environment, "scientific literature itself becomes politically biased, regardless of whether individual researchers harbor such biases" (2020:81). Therefore, it was reasonable to think that new research institutions, and new, state-funded research will provide topics, research questions, subjects, results and interpretations more apt to support government narratives, and to raise a new generation of social scientists with political values different from what is prevalent in the current academic community.

Some constelations of political bias can actually help produce prestigious research, masking the inadequate quality of the research in question. Such a situation has been recently referenced in the context of research quality and evaluation by the current president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), Tamás Freund. Known as a religious, moderately conservative figure with good connections in the Hungarian government, Freund criticized those social scientists employed in the networks of HAS whose performance, if measured by international standards, is inadequate. They can only prevail hiding behind the mask of government criticism, states Freund, and it is not rare that a manuscript from a weakly performing social scientist would be rejected by a prestigeous international journal based on professional reasons, yet they accept it with open arms if wrapped in criticism of the Orbán-government (Balázs 2019, Őry 2020).

Freund is also actively trying to manage government expectations by playing a role in the restructuring of HAS, a process by which its former research network (15 research institutes) and all of their assets were relocated to the newly founded Eötvös Loránd Research Network with (among others) the promise of better quality control and more just, performance-based allocation of research funding. It is evident that these reforms can only be beneficial for the Hungarian research environment, political motivations aside, if they help establish and enforce merit-based motivational and sanctioning mechanisms, applied independently from political values expressed by the individual researcher, or stance taken in public discourses at the institute level.

In light of the sometimes unnecessarily politicized debates about who is an excellent researcher, who merits grants, positions or who should be responsible for managing departments or research institutes, there is a genuine need for evidence-based policymaking. The presented dataset, which is informative on its own, can be a valuable tool for evidence-based policymaking in the form of providing an overview of the recent research output of both new research institutions of the System of National Cooperation (SoNC), and old ones from the research network of the HAS, as well as their particular researchers employed.

The data can be analyzed further, advancing the implementations of various rewards and sanctions based on quality research output (or the lack thereof). Meticulously researched national science policies are also apt to advance positive, negative, centripetal, and centrifugal mobility within universities and research institutions. In this context, positive mobility means attracting highly skilled foreign academics motivated to produce research of similar quality to what can be expected based on their recent output. Negative mobility means creating a research and institutional environment in which national researchers capable (and willing) to publish

their results at a top international level are symbolically and financially compensated for their efforts, preferably at a degree which makes them less likely to relocate to a foreign country to further an academic career. Centripetal mobility is meant to designate a process during which high-performing members of the academic community so far marginalized or excluded from access to funding and various forms of symbolic appreciations in academia, are attracted and repositioned closer to the center, to a degree which reflects their relative scientific merits in that specific community. Finally, as the counterpart to the above, centrifugal mobility is to force unproductive/low-output researchers currently in high academic positions to the symbolic periphery of a given research institution (or a research-intensive higher education institution), where their clout, salaries and access to funding, as well as their responsibilities and expected results are adjusted to their academic merits.

The authors believe that the above can lead to a more just, performance-based distribution of positions, responsibilities and available funding which enhance global competitiveness by fostering scientific excellence and innovation at the national level. We wish to contribute to this process by providing the dataset below.

Methods

Categorization of the analyzed institutions

We collected data from governmental and academic research institutes covering politically sensitive soft science fields. Based on their thematic coverage, we selected eight recently founded governmental, and six independent, traditional academic institutions from the network of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences with overlapping research profiles. Regarding the "research" and "academic" character of these institutions, we relied on their self-definition as reported in their official documents and communications available online. An institution was categorized as governmental if and only if the governmental founding and funding of the institution was well documented in public sources. Institutes were categorized independent for denoting their lack of dependency from the current Hungarian government and does not encompass meanings referring to lack of dependency from any other funding entity beside the current Hungarian government. The authors were in agreement in categorization decisions in every case.

Data collection

Data collection and categorization was conducted from the 13th July to the 29th August, 2019. An online search in Google.hu identified governmental research institutions and we then located and read through their websites. After confirming their self-definition as research institutions, a list of institutional staff was obtained from the websites, from which those employed full time primarily to do research were selected (all other, i.e. administrative, or training staff, were deselected). During the search, 11 governmental research institutions was found, but only seven had the name of their research staff openly available on the institutional website. The remaining four were contacted through their listed contact email addresses and were asked for this information in official letters. One of them provided the list of their research staff at request, one declined based on data confidentiality concerns, and two did not reply at all.

In total, the research staff of eight governmental institutions[1] in the sample, with 78 researchers total were included. We then selected six independent institutions with a total of 393 academic staff from the research network of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences,[2] their profiles covering approximately the same areas. Research staff employed in these institutions were retrieved from their respective institutional websites by applying the same screening criteria. All academic institutions listed their research staff on their webpages.

The publication output of each researcher found on these lists was collected and organized in Microsoft Excel. First, we checked the researcher's profile in Elsevier's SCOPUS, which was preferred for an overview of publication output over Clarivate Analytics' Web of Science because of the former's better coverage of the social sciences. We used SCOPUS Author Search to confirm whether the researcher is present in SCOPUS at all. Due to differences in Western and Hungarian name ordering, for a researcher "Firstname Lastname" we both looked for "F. Lastname" and "Firstname L.". We received multiple hits multiple times, in these cases we checked for matching institutional affiliations, then accessed these profiles independently. Not all researchers had a profile in SCOPUS, and some of them had multiple partial profiles under different IDs. To ensure the reliability of our data we double-checked the information provided by SCOPUS by comparing them with their MTMT (Hungarian Scientific Bibliography Database) profile, which is the main Hungarian database for keeping the publication record of academic staff members, and its usage is mandatory for all Hungarian academics. Items present in only one of these databases, or items categorized differently in SCOPUS and in MTMT were confirmed individually for their respective item type.

Data categorization

In order to be able to assess the publication output of the analyzed institutions' research staff, we used a novel categorization for highlighting the independence and the quality of published items. For independence, we made a distinction between items published with national (Hungarian), regional (Central and Eastern-European) and extra-regional (other parts of the world) publishers. For quality, we first narrowed the list of publications to peer-reviewed ones, meaning only original articles, review articles, chapters in edited books and monographs were considered. We double checked the article types offered by SCOPUS every time by looking at the actual item on the publisher's website. In the occasions the database misrepresented the categorization of publications (for example, labeling a 2-page book review as research article, or a book chapter as an article), the authors recategorized the item in question. After controlling for internationally, peer reviewed content and article type, we adopted SCIMAGO's quartile-type classification (Q1 – Q4) to the collected articles published in extra-regional journals: The first quartile (Q1) was for papers published in journals indexed in the top 25 percent of SCIMAGO-indexed journals of a specific science field, Q2 represents journals between the top 25 percent and the top 50 percent, and so on. We have labeled the newly constructed categories as "ExtR Q1", "ExtR Q2", "ExtR Q3" and "ExtR Q4".

We always used the journal's SCIMAGO classification of the same year in which the articles were published. If a journal was assigned to more than one field, we used its best

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[1] Namely; Tamás Molnár Research Centre (labeled: SoNC Tamás Molnár RC), Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology at the Hungarian Academy of Arts (SoNC HAA RIATM), VERITAS Research Institute and Archives (SoNC VERITAS), Research Institute and Archives for the History of Regime Change (SoNC RETÖRKI), Pallas Athene Geopolitical Research Institute (SoNC Pallas Athene GRI), Migration Research Institute (SoNC Migration RI), Center for Fundamental Rights (SoNC CFR), and Research Institute for National Policy (SoNC RINP).

[2] Namely, Institute for Political Science (labeled: HAS IPS), Institute of Art History (HAS IAH), Research Institute for Linguistics (HAS RIL), Institute for Sociology (HAS IS), Institute for Legal Studies (HAS ILS) and Institute of History (HAS IH)

quartile for classification purposes. For example, a 2017 article published in *Social Semiotics* (ISSN: 1470-1219), would have been classified as a ExtR Q1 article, based on its publisher (Taylor and Francis, UK) and its Q1 position in Cultural studies:

Figure 1: Scimago classification values assigned to journal articles
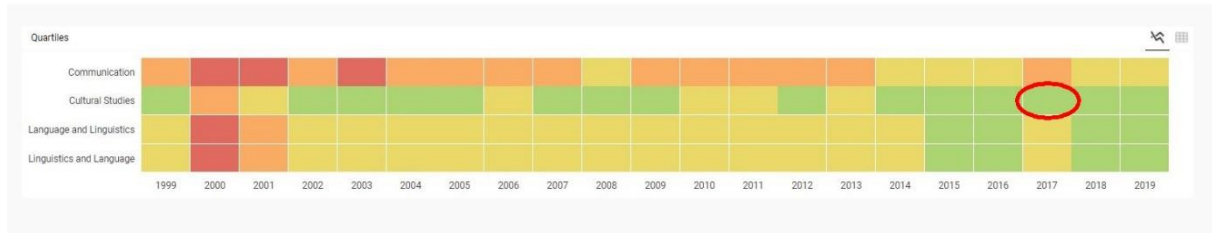
Source: scimagojr.com

Articles published in SCOPUS-indexed journals from the wider CEE region, or specifically from Hungary went to the "Regional - CEE" and "National - HUN" categories, independently from the quartile their journals belonged to in SCIMAGO. We have not used further quality classification for SCOPUS-indexed chapters and monographs either; they were simply categorized under "Chapters" and "Monographs". Monographs were only counted if they were published by a non-Hungarian academic publisher.

Data collected from SCOPUS and compared with MTMT were categorized for each individual researcher in the pattern shown in Table 1 (Numerical values represent the number of publications coded into the respective categories):

Table 1: Data Categorization pattern

Name	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	National – HUN	Chapters	Monographs
Szabó János	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0

Source: Own compilation

In the case of independent academic institutions, we also categorized the level of individual staff members in the Hungarian academic hierarchy. As a result, we listed the staff members to three exclusive categories. The first (highest) category consists of research professors and scientific advisors. The second (middle) category consists of senior research fellows and research fellows, while the third (lowest) category entails assistant research fellows.

Data Reliability

With the aid of a second coder, we calculated Cohen's kappa for each output category. From a list of 471, 50 names were selected randomly using Random.org's True Random Number Generator. After familiarizing with the coding protocol, the second coder categorized the publication output of these 50 researchers on 15 January, 2021, which were then compared with the original results.

Table 2: Intercoder Reliability Summary: Cohen's Kappa Scores

	Percent Agreement	Cohen's Kappa	N Agreements	N Disagreements	N Cases
ExtR Q1	100%	**1**	50	0	50
ExtR Q2	100%	**1**	50	0	50
ExtR Q3	98%	**0.79**	49	1	50
ExtR Q4	100%	**1**	50	0	50
Regional - CEE	94%	**0.645**	47	3	50
National - HUN	86%	**0.441**	43	7	50
Chapters	98%	**0.898**	49	1	50
Monographs	94%	**0.231**	47	3	50

Source: Own compilation

According to the Landis and Koch (1977) interpretation scale, coders were in "almost perfect" agreement in four variables (ExtR Q1, Q2, Q4 and Chapters), "substantial" agreement in two variables (ExtR Q3 and Regional - CEE), "moderate" agreement in one variable (National - HUN) and "fair" agreement in one variable (Monographs). In general, percent agreement was high with all variables (lowest percent agreement was 86% in the case of National - HUN) but Kappa came out relatively low. This considerable reduction in the level of congruence occurred due to the high ratio of 0-0 pairs: Many times and with the majority of researchers, there was no publication output to observe in the above categories between 2014 and 2018, greatly increasing the level of chance agreements.

We have decided to publish only data with at least substantial inter-coder agreement ($\kappa \geq$ 0.61) as we wanted to avoid criticism regarding the level of confidence that should be placed in the accuracy of the dataset.

Data

Summary statistics for the six HAS and eight governmental research institution are presented in Tables 3-16 and Figure 2-15. The categorized data can be downloaded from Appendix A as supplementary material.

Table 3: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS RIL researchers (n=121)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**42**	**17**	**6**	**9**	**8**	**14**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,3471	0,1404	0,0495	0,0743	0,0661	0,1157

Average per year	0,0694	0,028	0,0099	0,0148	0,0132	0,0231
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	1	1	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	7	2	1	4	2	3
SD	0,9155	0,3921	0,217	0,5169	0,3336	0,3897
skewness	4,1584	2,8882	4,2018	7,3761	5,2475	4,4431

Source: Own compilation

Figure 2: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS RIL researchers (n=121)
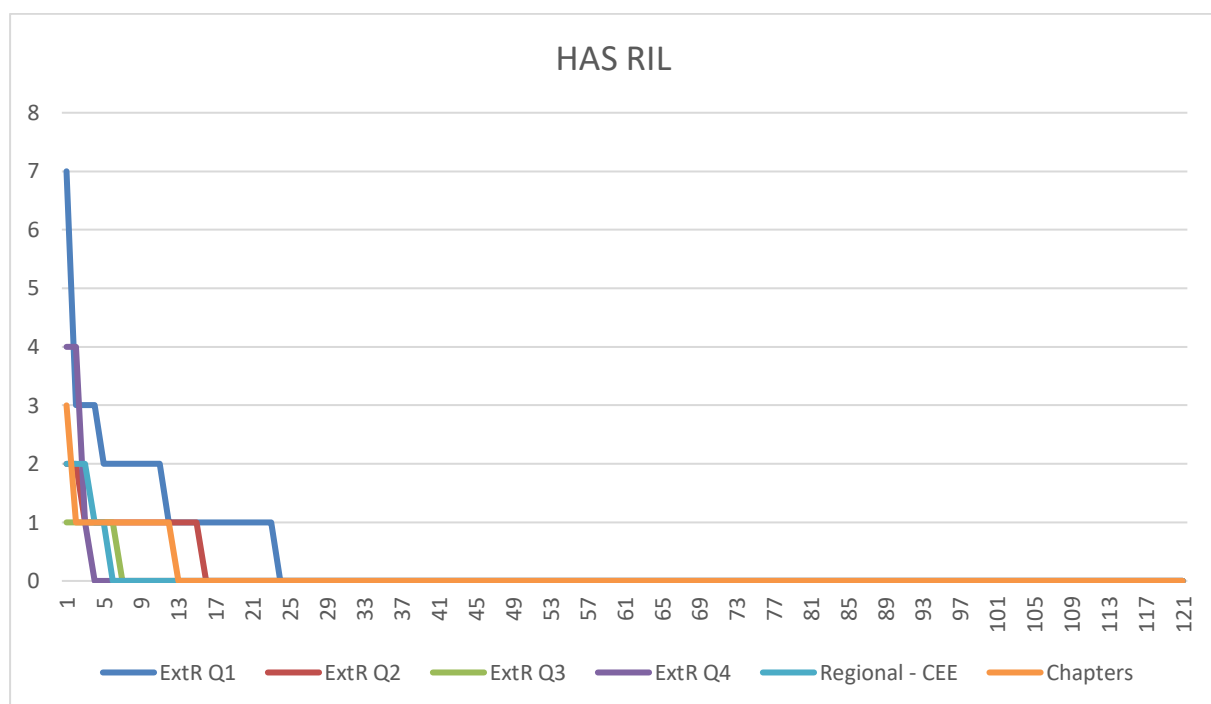

Source: Own compilation

Table 4: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS IH researchers (n=104)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**6**	**3**	**0**	**5**	**5**	**3**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,0576	0,0288	0	0,048	0,048	0,0288
Average per year	0,0115	0,0057	0	0,0096	0,0096	0,0057
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0

p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	3	1	0	3	2	2
SD	0,3623	0,1673	0	0,3216	0,2549	0,2173
Skewness	6,8948	5,712	N/A	8,0442	5,8959	8,1445

Source: Own compilation

Figure 3: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS IH researchers (n=104)

Source: Own compilation

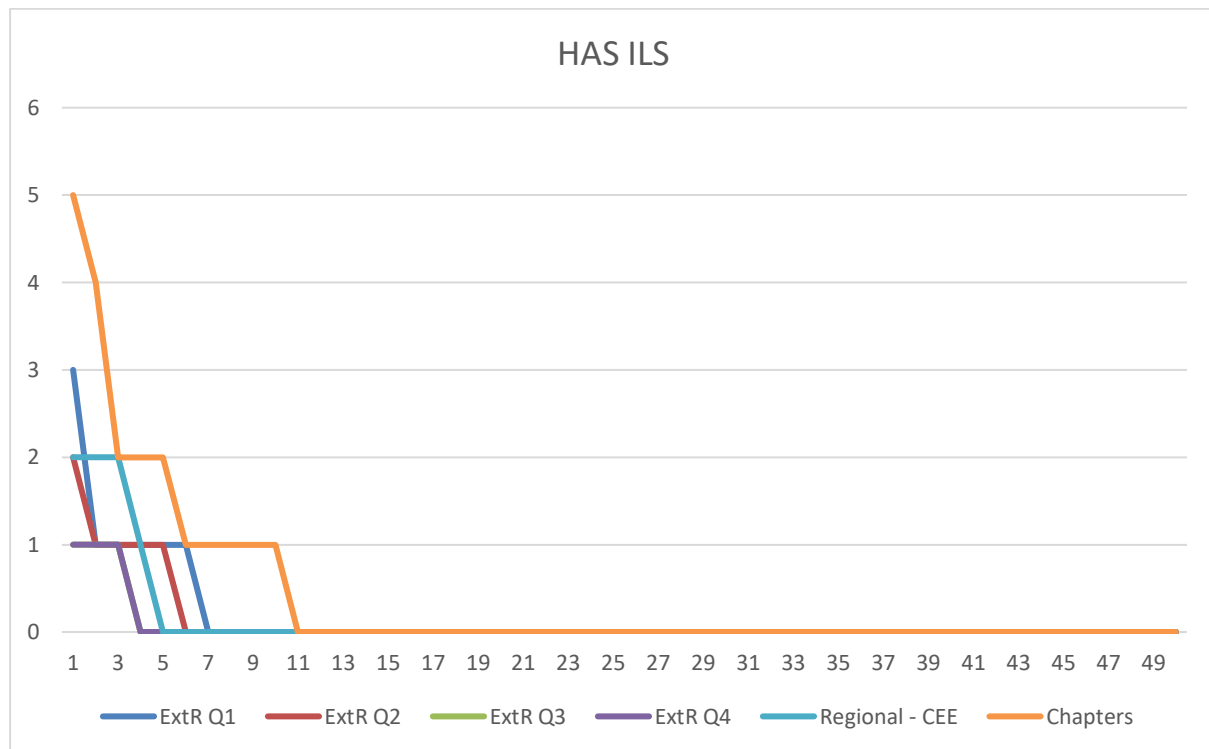Table 5: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS ILS researchers (n=50)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**8**	**6**	**3**	**3**	**7**	**20**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,16	0,12	0,06	0,06	0,14	0,4
Average per year	0,032	0,024	0,012	0,012	0,028	0,08
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	1	0,1	0	0	0	1,1
p100(Maximum)	3	2	1	1	2	5

SD	0,5043	0,3815	0,2374	0,2374	0,4903	1
Skewness	4,1290	3,449	3,821	3,821	3,4669	3,1925

Source: Own compilation

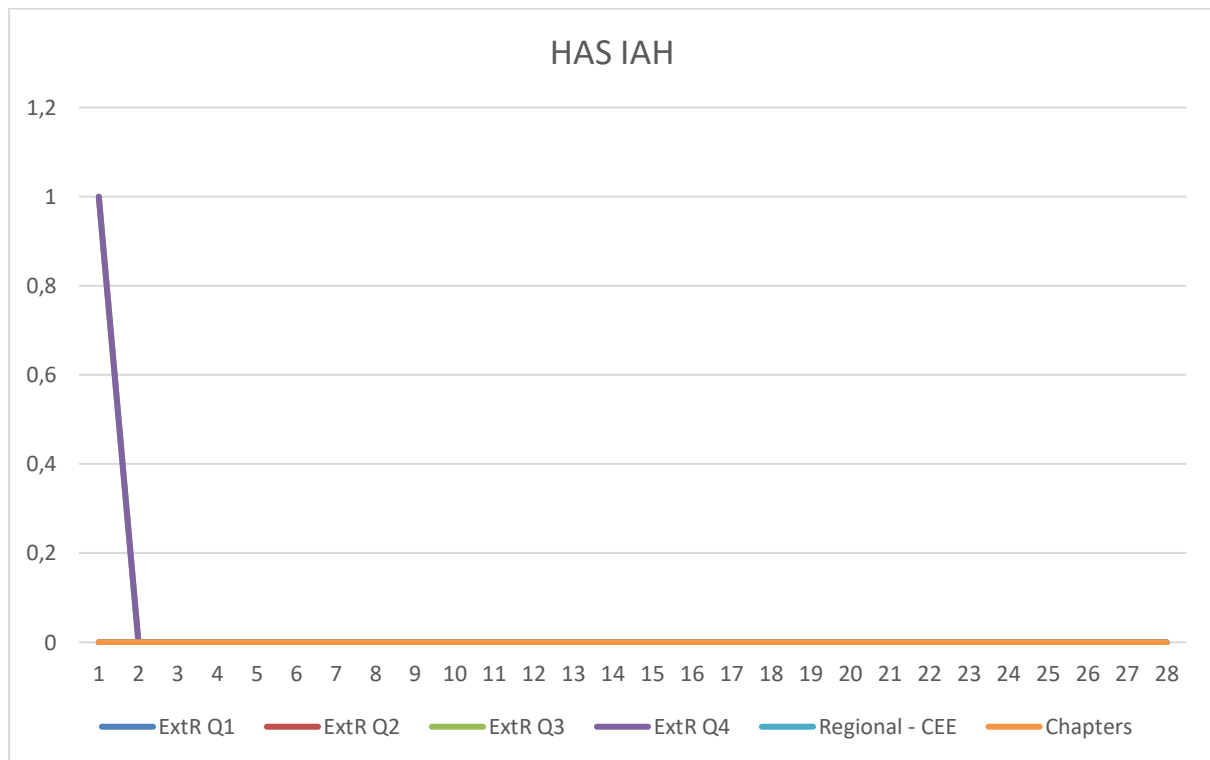Figure 4: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS ILS researchers (n=50)

Source: Own compilation

Table 6: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS IAH researchers (n=28)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0,0357	0,0357	0	0
Average per year	0	0	0,0071	0,0071	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	0	0	1	1	0	0
SD	0	0	0,1855	0,1855	0	0
Skewness	N/A	N/A	5,2915	5,2915	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 5: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS IAH researchers (n=28)
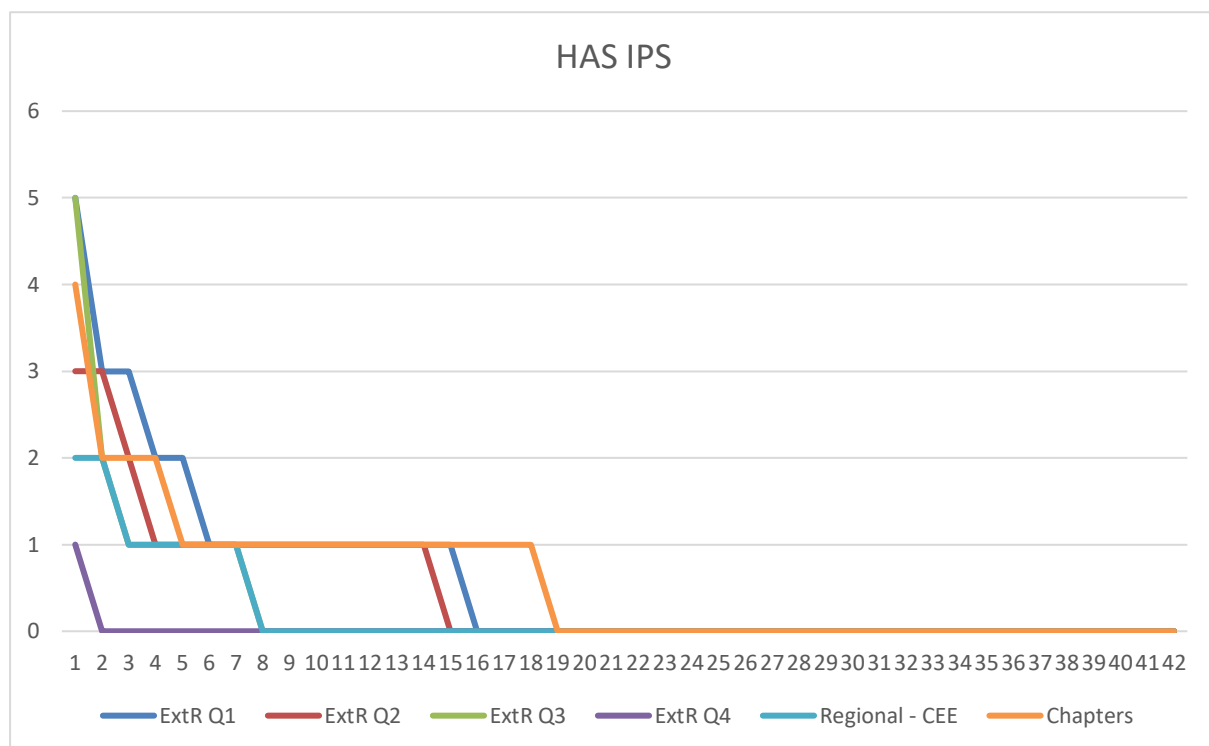

Source: Own compilation

Table 7:: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS IPS researchers (n=42)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**25**	**19**	**12**	**1**	**9**	**24**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,5952	0,4523	0,2857	0,0238	0,2142	0,5714
Average per year	0,119	0,0904	0,0571	0,0047	0,0428	0,1142
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	1	1	0	0	0	1
p90	1,9	1	1	0	1	1
p100(Maximum)	5	3	5	1	2	4
SD	1,0478	0,7622	0,8531	0,1524	0,5134	0,8206
Skewness	2,4426	2,007	4,4076	6,4807	2,4582	2,0412

Source: Own compilation

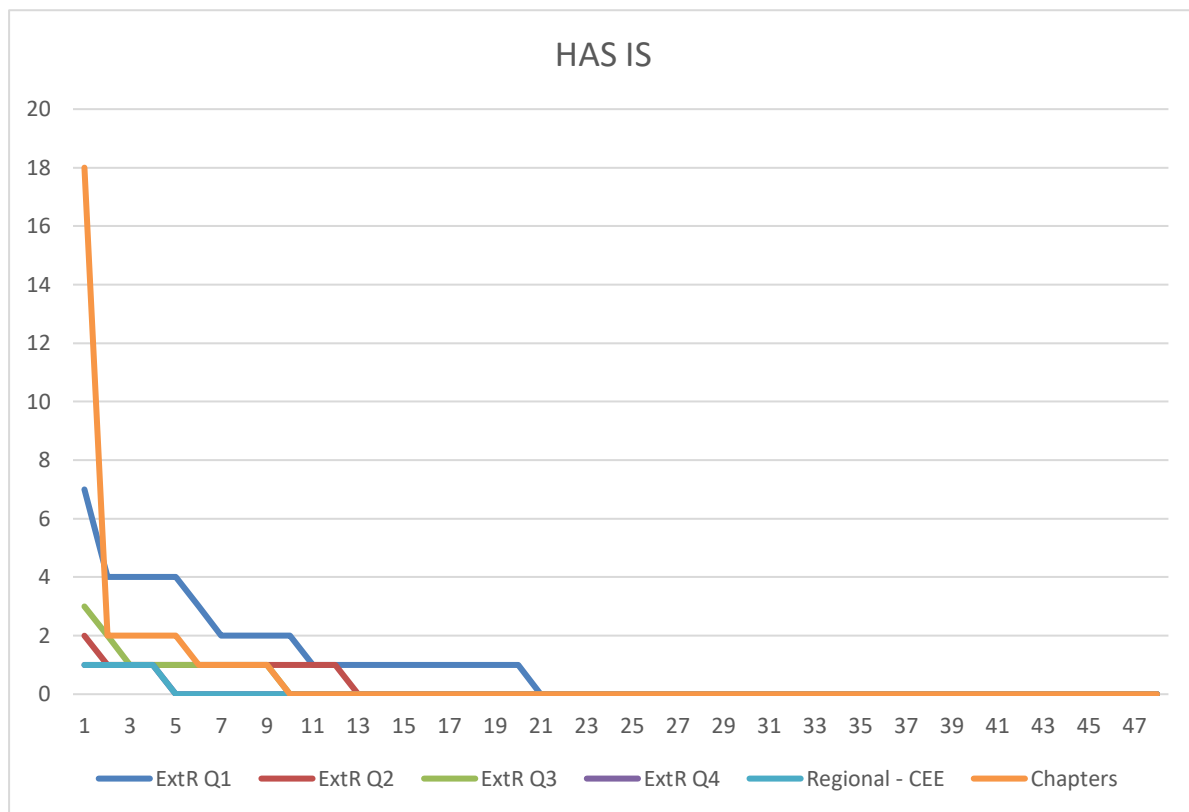Figure 6: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS IPS researchers (n=42)

Source: Own compilation

Table 8: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of HAS IS researchers (n=48)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**44**	**13**	**12**	**4**	**4**	**30**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,9166	0,2708	0,25	0,0833	0,0833	0,625
Average per year	0,1833	0,0541	0,05	0,0166	0,0166	0,125
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	1	0,25	0	0	0	0
p90	3,3	1	1	0	0	1,3
p100(Maximum)	7	2	3	1	1	18
SD	1,4976	0,489	0,5951	0,2763	0,2763	2,603
Skewness	2,1447	1,6038	2,9087	3,1132	3,1132	6,3983

Source: Own compilation

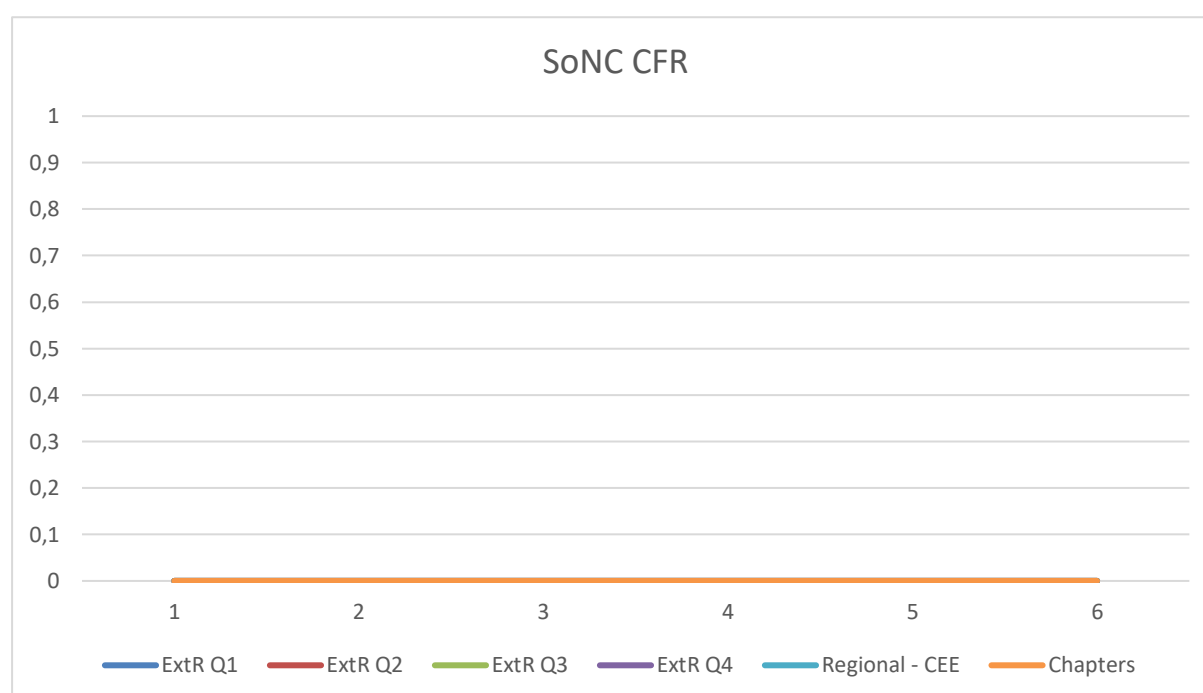Figure 7: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of HAS IS researchers (n=48)
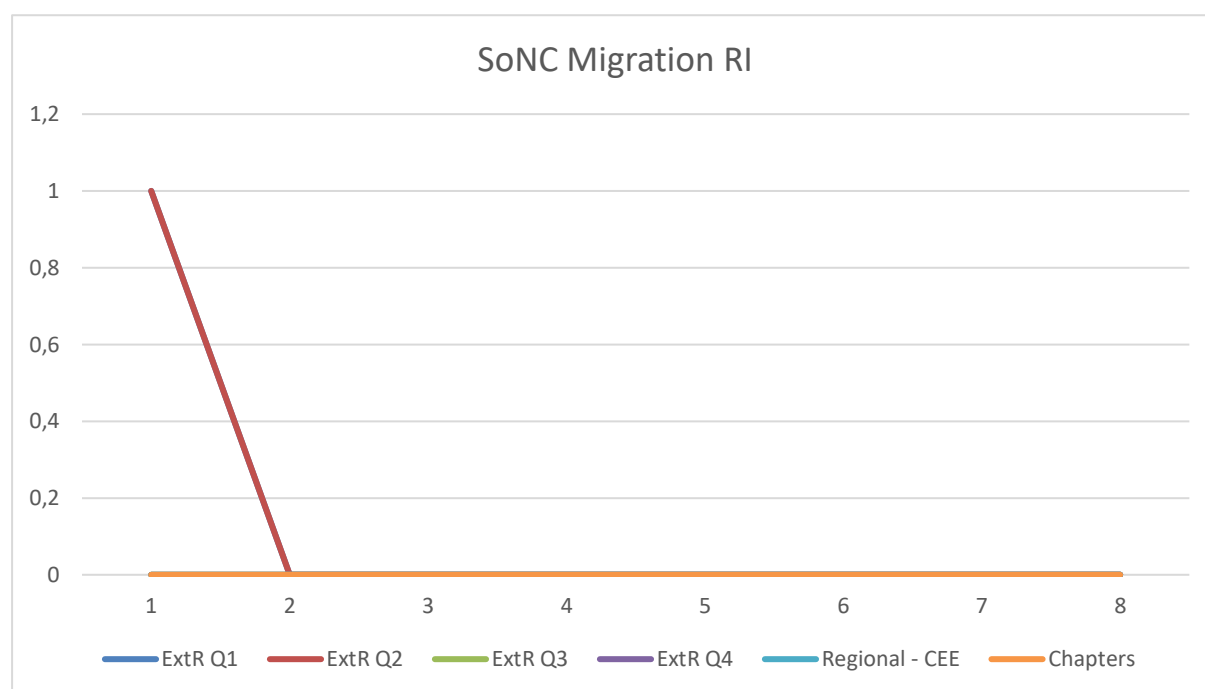

Source: Own compilation

Table 9: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC CFR researchers (n=6)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average per year	0	0	0	0	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 8: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC CFR researchers (n=6)

Source: Own compilation

Table 10: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC Migration RI researchers (n=8)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,125	0,125	0	0	0	0
Average per year	0,025	0,025	0	0	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0,3	0,3	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	1	1	0	0	0	0
SD	0,3307	0,3307	0	0	0	0
Skewness	2,8284	2,8284	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 9: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC Migration RI researchers (n=8)
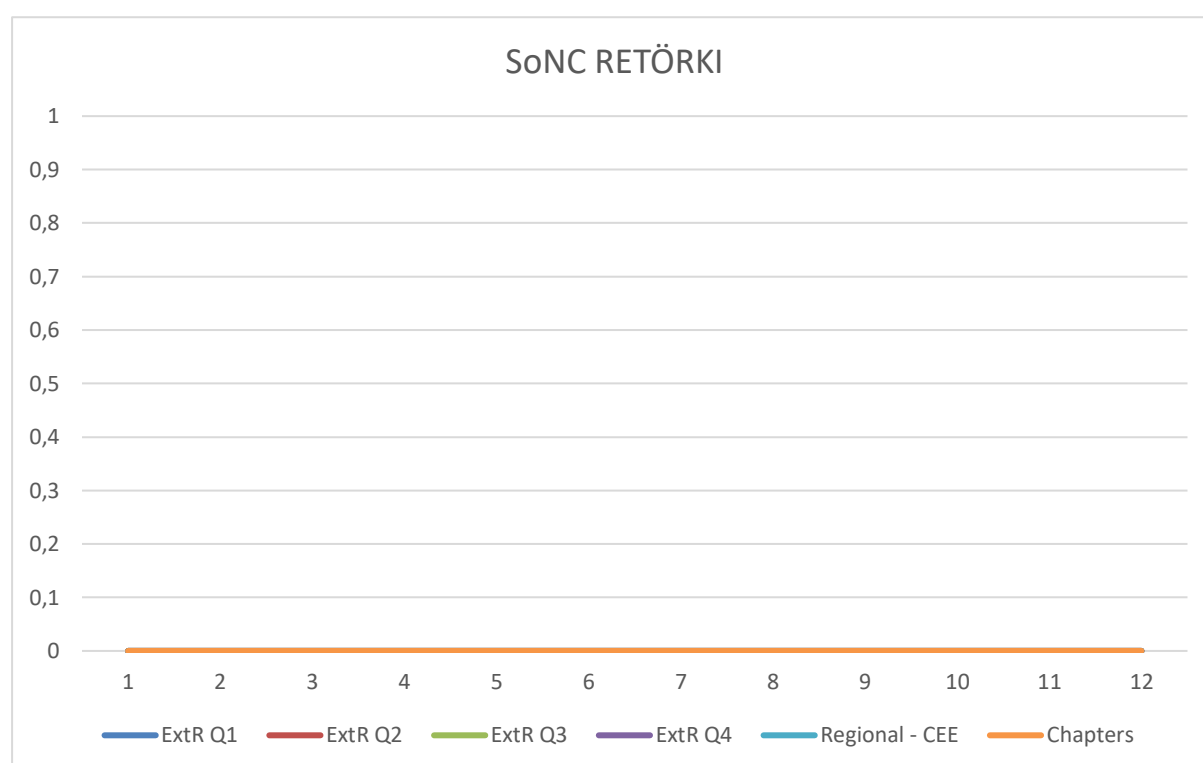

Source: Own compilation

Table 11: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC RETÖRKI researchers (n=12)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional - CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average per year	0	0	0	0	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 10: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC RETÖRKI researchers (n=12)

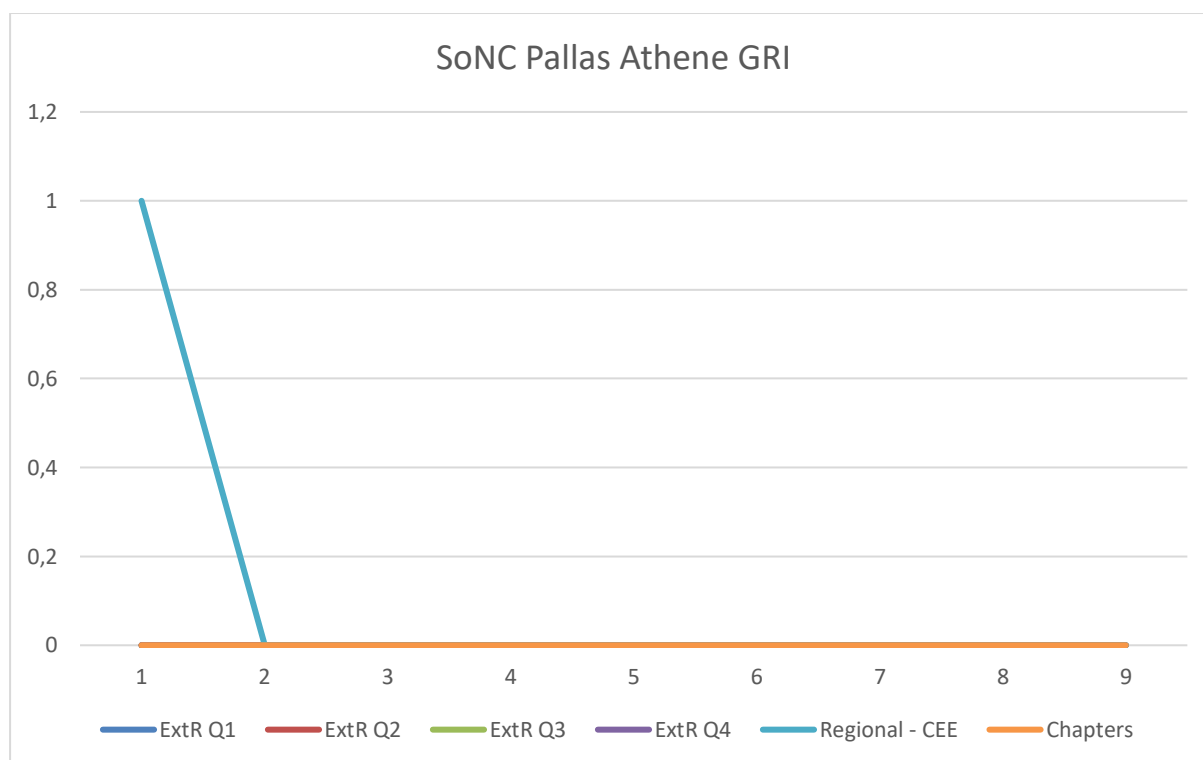
Source: Own compilation

Table 12: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC Pallas Athene GRI researchers (n=9)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0	0	0,1111	0
Average per year	0	0	0	0	0,0222	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0,2	0
p100(Maximum)	0	0	0	0	1	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0,3142	0
Skewness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 11: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC Pallas Athene GRI researchers (n=9)
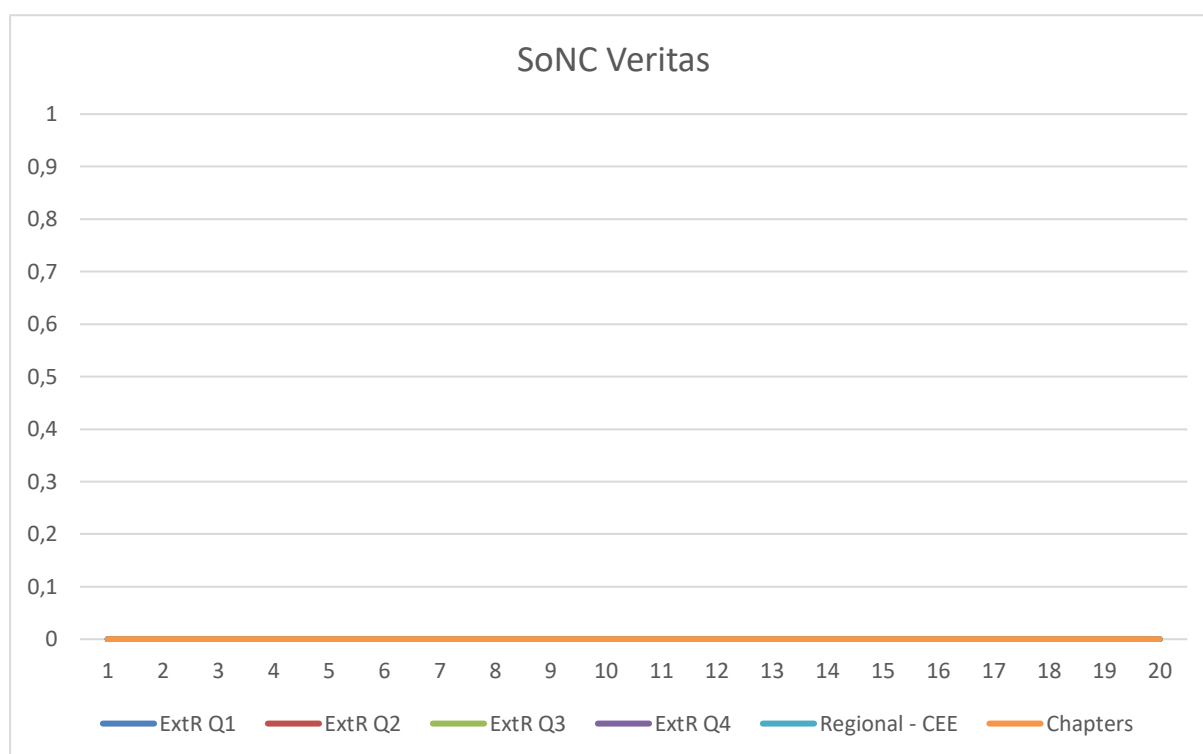
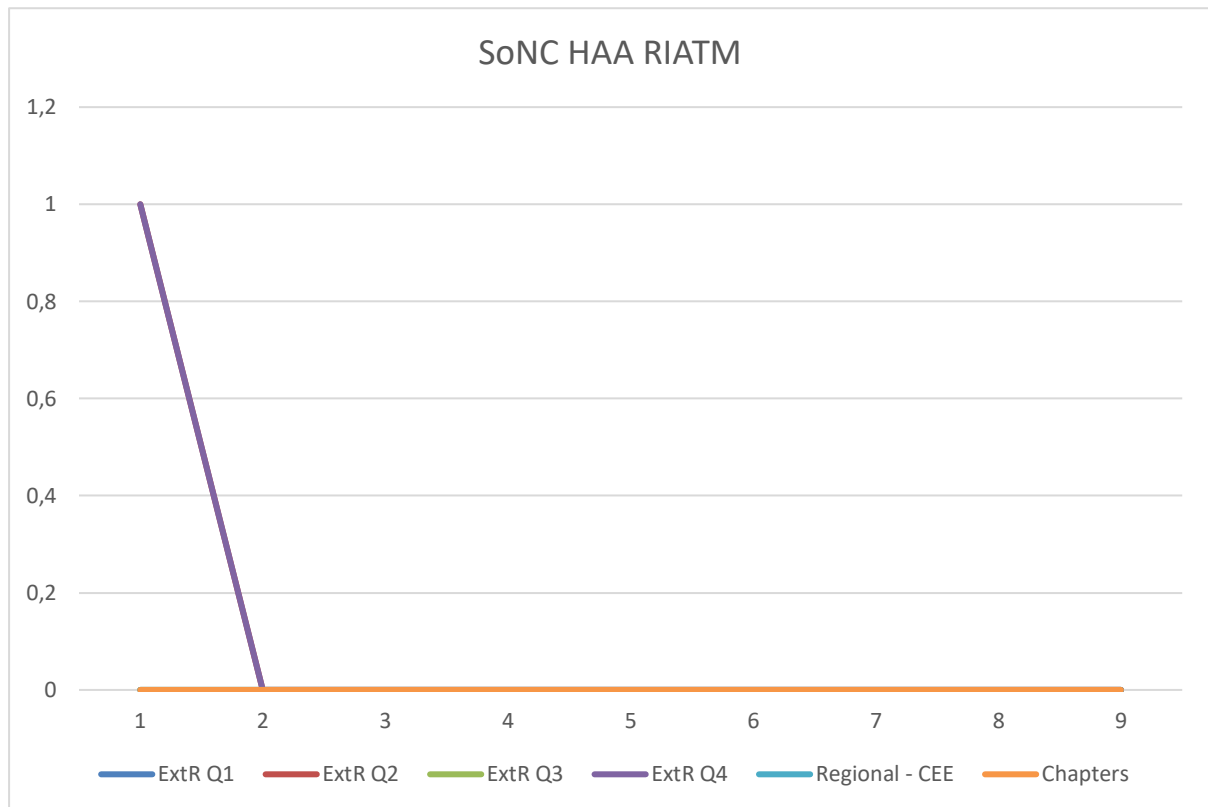Source: Own compilation

Table 13: 2014-2018 publication output statistics SoNC VERITAS researchers (n=20)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average per year	0	0	0	0	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0
p100(Maximum)	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skewness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 12: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC VERITAS researchers (n=20)

Source: Own compilation

Table 14: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC HAA RIATM researchers (n=9)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0,1111	0	0,1111	0	0
Average per year	0	0,0222	0	0,0222	0	0
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0,2	0	0,2	0	0
p100(Maximum)	0	1	0	1	0	0
SD	0	0,3142	0	0,3142	0	0
Skewness	N/A	3	N/A	3	N/A	N/A

Source: Own compilation

Figure 13: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC HAA RIATM researchers (n=9)

Source: Own compilation

Table 15: 2014-2018 publication output statistics of SoNC Tamás Molnár RC researchers (n=8)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0	0	0	0	0	0,125
Average per year	0	0	0	0	0	0,025
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0	0	0	0	0	0,3
p100(Maximum)	0	0	0	0	0	1
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0,3307
Skewness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,8284

Source: Own compilation

Figure 14: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC Tamás Molnár RC researchers (n=8)
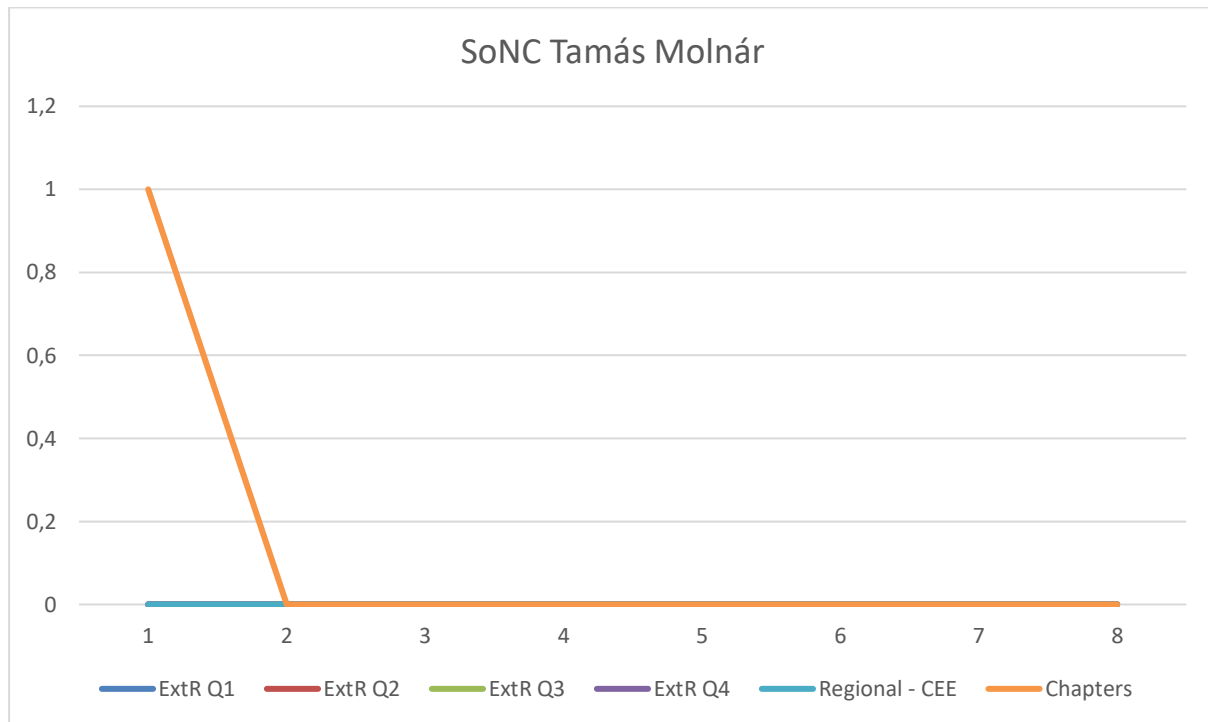
Source: Own compilation

Table 16: 2014-2018 publication output of SoNC RINP researchers (n=6)

	ExtR Q1	ExtR Q2	ExtR Q3	ExtR Q4	Regional – CEE	Chapters
Total	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**
Mode	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average	0,166	0	0	0	0	0,1666
Average per year	0,0333	0	0	0	0	0,0333
p25	0	0	0	0	0	0
p50(Median)	0	0	0	0	0	0
p75	0	0	0	0	0	0
p90	0,5	0	0	0	0	0,5
p100(Maximum)	1	0	0	0	0	1
SD	0,3726	0	0	0	0	0,3274
Skewness	2,4494	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,4494

Source: Own compilation

Figure 15: 2014-2018 publication output histogram of SoNC RINP researchers (n=6)

SoNC RINP
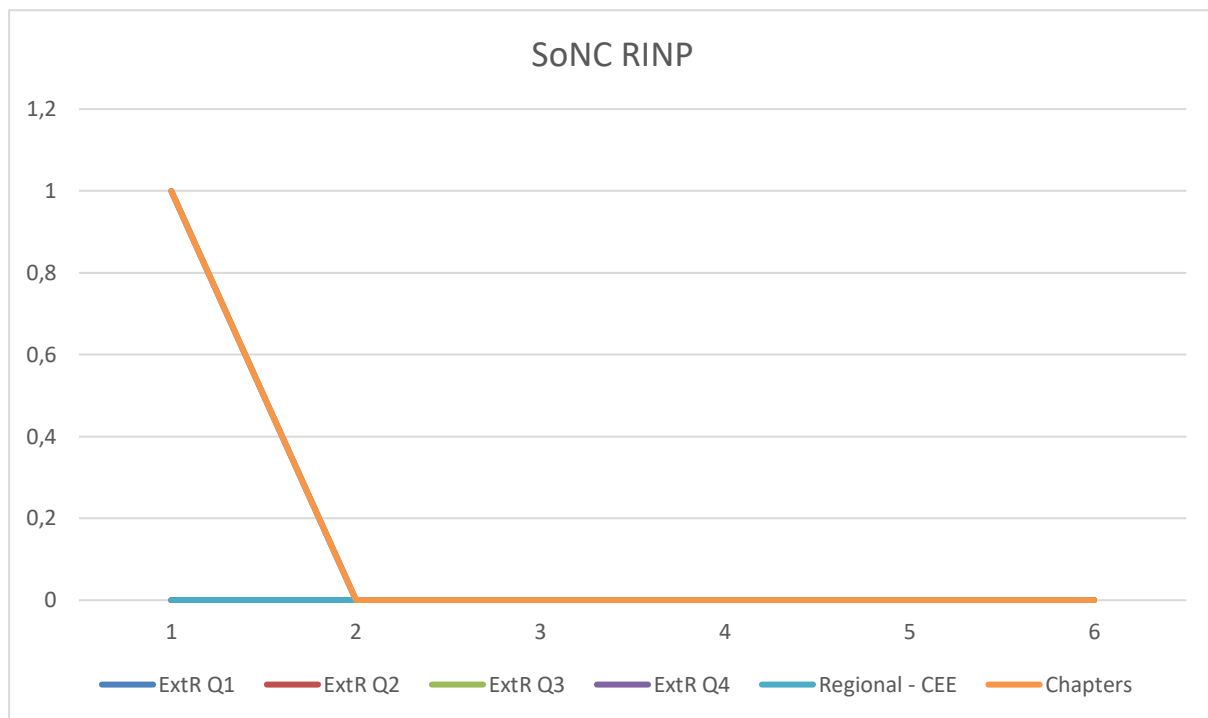
Source: Own compilation

Limitations

Since the presented results mirror the research productivity of individual researchers employed in 2019, their applicability in measuring the performance of the researcher's home institution is limited: It is possible that an observed item was published by the researcher when they were not yet affiliated with the studied research institutions (i.e., a 2016 article by a researcher hired only in 2018), or that a researcher was no longer affiliated with the studied research institution at the time of the sampling procedure (i.e. if a researcher employed between 2010 and 2017 would have produced 2 ExtR Q2 articles in 2015).

Another limitation of the study is that we did not consider co-authorship thus a given paper is assigned to all its coauthors. Consequently, our findings show a more optimistic picture than the reality, since if we divide each published paper with the number of co-authors (or weight co-authored articles differently) then the calculated means will be decreased.

Additionally, both SCOPUS and MTMT are subject to minor data fluctuation, meaning that they can show both fewer and more items for a given time period if inspected across large time spans. This may be caused by database maintenance, delayed inclusion of publications, new journal indexation, author- or publisher-initiated changes in data or categorization, and various other factors. Since re-coding was done 16 months after the initial coding, most of these common data uncertainty effects are expected to be already mirrored by the intercoder reliability values. Still, others may occur later, and can affect the results of a future reproduction study.

The protocol proved to be strong in discerning extra-regional publications when applied to SCIMAGO Q1-Q4 articles but was less reliable when the coder had to decide whether non extra-regional articles should go to the Regional – CEE or the National – HUN category. We should also consider that our data coding protocol may have been less clear than necessary in the case of monographs and national publications. For example, the protocol could be improved

later by a clear description on how to check for a publisher's national affiliation, or an indication that national publications may include English language publications and regional publications may include Hungarian-language publications as well. We will improve these parts for future studies.

Appendix A: [2014-2018 Research Performance of HAS and SoNC researchers - Data Table](#)

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Original Article

Tug of War:

Social Media, Cancel Culture, and Diversity for *Girls* and *The 100*

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Abstract: Hate the most recent season of a television show? Create a viral petition! Better yet, find an old tweet of a cast member to publicly shame them. These are examples of audience participation and expectations when it comes to television. Audiences react to several types of fiction, but this article mostly focuses on the impacts of television shows and audience reception. Analyzing audience and critical reception of certain TV shows may reveal motivations for subsequent creative decisions by the creators. On shows like *Roseanne*, audience reception has influenced decisions concerning creative control. Audience demands help sway the market and have opened diversity initiatives in speculative media. The theoretical base for this article is formed from reception theory and primary research of Twitter posts. To further explore the phenomenon of audience sway over artistic ownership, two television shows, *Girls* and *The 100*, will be examined in context with audience and critical reception, cancel culture, and diversity initiatives across media.

Introduction

After the last half of Season 8 streamed on HBO, 1.7 million *Game of Thrones* fans signed a petition demanding new writers and an alternate ending (Mccluskey, 2019, para. 2). HBO responded, sharing how they had no intention of making changes. Instead of closing the chapter on *Game of Thrones*, the fans and critics continued to backlash. *Saturday Night Live* mocked the now infamous series finale. Former *Game of Thrones* co-star Jason Momoa publicized his disappointment with the last episode via an Instagram video that was viewed over 136,000 times. Showrunners D.B. Weiss and David Benioff were "extremely quiet, even going so far as to cancel their scheduled appearance at Comic Con" (Placido, 2019, para. 1). The pair had been signed to direct and write the next series of *Star Wars* projects. However, after the backlash, they signed with Netflix and bowed out of the *Star Wars* deal. Laura Bradley of *Vanity Fair* describes how Weiss and Benioff may have decided against joining the *Star Wars*-verse. After watching "Star Wars fans bully actors and directors […] they began to have doubts

about whether they should dip their toes in as well" because "who wants to go through that again?" (Bradley, 2019, para. 2). *Game of Thrones* is but one example of television audience participation and how the gears of reception and fandom push back against corporations, networks, and production companies. Though not necessarily a new constraint, audiences increasingly make demands of creators and studios to influence content and shape productions. The novelty, and sometimes effectiveness of such demands, is in part the result of social media platforms that allow for opinions to quickly spread and to then be picked up by news outlets and critics. This symbiotic relationship between creators, audiences, and critics can help boost or sink shows and films. While to some degree creators and commercial distributors have always considered audience needs and wants, the persistence of contemporary audience expectations has come to influence entertainment production. In particular, Wolfgang Iser's (2006) Reception Theory calls for text, context and text, and the reader (p. 58). In the case of this article, the "reader" becomes the "audience," and "context and text" become "interpretation of critical reception." Audiences react to several types of fictional entertainment, but this article investigates online audience reception of recent television shows. In conjunction with various reception theories, primary research was assessed from individual social media posts via Twitter. Although other sites like Reddit and Tumblr encourage users to discuss media, Twitter is easily accessible (for users and researchers) and is more popular. As the title of the article suggests, the very act of watching may engender a feeling of possession for the audience, a feeling nurtured by online spaces. While at times considered toxic and labeled as cancel culture, this amplification of sentiment can also evolve into positive calls for change, such as calls for diversity. To further explore the phenomenon of audience sway over artistic ownership, this article examines two television series, *Girls* and *The 100*, using such frameworks as audience reception, cancel culture, and diversity initiatives across media.

First, an outline of rationale in choosing *Girls* and *The 100* as examples for this article will establish greater context. In decades past, audiences have rallied to influence networks to stave off show cancellations, using letters, phone calls, and word-of-mouth campaigns with *Star Trek* and *Twin Peaks* (Guerrero-Pico, 2017, p. 2072). Additionally, there are several recent shows that could have been evaluated for audience reception. *Friends*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *Roseanne*, and the aforementioned *Game of Thrones* weathered controversies that reflect the influence of audience opinion. However, the focus of this article is to explore what, if any, tangible production changes (i.e., new or revised characters) result in response to audience reception in which "television fans now make strategic use of social media" (Guerrero-Pico 2017, p. 2072). Thus, *Girls* and *The 100* are two shows that altered production in reaction to online controversy, rather than simply cancelling, renewing, or re-naming a show through other means. In assessing these phenomena, it helps that *Girls* has concluded and *The 100* is ongoing. Whereas one show ended three years ago (*Girls*), the other (*The 100*) is still beholden to fans and critics. Furthermore, Twitter and other social media became more influential from 2012 onward, lending audience opinion and increased presence and influence. The focus on *Girls* and *The 100* also reviews the impact of audience reception in two distinct corners of television: *Girls* originates from a premium cable channel, HBO, whereas *The 100* represents a basic cable network, The CW. Even as their fan demographics may be similar in gender and age, their viewership is different enough to support the theory that audiences of all types can express expectations that influence production. However, as this article will outline, the impetus and application of fan criticism varies and produces divergent results.

A brief overview of *Girls* (2012-2017) and *The 100* (2014 --) will provide background on the impact of their audience reception, along with critical reception of the time. This is to ensure less of a nostalgic view as sometimes adopted by present-day critics that may not consider critical reception and categorization of television shows at the time of their release. Such a dualistic approach, critical plus audience reception, may help "readers to grasp a reality that

was never their own" (Iser, 2006, p. 63). Starting chronologically, *Girls* premiered on HBO on April 15, 2012 amid rave reviews for "its voice and colorful storylines," even being compared to the network's other NYC dram-edy, *Sex and the City* ("Lena Dunham," 2012, para. 1-2). The show follows a group of four post-college white twenty-somethings as they deal with life in New Yok City, specifically focusing on Hannah (played by Lena Dunham) and her career as a writer. Dunham, the show's co-creator, head writer, and lead actress, had written award-winning independent films, and was labeled a "wunderkind" by several news outlets, such as *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*. Still, within hours of the premiere, viewers and critics criticized the show's penchant for an all-white cast lamenting upper-class privileged issues ("Lena Dunham," 2012, para. 3). That same year on NPR's *Fresh Air*, Dunham professed "sensitivity" to the diversity issues, but insisted she wrote the characters to "avoid rendering an experience I can't speak to accurately" ("Lena Dunham," 2012, para. 6). Yet, seemingly in acknowledgement of the diversity criticism, *Girls* began filming new episodes in May of 2012, with star Dunham spotted by outlets like *TMZ* with supposed cast addition, Donald Glover. In another interview, Dunham expressed excitement for adding "new characters into the world of the show. Some of them are great actors of color" (as cited in Storey, 2012, para. 5). Eventually, Glover's role was revealed as a guest star. His character is a soft-spoken law-student and Republican who only remains for two episodes. Though never as predominant as it had been in 2012-13, critique about diversity continued for the duration of the show.

   In 2014, The CW released *The 100*, a sci-fi show based on the eponymous Kass Morgan book series. The plot centers around Clarke Griffin, an incarcerated teen aboard a space station after a worldwide nuclear strike 100 years in the future. Clarke and 99 incarcerated (therefore disposable) teens are sent to Earth to see if it can be safely re-colonized. The first season was described as a futuristic *Lord of the Flies* by outlets like *The San Antonio Times* and *IGN* due to its proclivity for killing off main characters. Deviating from Morgan's novels, the television writers even killed off show favorites, like the character Wells Jaha. This trend continued into Season 3, when Commander Lexa was killed by a stray bullet. In a show where so many characters die, Lexa'a death could have been explained as par for the course. However, fans felt differently, pointing out on social media platforms how she was killed right after a sexual encounter with another female character, the protagonist Clarke Griffin. Thus, to viewers, Lexa's death paralleled trends in which LGBTQ characters were more dispensable than straight characters (Framke, 2016, para. 14). In online articles for *TVInsider* and face-to-face forums like the Writer's Guild Panel in 2016, showrunners of *The 100* openly discussed their snafu, and how it might be remedied. A staff writer for the Lexa-death episode, Javier Grillo-Marxuach, conceded, "I think it was a failure to recognize the cultural impact that this would have outside the context of the show" (as cited in Wagmeister, 2016, para. 4). Ultimately, showrunners did not revert Clarke (Lexa's lover) to a heteronormative relationship upon Lexa's death, as many viewers assumed would be the case. Queer and gender critiques of *The 100* persist to this day. Part of why *Girls* and *The 100* were chosen for analysis over series with similar issues is because of the presence of social media in response to controversies (or as an impetus for what fans perceived as controversial). The fan voices were amplified due to the prevalence and easy use of social media, gaining attention for racial and queer issues of diversity.

Audience and Critical Reception

This article will primarily rely on audience reception as the lens for interpretation. A rift between traditional criticism and popular receptions of media "raises a key issue regarding the use of film criticism in reception studies: to what extent can the critics' views be taken as representative?" (Chapman et al., 2007, p. 195). In an age of new "media citizenship" and "the ethics of performativity" (Elsaesser, 2004, p. 76), this question may be extended to revise (and re-envision) the very function of the critic, getting to the heart of contemporary reception studies. To what extent does the viewing public come to *perform* the role of film critic through new media participation, and what is the impact of such criticisms on televised content? Analyzing audience reception of *Girls* and *The 100* may illustrate how subsequent creative choices were informed, with little or lasting impact. As mentioned above, audiences for both shows expressed their displeasure for the perceived status quo of the narratives. Emily Keightly (2008) suggests that in research, memory is a useful method for cultural studies, as different voices come together to analyze one story (p. 181). Given that the diversity issues for the shows took place eight years ago for *Girls*, and four years ago for *The 100*, the audience critiques amount to a socially constructed memory of what occurred. Studying this in tandem with critical responses may reveal complexities in the showrunner's creative decisions.

Though memes and posts were widely shared on Facebook and other social media, Twitter produced the brunt of audience conversation. From its inception in 2006, Twitter was designed for mobile users and thus held greater appeal to younger users (the target audience for *Girls* and *The 100*) than the desktop site for Facebook (Jackson, 2012, para. 3). Twitter is a platform that empowers users to share, and then reshare, their opinions, particularly with showrunners. Mar Guerrero-Pico (2017) explores how following the internet's inception in 1989, "There has been an empowerment of consumers, who, thanks to the expansion of social media in recent years, now have more tools at their disposal to become more visible and ensure their comments, opinions, and requests reach the interested parties without intermediaries" (p. 2071). Other series, like *Scandal*, also utilized Twitter in 2012 to their marketable advantage: "*Scandal* is also an important mark in the historical development of #TGIT (or Thank God It's Thursday) programming because it demonstrated the possible success of social television from an industrial perspective. Indeed, *Scandal* has come to be referred to as the industry standard for 'must-tweet television'" (McNamara, 2013). With Twitter, fans learned how to create an entire force, ready to mobilize and then capture the attention of critical news outlets. From Nagy and Midha (2015) in "The Value of Earned Audiences: How Social Interactions Amplify TV Impact": "As Tweet exposure drives actions across platforms including searching, engagement, and purchase, marketers should learn to integrate Tweet messages, #hashtags, and calls to action with campaigns on other media" (p. 453). The following section balances modern and past critical perspectives, while also allowing room for individual interpretation. As Halbwachs (1980) believes, memories are the products of something larger, or an "intersection of collective influences" (p. 44). Due to ready availability of online spaces, audience are now able to share their influence in an easier and quicker fashion, in opposition to the letter writing and phone calls of the past. Thus, truth and story are shaped by what is communicated, and in the context of others.

Analyzing audience reception through a relatively newer type of media, like Twitter, may archive, analyze, and legitimize the vast array of popular responses to television across new media. Elsaesser (2004) notes how "theories of cinematic spectatorship, initially elaborated around class and (immigrant) ethnicity, have been extended to gender, race and other forms of cultural identity" (p. 76). Audience criticism for *Girls* involved complaints about a lack of diversity among the cast and charges of nepotism. The online discussions included fans and

critics. Even before the premiere, critics like Judy Berman had early access, and posted articles decrying the series for covering "first-world problems" from a "white lens." As Berman (2012) suggests in an April 13 article (before the premiere), several popular shows of the time were guilty of promoting white "problems" without diverse voices entering in—*Two Broke Girls*, *How I Met Your Mother*—and yet, the need to examine *Girls*, and then examine it again, was oddly acute (para. 5). On the date of the premiere, April 15, 2012, viewer angst and independent think-pieces on the lack of diversity, like the *Intellichick* post "These Aren't My 'Girls'," were widely shared on Twitter. Before such posts, there seemed to be an unspoken agreement from formal critics that the show "spoke" to young women's issues in big-city life. Not every Twitter user was unhappy with *Girls*, as @LCoan_'s tweet (Figure 1) gives Dunham "props" for avoiding what she deems "forced and fake diversity."

Figure 1. "Girls criticism and praise on Twitter." Screengrab from Twitter. 2020.

From April 12-17, there were only two tweets discussing race or diversity, increasing to nine tweets from April 18-22. On April 18, journalist Dave Weigel acknowledges the critique of *Girls* as a new "national pastime" (Figure 2).
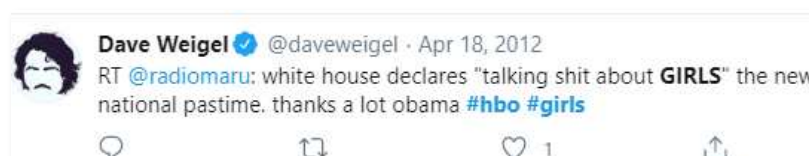

Figure 2. "Journalist Weigel on Girls controversy." Screengrab from Twitter. 2020.

Some tweets even mentioned "nepotism," since the four main co-stars all hail from famous and/or wealthy families. Then, on April 23, there were seven tweets about race, almost the same amount there had been on a five-day run. April 23, a week after the first episode, was also the day *CNN* aired a panel critiquing *Girls* and race. The *CNN* panel was critical of a show that takes place in the diverse city of New York, and is yet full of so many white characters and themes (Crugnale, 2012, para. 2). On air, host Soledad O-Brien showed *Girls* staff writer Lesley Arfin's post (Figure 3) in response to diversity criticism. Though not participating in the *CNN* panel, Arfin later deleted the post and apologized for her comment. Even as she tried to argue that narratives often focus on particular characters and their trials and tribulations, her tweet seemed dismissive and racially-charged.

Figure 3. "Girls staff writer Arfin on Precious film." Screengrab from Twitter. 2020.

Diversity and nepotism were not the only controversies to haunt the show in audience and critical circles, though they were two of the most prominent and persistent. Other controversies include depictions of nudity and sex acts. The web magazine *Vulture* chronicles all the controversies on their website, from 2012-2017 (Moylan, 2017). Interest in the show from critics and audiences was high. Notably, "the *New York Times* ran seven articles per week during the show's first three months" (Watson, 2015, p. 145). Dunham, as the main character Hannah, even reflects satirically on her role as "the voice of my generation" versus "a voice of a generation" (S1x1, "Pilot"). This could be because, months before the show aired, critics were already lauding *Girls* as "important" and a modern instantiation of feminism, which was assumed to be global feminism. Instead of including intersections on gender, race, and class in a way that was supposed to be "highly current, and thoroughly modern" and "unlike what was on TV" (Stewart, 2012, para. 7), the show released promotional posters featuring a cast of four white young women. The white feminist narrative seemed reminiscent of what viewers had seen from *Sex and the City* fourteen years earlier, and so the progressive expectations for the show did not meet with the show's creative reality.

In *The New Film History: Sources, Methods, Approaches*, Justin Smith (2007) describes the method of "web ethnography," identifying new media participation as constructing "the politics and rituals of cult film fandom" (p. 229). Approaches such as Smith's help illustrate the constraints of traditional critical reception studies, which prioritize critical discourse at the exclusion or marginalization of popular reception, and conversely suggests the benefits of more democratic approaches to media reception. Berman (2012) scratches at another plausible reason why *Girls* received so much critical attention: "It's almost as if we're holding Lena Dunham accountable in a way that these earlier Voices of a Generation didn't have to be because she's already somewhat outside the mainstream—a young woman whose body isn't magazine-perfect" (para. 6). The very title of the show, *Girls*, implies it appeals on a universal-feminist scale, though the main characters and their social and class concerns seem to refute the "every-girl" implication. Still, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2012) believes Dunham and Arfin should avoid writing in minorities simply because of audience and critical push-back. Instead, he calls for greater scrutiny for the platforms producing content like *Girls*: "There has been a lot of talk, this week about Lena Dunham's responsibility, but significantly less about the people who sign her checks" (Coates, 2012, para. 12). In 2012, out of a few dozen offerings of original fictional content, HBO only had one show with a minority listed as the first lead character, with only another two featuring minorities as co-stars. However, their 2020 lineup and beyond has been building upon past diverse shows, to be explored later in this article.

Through a comparative case study approach, this article illustrates how such theories of popular reception are particularly insightful when analyzing the reception of contemporary television series like *Girls* and *The 100*. Ultimately, as shown below, sensitivity to actual audience reception may be understood as central to the success and creative trajectory of contemporary television series. Alternatively, The CW's *The 100* enjoyed almost no criticism for its casting, which was more diverse than *Girls*. It was not until Season 3 that creator Jason

Rothenberg heard from upset viewers across various social media. By that time, *The 100* was notorious for killing off central characters, and did so with Commander Lexa in the episode "Thirteen" (S3x7). After this episode aired on March 3, 2016, viewers vented their disappointment on Twitter, as shown in Figure 4.

A total of seven negative tweets emerged on March 3 about Lexa's death, with another seven on March 4. For perspective, March 2 had only one promotional tweet, and March 1 had eight positive tweets and two negative tweets concerning the quality of the show. The discontent evolved into fan-led online petitions and a viral trend of the Bury Your Gays trope, that acknowledges how media will often portray an LGBTQ character, only to kill them off, usually after engaging in a sexual act. Originally a literary trope to "rid" storylines of characters unapproved by society, Haley Hulan (2017) notes how Bury Your Gays bled into other media forms (p. 17). However, as same-sex marriage is now legal and "many laws against homosexuality have been abolished, Bury Your Gays is no longer necessary" (Hulan, 2017, p. 17). Despite wider tolerance for difference in society, narratives still employ the trope. Often, if a character engages with someone of the same sex, it's merely a blip in the narrative, as they quickly return to heteronormative relationships. The violent deaths of *The 100*'s female LGBTQ characters brought #BuryYourGays to the forefront of online fan concerns, as noted by formal critics.

For instance, Dhaenens et al. (2008) have argued "that queer-sensitive audiences cannot be ignored in research on queer representations and reception in media studies" (p. 336). This article will use as a starting point their description of a *queer reading* of film reception, "a multidisciplinary approach that includes queer theory frameworks and insights from audience" (Dhaenens et al., 2008, p. 336)—one which resists the strict categories of gender, sexuality, genre, and even the distinct categorization of "critic" and "popular audience." It is here that intersections of youth, queer-sensitive audience identification, and critical performativity allow

us to better understand not only the reception of such films across a range of popular and critical responses, but indeed the very processes of film reception and criticism in a new media age. Part of the audience dissatisfaction for *The 100* stemmed from expectations versus execution.

At times, writers employ what fans call "queerbaiting," or writing in queer characters to attract queer audiences, only to then "ditch the characters so they can focus on developing heterosexual plots" (Guerrero-Pico et al., 2017, p. 3). With the development of Clark and Lexa's relationship, and subsequent death of Lexa, the charge of queerbaiting on the part of *The 100* writers seemed valid to fans. Dorothy Snaker (2012) of *The Hollywood Reporter* notes how the Clarke and Lexa dynamic trended on social media during Seasons 2 and 3, "encouraged and engaged by series creator Jason Rothenberg and his staff" (para. 5). Following the character build-up, the swift end did not meet fans' hopes for strong, feminist storylines, particularly for the LGBTQ community. Snarker (2012) states how "in retrospect, many now feel the show misled them into hoping" for those storylines (para. 5). The CW focused on Clark and Lexa's relationship in the twenty-one second promo video by having a character chide Lexa: "Your feelings for Clarke put both of you in danger" (TV Promos, 2016, 0:10). In the context of Lexa's death, that particular line seems to further underscore the Bury Your Gays trope. In an online post, Rothenberg admits that the "aggressive promotion" of the episode and of Clarke and Lexa's relationship (also known as "Clexa"), "only fueled a feeling of betrayal" (as cited in Roth, 2012, para. 4). Initially, Rothenberg attributed Lexa's death to creative freedom, while apologizing for not understanding how hurtful the decision might seem to LGBTQ audiences. When asked about re-writing Lexa's ending during a March 21 *TVInsider* interview, Rothenberg said he would have kept everything the same (as cited in Holbrook, 2012, para. 7). Though he expressed regret for unwittingly playing into the Bury Your Gays trope, Rothenberg was perceived as unconcerned with the audience impact.

Girls and *The 100* had differences and similarities concerning audience and critical reception. The height of audience and critical reception occurred at different times; for *Girls* it was before and after the premiere, and for *The 100* it peaked during Season 3. Though both shows were analyzed for issues of diversity, the points of diversity were not the same. For instance, *Girls* was scrutinized for an all-white and upper-class cast, whereas *The 100* came under fire for upholding an anti-lesbian trope, Bury You Gays. It seemed that the formal media criticism for *Girls* increased the audience reception on Twitter, while the opposite was true for *The 100*. The perceptions of either show cannot be distilled through formal critical and audience reception alone, because "the first meaning of history—what has happened—posits a base reality whose totality can never be fully reconstituted" (Friedman, 1997, p. 233). Thus, the opinions of the audience and critics will be assessed through subsequent sections of this article, and will be treated as separate pieces of the puzzle. Audiences and critics can rally behind different points concerning fictional narratives. Generally, the increase in online discussion (whether audience-led or in the form of media criticism) elevated both shows and fostered more analysis of diversity issues. Once these initiatives gain momentum, for good or ill, they sometimes spiral into cancel culture.

Cancel Culture

Recently, audience reception has influenced decisions concerning creative control, which may be linked to cancel culture. Jeannie Parker Beard (2020) codifies cancel culture as a hinderance to civic discourse, in the way that it "cultivates the mob mentality" and demands a "100% consensus" (para. 4-5). In part, cancel culture can be linked to what is perverse or taboo in a society. However, cancel culture goes further than recognizing supposed taboo words and actions because it is also places pressure to withdraw the taboo words or actions. On Twitter,

users may "encounter an affective flow of outrage, as well as fun and enjoyment, at the expense of an evil other who must be 'cancelled,' and the pleasures of moral posturing" (Bouvier, 2020, p. 10). In online spaces, cancel culture hashtags can go viral, resulting in online petitions or movements calling for the entertainment industry to make drastic changes. In the end, entertainment industries are also businesses and strive to keep fans (aka customers) happy. While this can be conflated with cancel culture, it may be indicative of a business decision and customer demand.

Online platforms could be changing society's response to taboo behaviors. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and more are making it easier to quickly share information, and then to quickly respond with individual opinion. Gwen Bouvier (2020) writes how Twitter drives users to share short, snappy comebacks that encapsulate "high levels of affect and emotion" and then "bind affective communities" (p. 2). This level of emotion is what can also ramp up the number of "likes" for a tweet (aka commentary), or hashtag (aka trending topic). The desire for increased exposure can lead to a cycle of provoking emotional response from other users (Bouvier, 2020, p. 2). Some incidents and opinions are widely disseminated, becoming "viral," and it becomes contingent upon users to either disagree or agree. Beard (2020) outlines how "what seems to be an escalation in the culture war and the demise of civic discourse could, in part, be a symptom of big tech's dominance over the modes of communication and dissemination of information" (para. 1). Before the internet, consumers and audiences complained mostly via newspapers, consumer groups, and letters to companies. The turn-around time on a substantive response was comparably slower than the swift responses as seen with the online campaigns against *Girls* and *The 100*. While the messages against the shows were amplified due to online delivery, the messages were perhaps shared because of the anonymity perpetuated by virtual spaces. Partha Kar (2019) recalls how at in-person healthcare conferences, one speaker referenced a joke about "choking a female partner but was not interrupted or challenged" and it was only afterward that "some people did protest on social media" (para. 2). There is an elusive element to sharing sentiments online. Bouvier talks about how tweeting takes place while doing other things, is done quickly, and so users may not think through their words before hitting "submit." This lack of reflection, "bolstered by a compelling sense of affective community, [ensures] there is a corresponding distance from the victim, and no real fear that there will be any consequences" (Bouvier, 2020, p. 3). The easy access of social media coupled with the distance provided by technology allows for a disconnect and sense of freedom that may be absent from in-person interactions. Therefore, live audiences may be less likely to call attention to taboo words or actions without the shelter of social media.

The motivation for canceling certain media depictions and actions could be construed as an attempt to challenge offensive behavior. In society, "if something is considered to be inappropriate or offensive, there must be some set of common cultural standards that tells us what is appropriate or what is not" (Jay, 2017, p. xiii). In the case of *Girls*, Twitter users deemed the lack of diversity as inappropriate in a discriminatory context. For *The 100*, the death of Lexa was a resurgence and confirmation of the Bury Your Gays trope surrounding queer characters. Like Timothy B. Jay (2017) examines in *We Did What? Offensive and Inappropriate Behavior in American History*, "it is important to recognize that what is appropriate or not depends heavily on context, the 'who, what, where, and when' as something questionable happens" (p. xvi). In both cases, outraged users assessed the behaviors, deemed them taboo, and demanded change. In fact, what is coined as "cancel culture" can sometimes become synonymous with "outrage-culture," or an expectation to never be offended. What often goes unrecognized is the hidden allure of taboos. As Jay (2017) further notes, "the force of taboos insulates us from danger (we abstain from the taboo behavior) but at the same time brings us nearer to them (our curiosity is aroused)" (p. xiv). The push and pull of the taboo may be what feeds into the outrage. As comedian Tom Segura shares in his Netflix special *Tom*

Segura: Ball Hog (Hachachi, 2020), "I believe you [the audience] have the right to be offended, and share these grievances publicly. I also believe you shouldn't expect anything to be done about it" (38:01). Segura's point hinges on the belief that offensive things are going to be said and done, particularly with comedians, and that audiences can simply avoid being offended by never watching or listening, as is their choice. However, avoiding a taboo, as Jay describes, is hard because the very codification of an action or word as taboo builds a hidden attraction. Still, when an opinion is shared, and deemed by social media users (or other stakeholders) to be "unpopular" or taboo, this sort of outrage is construed as a cancellation, or even a threat to freedom of speech. For instance, the "Letter on Justice and Open Debate," released online by *Harper's Bazaar* in June 2020, chronicles the supposed threat of cancel culture. The letter was a collaborative effort, penned by public figures like Gloria Steinem, Margaret Atwood, David Brooks, Noam Chomsky, J.K. Rowling, and others, who feel:

"The free exchange of information and ideas, the lifeblood of a liberal society, is daily becoming more constricted. While we have come to expect this on the radical right, censoriousness is also spreading more widely in our culture: an intolerance of opposing views, a vogue for public shaming and ostracism, and the tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a blinding moral certainty." (Ackerman et al., 2020, para. 1)

The collective authors are correct to some degree: those "cancelled" in Hollywood, such as actress Roseanne Barr and director James Gunn, faced swift consequences as a result of publishing their views online. Yet, it wasn't so much as a public shaming as a business decision on the part of Disney. Creative endeavors have been, and likely will remain, beholden to audience interest. Instead of cancel culture as first-amendment suppression, it can perhaps be viewed as another expression of free speech. Writers of *Girls* and *The 100* were not censored in sharing their storylines. Once shared, social media users exercised their first amendment rights and responded, and showrunners made a business decision. Rather than suppression, cancel culture can be a fervent exchange of ideas, and is the sort of dialogue spoken of by authors of the *Harper's Bazaar* letter. Segura may agree that just because opinions (or creative decisions as seen on *Girls* and *The 100*) are shared, don't expect anyone to *like* said opinions, as an expression of dislike does not necessarily translate to suppression. Social media users have become adept at hosting online campaigns to champion causes, and though this may seem like suppression, it is not that different from buying power (boycotting a product/opting out) that the public has been used to seeing and using for decades. Social media has merely made it easier to use this power. There will always be delays and cancellations due to outside events and pressure. However, for shows like *Girls* and *The 100*, audience reception resulted in more than a cancellation. It permeated the creative decisions of showrunners, which changed the course of each show and their characters.

After the critique of Season 1, casting decisions for Season 2 of *Girls* had changed. Laura Bennett (2013) of *The New Republic* writes how the "casting notices [were] seeking 'hipster types' of 'all ethnicities'" (para. 1). Eventually, the Season 2 cast role went to Donald Glover, a young black actor. As Bennett (2013) mentions, television shows had added to their casts for similar "complaints of whiteness," like *Friends* adding black guest stars Gabrielle Union and Aisha Tyler with "nearly identical storylines […that…] felt like a cheap kind of appeasement" (para. 5). For some, Glover wasn't so much an addition as he was ill-used. In a *Huffington Post* piece, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (2013) echoes other critics on how *Girls'* "world is mostly white", and emphasizes how:

that white ghetto was breaching by a black character who is introduced as some jungle fever lover, with just enough time to have sex and mutter a couple of lines about wanting more of a relationship. A black dildo would have sufficed and cost less. (para. 4)

On the surface, adding Glover looked as "forced" as Abdul-Jabbar claims.

Though it's hard to say if Dunham did in fact cast Glover due to outside pressure, she at least used the on-screen relationship of Hannah and Sandy (Dunham and Glover) to enact brief but uncomfortable arguments rooted in racial difference. One of the arguments begin because Sandy dislikes Hannah's essay, admitting that "It wasn't for me," and her insisting "It's for everyone" (S2x02 "I Get Ideas"). Bennett (2013) observes how even this small slice of their conversation is a nod to the larger controversy surrounding *Girls*: "whether 'Girls' is about all girls or about four girls' very particular bubble" (para. 4). The types of viewers interested in the show do not support the "every-girl" theory. Per a report from *Vulture*, 56% of the audience for *Girls* are male, with 22% of them being "white dudes over 50" (Adalian, 2012, para. 2). Despite the audience metrics, Glover's casting and the meta-conversation appeared indicative of the validity of cancel culture. Dunham may have also yielded to the "whitewashing" claims because of the scrutiny surrounding *Girls*, even before the premiere. To sustain positive perceptions of the supposedly critically-acclaimed show, tackling the lack of diversity (even in a short-lived manner) was necessary to keep in line with market demands from viewers.

As stated earlier, *The 100* fans created online petitions, calling for greater empathy and recognition for LGBTQ characters. Part of this was the trending #BuryYourGays and also #LGBTQDeservesBetter hashtags on Twitter. Aside from the abstract demands, fans created a fundraiser for the Trevor Project, which is dedicated to LBGTQ issues. From the beginning of March 2016 until Rothenberg's *TVInsider* interview, the petition had raised over 80,000 dollars for the Trevor Project. On March 24, Rosenberg apologized again, and shared that he would have "handled Lexa's death differently" (as cited in Roth, 2012, para. 6). Originally, he most likely deemed fans were upset over the loss of a favorite character, much in the way fans denounced previous character deaths on *The 100* in a similar fashion. However, the mixture of fan backlash and fundraiser may have illustrated for Rosenberg the seriousness of the LGBTQ issue of character representation, which was separate and distinct from past instances of fan backlash over character deaths. Seeing as how writers could not "reverse" Lexa's death, they did write in a continued lesbian story arc. In Season 3, Clarke starts a relationship with Niylah, sustaining their bond through Season 4. Entering into Season 7, Clarke has yet to enter into a romance with a man. Through viewers' online demands, the showrunners of *The 100* changed the creative outcomes to align with what was deemed appropriate and fair.

Realistically, like with *Girls*, a combination of business and fan-fueled issues may have convinced Rosenberg to change course. For instance, the Trevor Project initiative grabbed the attention of advertisers like Maybelline, who promised to no longer air ads during *The 100* via Twitter posts to fans. According to journalist Brian Steinberg (2016), this did not mean that the company was pulling ad revenue from The CW, but it was still a substantive threat in terms of "energizing a fan base" (para. 7). Even before the March 3 airing of episode "Thirteen," the sci-fi drama was rumored for cancelation. It's possible that the #BuryYourGays controversy simultaneously forced Rosenberg to yield some creative positioning to save face with The CW executives deciding the future of his show, while also giving Rosenberg reason to demonstrate how cancelling his show would be counter-productive, given the boost in popularity.

Both shows apparently capitulated to the online critique period. *Girls* was accused of white-washing and sought to counter this perception. *The 100* was accused of perpetuating anti-LGBTQ tropes and was likewise determined to "correct" the perception. However, *The 100* made a lasting change that the character trajectory for Clarke has followed for five seasons, whereas *Girls* made surface changes with a two-episode guest star, Glover. As identified by Watson (2015), in *Girls*, "non-white characters are often transient men and women— disposable figures quickly dismissed, or at the very least, marginalized by her group" (p. 147). The shorter and less-sustained response could be because of the nature of diversity issues on

Girls that originated from a more ambiguous systemic trope (an all-white cast), compared to the violent and more "in-your-face" offing of an LGBTQ character under circumstances that reinforced another trope. It is worth noting that even as *Girls* remained transient in its inclusion of diverse characters, the critical and audience reception may have influenced HBO to cast increasingly diverse characters in subsequent show offerings (which will be explored later in this article). While both tropes are hurtful to different groups, one for racial diversity and one for gender and sexuality reasons, lasting character changes may have occurred because of the substantive initiative taken by *The 100* fans. Instead of just writing or sharing memes, the fans decided to act, such as raising funds for The Trevor Project. The fandom also shifted from antagonistic rhetoric to instead "establish channels of collaboration for a common cause" (Guerrero-Pico, 2017, p. 2). The fandom tried to refocus the online discussion away from hate of the show and on to social recognition of a damaging trope. The newly adopted tone and efforts in campaigning for queer rights gained the notice of The CW network. Rallying as an online community and creating a tangible output (more than 80,000 dollars raised) generated intense pressure for the showrunners. Fans of *The 100* built a smaller community-based following, and so they may have felt they had more buy-in, or even a type of ownership over the show.

Artistic and Creative Ownership

When audiences identify with a character (as they had trouble with in *Girls* or found troubling when a queer character was killed off with *The 100*) they may feel a type of possession over that character. As Michel Foucault (1992) argues in "What is an Author?," a writer's name and ownership may be "regulated" by a culture (p. 305). Foucault explains, "Partially at the expense of themes and concepts that an author places in his work, the 'author function' could also reveal the manner in which discourse is articulated on the basis of social relationships" (p. 313). By extension, "suspicions arise concerning the absolute nature and creative role of the subject" (Foucault, 1992, p. 314), which could mean that audiences also hold power over stories and increasingly express interest in influencing these outcomes. Thus begins a battle for control between the artist and the audience, who create and influence characters, respectively.

The idea of artistic ownership and authorship is hard to pinpoint in an artform like a play, film, or television show. These forms are penned by one or many people and require producers, editors, and other collaborators to bring the story to fruition. Michael J. Meyer (2004) suggests of the novel *Misery*:

[Stephen] King poses the ambiguous question faced by all writers: whether their concern for the symbiotic relationship with their reading public is great enough to overcome their fear of catering to inferior quality in order to attain a more measurable goal: reader acceptance and financial success. (p. 97)

Indeed, as displayed in the face-to-face power play between characters Annie Wilkes and Paul Sheldon, artists must decide to concede or not concede, in varying degrees, with varying results. However, in making these changes, artists may believe the writing and characterization will be lessened, and the result will be not as envisioned. In a technical sense, this interplay between artists and audience may now also include the influence of online fandoms, whether it results in renewal, casting decisions, or new character arcs. With *The 100* in particular (and to a more limited degree with *Girls*), audiences were not so much "authors" as they functioned as what Foucault might call "initiators." As he describes, "the distinctive contribution of these [sorts of] authors is that they produced not only their own work, but the possibility and the rules of formation of other texts" (1992, p. 310). Foucault uses "initiators" to describe authors like

Homer, Freud, and Marx, and obviously online discussion is not an identical comparison. Yet, the moves made by *The 100* fandom is like the initiator in that it shifted discourse to focus on import larger than the original work in reference. In highlighting the social injustice of Bury Your Gays, *The 100* fandom may represent a more modern initiator, establishing a larger conversation of how the trope had permeated into other shows and films. This sort of action differs from the simplicity of "cancel culture," and may instead be cited as a diversity initiative.

Instead of expecting creative changes based on want, like with *Misery*, the criticism of *Girls* and *The 100* was an expectation of change based on what was considered to misalign with reality. To see normative characters fixed in a setting that ignores, or at least doesn't showcase, a diverse reality is largely behind the diversity criticism for *Girls* and *The 100*. Essentially, as opposed to calling for creative change based on expectations of what is correct or appropriate, the diversity criticism aimed at *Girls* and *The 100* was more of a critique of social injustice, rather than an instance of cancel culture. Despite the negativity of the blanket term "cancel culture," this is not a reason to "disengage from Twitter and Facebook, as some commentators advocate, nor to give up on social media's potential for progressive action" (Ng, 2020, p. 622). As explored above, though audience pushback sometimes results in snap decisions, it can also inspire positive initiatives for diversity.

Diversity Initiatives Across Visual Media

Audience demands help sway the market and have opened diversity initiatives in various forms of media. A diversity initiative can be described as an attempt to acknowledge diversity gaps, while also promoting greater diversity.

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd in 2020, protests across the US have reignited conversations about race and representation. Television executives have taken notice, and have launched diversity initiatives. To start, in June 2020, Hackman Capital promised to invest 2 million dollars in diverse communities and media training for minorities. The funds will enable "work with local schools, production studios, and content creators to offer Black students and other underrepresented communities the resources to obtain mentorship, internships, scholarships, and the necessary education and onsite training to secure jobs in Los Angeles' largest industry" (Low, 2020, para. 5). Similarly, CBS has set a goal to hire more minority writers. The network hopes to expand to 40% diverse writers by the 2021-22 broadcast season, widening to 50% by the 2022-23 season (D'Zurilla, 2020, para. 1-2). Even actors are making strides to develop opportunities for underrepresented writes. Working with the organization Color of Change, Michael B. Jordan started the #ChangeHollywood initiative in July 2020, which "outlines a road map with concrete ways to invest in anti-racist content and authentic Black stories, invest in Black talent and reinvest police funds to support Black communities" (Ali, 2020, para. 4). Even as the drive for greater diversity in visual media expands and is quantified, the current gaps in representation are still acute. Social media plays a role in how knowledge of representation is changing, because "as the communications landscape gets denser, more complex, and more participatory, the networked population is gaining greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action" (Shirky, 2011, p. 29). The combination of communication and dissemination of sentiment can drive change, like a diversity initiative. As Meadow Jones (2014) tells it, "Artists and authors commonly strive to bring the viewer or reader into a world made through description or expression" (p. 49). So it makes sense that those same audiences would voice their opinions to reach the authors in pursuit of new artistic development. Ultimately, collective action allowed *The 100* to sustain a longer lasting initiative, whereas the collective action for *Girls* was less focused and produced different results.

Though Dunham initially reacted to the lack of diversity by basically saying she "couldn't relate" and therefore "couldn't write to the experience," she nevertheless added a prominent black guest star at the start of Season 2. Given that filming took place only one month after the premiere, the audience and critical reception may have swayed whom *Girls* ultimately chose to cast. Either way, Dunham's decision to publicize this choice was certainly in part a response to the critique. Similar to *The 100*'s Clexa promos, which built up a diverse and strong character, the promos for Glover's addition hinted that he would be a series regular. After the Season 2 premiere, rumors hit that he was only a guest star. Glover's departure after two episodes initiates when the main character, Hannah, confronts him for critiquing an essay she's written, a conversation that devolves into racial awkwardness with Glover's character shooting back, "Oh, I'm a white girl and I moved to New York and I'm having a great time and I got a fixed gear bike and I'm gonna date a black guy and we're gonna go to a dangerous part of town" (S2x2 "I Get Ideas"). His critique of Hannah's white privilege reflects self-awareness on the part of *Girls*. Importantly, Jones (2014) talks about how "empathy may be best understood through a narrative context" (p. 54). With the storyline including Glover's minority character, both the audience and artist may have experienced empathetic moments for diverse characters and situations. However, in a 2018 interview with *The New Yorker*, Dunham revealed that Glover ad-libbed the lines. His interpretation of Hannah's white privilege was "one-hundred percent him. I emailed him later to say 'I hope you feel the part on *Girls* didn't tokenize you,' and his response […]: 'Let's not think back on mistakes we made in the past, let's just focus on what lies in front of us'" (as cited in Friend, 2018, para. 70). As time passed from the 2012 premiere, Dunham seemed more comfortable expressing self-awareness for the diversity issues pointed out by fans and critics. During an interview with *Nylon*, Dunham professes "I wouldn't do another show that starred four white girls" (as cited in Wappler, 2017, para. 8). In reflecting on other *Girls* controversies, the aforementioned claim of nepotism was perhaps linked to the lack of diversity.

Nepotism is a sort of bias based on familial or friendly connections. There is an adage among writers to "write what you know," and Dunham acknowledges she "wrote" from what she knew. Jones (2014) believes that to truly write "what you know," greater reflection is necessary, because "the ability to synthesize information directly relates to one's ability to combine the given experiences and create new knowledge through appropriation and reconfiguration" (p. 50). If normative white showrunners continue to influence television, then falling back on "what you know" becomes a trap of bias couched in artistic freedom, lacking reflection or synthesis of self and of others. Thus, until more diverse showrunners are included at all levels of television, writing from beyond what is familiar (i.e., casting diverse leads) is a healthy start in combating a lack of diversity. Such steps should be taken with consideration, so as to avoid tokenism or misappropriation, but in moving from "what is known," or rather, "what is comfortable," new perspectives and stronger stories may flourish.

As outlined in the first section, staff writers of *The 100* ultimately decided for Clarke's character to remain bisexual rather than play out the potential heteronormative relationship with the protagonist Bellamy. Many factors could have influenced this decision, but the audience and critical response may have played a part. Likewise, before the Clexa debacle, audiences were previously on edge from another LGBTQ character death on *Jane the Virgin* in February 2016. With March came Lexa's death on *The 100*, Kira's death on SyFy's *The Magicians*, and Denise's death on AMC's *The Walking Dead*. The culmination of queer character deaths via various television shows accentuated the Bury Your Gays trope in a very short time span.

Fictional characters are killed off in any genre, regardless of demographics or social standing. However, fans of *The 100* believed queer characters have been repeatedly discarded in film and television. As the Bury Your Gays trope outlines, this is in part because such characters are cast so infrequently (or commonly as antagonists), so their deaths are all the more

noticeable and give rise to the notion that these characters are expendable. Autostraddle published a list of 212 lesbian and bisexual characters that are killed off from 1976 through 2020 (Riese, 2016, online chart). Of all modern queer characters and relationships on television, not many end up surviving. Snarker (2012) reports that television has in large part allowed "happy endings" for "only around 18 couples, on some 16 TV shows" (para. 8). Like other fans, queer fans hope to see themselves represented in fictional characters. Erin B. Waggoner (2018) explains that,

"for LGBTQ fans, this is especially important in their own meaning-making as representation becomes an important aspect of this process. Essentially, there needs to be good representation to help people understand who they are and the challenges they can expect to face with regard to this particular identity." (p. 1880)

Audiences understandably want characters to identify with, to see themselves in, and to recognize. This representation is hard to come by for queer audiences, so instead of just being upset over the loss of a beloved character, fans were perhaps upset over the loss of a role-model. The limited or poor representations of queer characters in February and March 2016 led to an amplified response from fans. Such a response contributes meaningfully to participatory culture.

As noted above, certain hashtags trended on Twitter to call more attention to the diversity criticism, like #BuryYourGays. *The 100* showrunner Rothenberg's Twitter account lost 15,000 followers after the March 3, 2016 episode aired. Moreover, "Fans got the hashtag #LGBTFansDeserveBetter to trend for hours worldwide on Twitter the week after Lexa's death to coincide with the airing of *The 100*" (Snarker, 2012, para. 15). Viewers also created two websites to express thoughts and discontent with queer representation on media (lgbtfansdeservebetter.com and wedeservedbetter.com), and raised over 100,000 dollars to donate to the Trevor Project. The combination of social media blitzes and other forms of outreach effectively conveyed how powerful the audience discontent could be. As Snarker (2012) observes, "The intricate pas de deux that shows and fans play with each other is the new social capital that drives ratings" (para. 20). Showrunners that ignore critics and fanbases are ignoring the potential for media exposure, which in turn could impact the number of viewers.

Diversifying Show Catalogs: The CW and HBO

Perhaps intent on investing the "new social capital" for creative and economic gain, The CW and HBO have diversified representation in the last five years. In 2020, The CW features six shows with minorities billed as lead and six shows with minorities as co-stars (out of twenty-four offerings of original content). Two shows star white women as the lead, but are diverse in their characterizations: *In the Dark* is about a blind woman, while *Batwoman* features a queer lead as Batwoman (and the actress also identifies as lesbian). Also in 2020, HBO now features more than eight shows with minorities billed as the lead (out of over thirty-six offerings of original content), with minorities writers to boot. As diverse successors to *Girls*, shows like *Insecure*, *Euphoria*, and *Betty* reflect—respectively—on: relationships for women and teens working and dating in the city, overcoming drug use, and resisting sexism. This diversity of characterization could be framed as cancel culture phasing out white characters. However, it is better understood as a diversity initiative, which the following sections evaluate and distinguish.

Cancel Culture or Diversity Initiative?

As previously suggested, cancel culture is a sort of group mentality by which the actions or words shared in a public forum are deemed taboo, and therefore should be amended. Sometimes, the desire to "amend" goes too far (in which the push and the allure hit an apex), and online forums demand similar taboo action or content be deleted or "cancelled." For *Girls* and *The 100*, the writers of this article believe that the audience and critical receptions cut across cancel culture *and* the larger diversity initiative influencing Hollywood and other media spaces. Cancel culture can have negative connotations; however, in the cases of *Girls* and *The 100*, what was being identified as taboo coincided with diversity initiatives and could be deemed positive, instead of being classified with the more toxic elements of cancel culture, which sometimes lead to the dismantling of a cause without reflection. Instead of intending to "silence" what was considered taboo, the criticism surrounding *Girls* and *The 100* aimed to *remedy* problematic character representations. With these remedies, there is an intent to "end" or "cancel" the predominate representation of white and heteronormative characters. In that way, the social media calls for change complicate negative connotations of cancel culture.

Even as cancel culture and diversity initiatives may overlap, they are not the same. Cancel culture is a consensus to end taboos, whereas diversity initiatives constitute an attempt to add new perspectives to an otherwise homogenous creative landscape. Even still, there are audiences who believe that diversity initiatives are a type of cancelling, or destruction, of creativity (Figure 5).

Figure 5. "Twitter user Patrick on Friends *and diversity." Screengrab from Twitter. 2020.*

Twitter user Patrick suggested the diversity criticism of *Friends*, may have contributed to fewer viewers. This view also leads to the perception of diversity initiatives as "forced creativity" and therefore diminishing their quality, much in the way *Misery*'s Sheldon was concerned about forced revisions from fan Wilkes as a weakening of the storyline. Yet, diverse casting in shows like *Scandal* and *Evil* have drawn large audiences. Clearly, a series can be both diverse and profitable, as noted by Weinstein (2014): "*Scandal*'s success as both a form of social TV and Black female-centered programming encouraged ABC to sign Rhimes to a lucrative four-year contract and schedule their entire Thursday-night prime-time programming around a block of Rhimes-produced programs" (para. 5). There is also the line of reasoning to just let characters and storylines appeal to viewers without needing to infuse diversity. Lisa Kudrow explains how in *Friends* "there was a guy whose wife discovered she was gay and pregnant, and they raised the child together? We had surrogacy too. It was, at the time, progressive" (as cited in Donnelly, 2020, para. 11). What this points to is that series like *Friends*, *Girls*, or *The 100* are not irredeemable for their audience-perceived issues of diversity. Rather, audiences have shifted their expectations of what character portrayals can mean on a personal level since *Friends* premiered in 1994, just as *Girls* and *The 100* manifest more recent societal trends. It's important to reassess where television content stands in the hopes of looking forward. Even if audiences

admire television shows, they may still hope for new narratives that incorporate societal changes in a meaningful way.

Diversity initiatives may also be perceived as unnecessary because all-black casts in similar shows promote a "separate but equal" ideal. As seen in Figure 6, Twitter-user Jabber questions why minority-centric shows are not questioned for their lack of diversity.

Figure 6. "Twitter user Jabber on diversity critiques." Screengrab from Twitter. 2020.

In fact, such analogy betrays a deceptively false equivalence, as minority-centric shows are so rare compared with the proliferation of white, heteronormative spaces. White showrunners may be given preference (for nepotism or other privilege), which excludes minorities from participation, even if all-black casts are promoted in shows like *Sanford and Sons*, *Good Times*, or more recently *black-ish*. Overall, though cancel culture and diversity initiatives share similarities, diversity more aligns with market sway (audience interest and trends) that many writers and distributors already account for and respond to.

Conclusion

Overall, our premise was to detail audience receptions for *Girls* and *The 100* and analyze how they affected each show's production. The writers of this article believe that participatory culture reflects established online practices and may be used to sustain media projects, end them, or to invite revision and the production of new media content. While some use pejorative terms like "cancel culture," the term "diversity initiative" might be more appropriate and aptly describes viewer critiques of *Girls* and *The 100*. Creativity and authorship are *always* about reception and pleasing the audience; in a networked media age, the audience simply has more immediate and wide-reaching means to make their perspectives heard. The two cases of *Girls* and *The 100* diversified production in response to viewer criticisms. Considered separately, the more substantive change occurred with *The 100*, perhaps because writers weighed the pushback from fans in tandem with market concerns, since cancellation is of greater concern for basic cable networks like The CW. Even so, this confluence does not negate the strength of audience reception. Instead, it perhaps underscores how network series are at the mercy of the market, unlike series on premium channels like HBO that can respond in relatively minor ways (such as with tokenism). This article also explored how diversity in television has a role to play in those very market concerns, and that writing from "what you know" can contribute to a lack of diversity if showrunners and writers are not representatively diverse. While tradition, or the familiar, is comforting, it can also perpetuate harmful practice. *Girls* is a high-profile example demonstrating how the temporary addition of "diverse" characters may not be the ultimate answer to television's lack of diversity, especially for guest-starring roles, which seems to diminish the cultures and criticisms (as a means of placating rather than consideration), whereas the sustained plot response from *The 100* showrunners with Clexa impactfully addresses a harmful trope. In the end, both series exemplify how diversifying characterization may prove

to be a temporary fix so long as diverse writers and producers are not given more opportunities to co-create media.

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Original Article

A Case for Psychoanalytic Visual *Dispositif*? *Birdman* after the "Cinematographic Capture"

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Abstract: This paper investigates how the notion of "superhero" in popular imagination, evident in the multiple live-action adaptations of Detective Comic's and Marvel Cinematic Universe's comic book heroes for their commercial value, has been debunked by Alejandro Inarritu's 2014 *Birdman*. While the aforementioned dream factories affirm the fantasmatic "flight" inherent to these cinematic creations, especially symbolised by the aviating capacities of most of their superheroes, it is Inarritu's *Birdman*, although not commercially comparable, that is theoretically significant here: the "flight" motif paradoxically gestures to the "capture" that is the very cinematic essence. Working with some key psychoanalytic theorists of the apparatus and later the suture, I shall argue that the messianic in this film, embodied by the male lead, whose waning career is resurrected from oblivion given Keaton's subsequent work acknowledgement despite his Oscar nonsuccess, is revealed by this author to be ultimately the cinematographic apparatus that gives us Baudry's transcendental subject, a concept arguably bound to his cinematic effect, a term with epistemological import. This paper will also redirect attention to the *interpretative* liberation associated with "flight", insisting that Baudry's discussion of the cinematic *dispositif* is among the first to address the real, albeit with an emphasis on intelligibility, so that release from what I call the "cinematic capture", a term that Todd McGowan defines as "uncritical subjectivity", can be enacted. This thesis asserts that *Birdman*, proposed here as a case for psychoanalytic film theory, unintentionally exposes the traumatic real within the imaginary because of cinematic capture, thus leading to this discussion of the gaze, identification, narration, control and desire. In addition, it will appraise what Baudry calls the "knowledge effect" by responding to the following inquiries that encapsulate the critical stake here. How can one call this effect "knowledge" when the "subjective" of the transcendental subject becomes more pronounced with the other title of Baudry's apparatus theory, which is suture theory? What can one say about the "reality effect" of the apparatus theory in an age of digitisation the emphasis of which is virtuality and, last but not least, can one argue that Inarritu's *Birdman* is an illustrative intervention of the digitised post-cinematic?

Introduction

This paper theoretically investigates how an analysis of popular culture spectatorship yields thoughts on Jacques Derrida's phrase "the messianic without messianism" in *Specters of Marx* (1993), the self-sacrificial hero that is other than the messiah as religiously prophesized. Derrida's messianic is an ethical response to contemporary political and economic crises; its religious undertones is reworked here to address the notion of "superhero" in popular imagination, evident in the multiple live-action adaptations of the comic book heroes of Detective Comics and Marvel Cinematic Universes for their commercial value. With qualification, This address also notes that not all comic book franchises are valued for their Hollywood commercialism; some comic book adaptations are self-aware, positioning themselves external to the hegemony of the tinseltown blockbuster. DC's or Marvel's recent box-office earnings attest to the financial successes of its serialized film franchises. While these dream factories are premised on the "flight" motif inherent to cinematic creations, especially symbolized by the aviating capacities of some superheroes, it is Alejandro Inarritu's 2014 *Birdman*, although not commercially comparable, which is theoretically significant here: the "flight" motif paradoxically gestures to the capture that is the very essence of the cinematic. Besides the commercial successes of the comic book heroes, Inarritu's filmic spoof ruptures the heroic aspect of comic superheroes and brings to the fore not only the earth-bound actor who plays the character but also how the concept of the heroic can only be understood in and through the anti-heroic.

James Driscoll's (2016) critical review of Todd McGowan's psychoanalytic film theory is crucial to an understanding of the manner in which audience participation is invited via an affective filmic involvement. He cites McGowan's "attribution to Jean-Louis Baudry that '[i]n the cinema, one can gain a sense of identity through the act of seeing heroic figures on the screen, I see Sandra Bullock or Denzel Washington acting in a specific way, and I model myself on them.'" (2016: 106). Whereas McGowan indicates the imaginary identification activated by the image: how we "model" ourselves on our favorite characters in action, Driscoll's ironic remark emphasizes the complexity of Baudry's exposition of how the filmic mechanism pulls the spectator's attention into the filmic object in and through *the medium as the social link, a socialization brought forth by the screened object, using the ideological interpellation inherent to the belief systems of communities*. However, this sociality is not an intersubjective person-to-person connection; it signals the manipulation of the imaginary dimension of the spectator's psyche by filmic creators for psychic immersion. One can only state that, after reading Driscoll's review, the successes of the superhero genre testify to the psychologically immaturity of those who find it appealing.

Driscoll attempts to retrieve psychoanalysis for clinical practice, which, according to him, is meant to be a psychic aid for the analysand. The analyst is to cure the analysand via a transference of his or her desire for the lost object onto a new object as substitution. This provides the necessary ontological support, without which the analysand's psyche may disintegrate, thereby his recommendation of not trivializing this psychic remedy by using it to analyze film. With hindsight, this "modelling" of iconic heroes because they are physically beautiful, muscular, amazing in action et cetera only reinforces the mundaneness of our everyday lives, resulting in an inverse negative identification that Driscoll explains as alienation in his psychoanalytic reading of Stanley Kubrick's 1971 *The Clockwork Orange*. It is the same with the consumption of "superhero" comics or films, live action or otherwise. Rather than psychic healing, this emotional negativity, which makes us more conscious of our physical inadequacies, can be used by the commercial machinery for economic reasons: to psychically render the urbanites conducive to suggestive promptings that will increase commodification. On the other hand, Tim Groves's "Entranced: Affective Mimesis and

Cinematic Identification" (2006) provides a cognitive account of how structures of affect are activated so that some kind of mirroring occurs, leading to recognition, perception and construction. *This paper, in an endeavour to be impartial, states clearly that the successes of the DC or Marvel franchises indicate both the psychic strength and weakness of our imaginary capacity.* But it is the weakness of the imaginary in the Lacanian triadic formula that opens us to ideological manipulation and, in this age of cyberspace, online deception.

Slavoj Zizek, too, states in "Jacques Lacan's Four Discourses" (2006) the interdependence of cultural studies and clinical practice: the latter fails when it ignores the socio-historical dimension of the psychoanalytic treatment. In line with Zizek's exposition and agreeing with Driscoll's premise, this cultural analysis starts by suggesting that *psychoanalytic film theory can increase our awareness of the social ills of hegemonic commercialism*. The cultural benefits are demonstrated in how this analytical approach yields apperceptions of the ideological underpinnings of not only institutional or bureaucratic functioning but also the disadvantages of global commercial bureacratization. McGowan's psychoanalytic take on films shows us how one can achieve liberation by overcoming the real on the side of the imaginary, the impasse that escapes symbolization, which intrudes into the individual's psychic functioning. The final scenes of *Birdma*n show a male protagonist whose reconciliation with his family helps him to move past his psychic blockage, an obstacle that Jacques Lacan attributes to *the effect* of the Imaginary as explained in the chapter "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Pyschanalytic Experience" (2006) and into the Symbolic, the social reality as we know it with its laws and conventions. Furthermore, McGowan's *The Real Gaze* (2007) attends to what I call the "cinematic capture" when he speaks of the psychic immersion that some films promote. This, of course, implies that the psychoanalytic import for those who study or analyze films has to do with what is uncovered with the removal of the imaginary overlay, the blankness of the screen itself that gives the viewer imaginary space. I shall examine the validity of Driscoll's negative comment of psychoanalytic film theory: how psychoanalysis when taken out of its clinical context and used as an approach for film analysis becomes shaky. This reworking of the discursive approach, which traces the theoretical shifts from Baudry's apparatus theory (1974) to the 1970s screen theory to the suture theory of late twentieth century and coupled with McGowan's innovative reading of the cinematic gaze, owes much to Thomas Elsaesser's advice (2011) to examine more closely the theory of the apparatus. A word of caution to those who think that psychoanalysis is trendy; psychoanalysis as a theory is premised on failure, albeit not only the failure that McGowan describes in *The Real Gaze*, which actually supports my thesis that *any attempt to theorize film viewing must begin with the premise of heterogeneity*, a theoretical premise illustrated by the ambiguous filmic conclusion of Inarritu's *Birdman*. The failure is due to the fact that what ails the individual psychically has to do with an unarticulated desire; the analysand must work through *her own psychic trauma herself* for the narrative band-aid the psychic wound necessitates.

Birdman, labelled a modern classic because it cinematically exposes the fundamental failure of the Other, causes psychic discomfit rather than the maternal comfort of which Baudry speaks in "The Apparatus", wherein the film nurtures psychically the regressive longings of the individual. Its critical strength is found in how it unveils the fantasmatic leanings of our psyche and ironically demolishes them without being overtly tragic. More importantly, its ambiguous ending sparks off more cineaste speculations, which I insist counter Vadim Rizor's five points of contention in his critical review of *Birdman*'s (2014) sustained long shot, crucial as a cinematographic device. Rizor's critique is brought to the fore as an inverse aid to my thesis that Emmanuel Lubezki's fluid cinematography reinforces the "thematic purpose" of *Birdman*: its attempt to present the Real within the Imaginary as chaotic material reality. Second, Rizor focuses on what the film characters have in common, which he attributes to *Birdman*'s go-to-

phrase "you are an asshole" which exposes their vile imperfections. This, moreover, is in accordance to Lacan's Hegelian take in *Seminar 1* (1953-54) on the master/slave dialectic with the master as an idiotic asshole enjoying the slave's labor. Third, Rizor enquires into Thomson's staging of Raymond Carver's play, thematically crucial because of what Lacan says about the stupid dimension of "love". Fourth, besides prompting a caustic snigger from the knowing spectator, the intertextual importance of the citation from Roland Barthes's *Mythologies* comes to the fore when a celebrity reviewer at the interview scene asks if the aforementioned semiotician is an Avenger and, lastly, the reason for *Birdman* as a credible alternative to Hollywood's "superhero" narratives despite Rizor's rather disgruntled review.

Because of the contemporary emphasis on the digital production of the post-cinematic, in line with the virtual and, thereby, psychoanalytically the imaginary, this paper addresses topographically the Lacanian real within the imaginary, rendered visually in Jacques-Alain Miller's diagram, which Inarritu's *Birdman* arguably demonstrates. I shall define briefly the three terms of the psychoanalytic triad, detailed mostly in Lacan's *Ecrits* and *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, before we proceed further. The Imaginary designates the ego formation of the mirror stage wherein maternal care is most crucial with the Symbolic as the Name-of-the-Father coming in at some point to collapse the Oedipal complex so that desire for the mother becomes repressed as the child enters society. Lacan works with Saussurean semiotics to introduce his version of the psychoanalytic treatment of the symptoms arising from the unconscious, coupling it with the metonymic and metaphoric movements of the Freudian psychoanalytic field. The Real, by far the most intriguing term, designates material reality for the earlier Lacan as well as the later Lacanian excess that escapes symbolization.

Working with Christian Metz's imaginary signifier (1991) and Jean-Louis Baudry's 1974-1975 "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus" and his more important 1986 "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impressions of Reality in Cinema", I shall examine, in particular, the cinematographic achievements of Inarritu's film and assert that the messianic in this film, although fronted by the male lead, is revealed ultimately to be the cinematic apparatus that gives us what Baudry calls "the transcendental subject", a concept suggesting movement and meaning and arguably bound to his "cinematic effect" or "impression of reality", making Lacan's early discourse on the real as material reality exceptionally significant. This theoretical assertion has to do with how the cinematographic apparatus aids in the imaginary cut that slices through the real, giving the viewer not only the visual narrative but also the analyst a symbolic reading at a different level. This paper also redirects attention to *the interpretative liberation* figured by the "flight" motif, proposing that Baudry's cinematic *dispositif* is among the first to address theoretically the real, albeit with an emphasis on intelligibility, which McGowan appears to have elided in *The Real Gaze*, so that my espousal of the release from what I call the "cinematic capture", a term that McGowan defines as "uncritical subjectivity", can be found. This classical film narrative apparatus, which Constance Penley (1989) rather ironically classifies as similar to "the bachelor-machine" of Marcel Duchamp in *The Future of an Illusion*, gives us the former's omnipotent subject that liberates us in and through our reading processes. This thesis asserts that *Birdman*, as a case for psychoanalytic film theory, unintentionally exposes the traumatic real within the imaginary of the cinematic capture, thus leading to this discourse of the gaze, identification, narration, control and desire. In addition, it appraises what Baudry calls the "knowledge effect" in "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus" by responding to the following inquiries. On what premise can one call this effect "knowledge" and how does the "subjective" of the transcendental subject attain this when the other title of Baudry's apparatus theory is suture theory? A preliminary response will indicate the semantic bind between the semiotic and the cinematographic, especially with the argument I pose in a different essay entitled "Aesthetic(s) Moves" (2014) that cinematography can be read as "writing-in-movement". This

will, in turn, alters how one approaches the material dimension of the sign, the signifier. It then takes us to the "reality effect" of the apparatus theory, which arguably interrupts the virtual emphasis of digitisation. Lastly, can one argue that Inarritu's *Birdman* is an illustrative intervention of the digitised post-cinematic?

The Psychoanalytic Theorists' Toolbox of Semiosis

The relevance of Christian Metz's linguistic conception of cinema (1991) to an analysis of *Birdman* becomes evident with the visual dimension of the title sequence. It functions like the "tissue sample", Lacan's "piece of flesh", that Jacques-Alain Miller touches upon in the drive as speech published in *Umbr(a)* (1997). Describing this piece of flesh as the drive metaphorically invokes the messianic as the embodiment of the spirit, the mirror images of the ego ideal transformed into the ideal ego, Birdman as Thomson at the filmic beginning and Thomson as Birdman by the filmic end. Raymond Carver's "Late Fragment" is used in the title sequence, which only appears momentarily: "And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so? I did. And what did you want? To call myself beloved, to feel myself beloved on the earth". The creativity of the opening sequence centers on the slow appearance of letters followed by the disappearance of the previous ones, paradoxically recalling invisibility even as the cinematic essence is that of the visible. The word made flesh, more precisely, the rotting flesh of an aging actor sums up what drives the entire human race, the *objet petit a*, which has no actual existence but takes on the various guises of the demand for love, the articulation of need and the combination of the two that leads to desire. To Miller, "[d]esire is as such full of identifications" (1997, 19). The manifest text of *Birdman* dramatizes Driscoll's concept of "negative" identification in "Reification and Alienated Form in *A Clockwork Orange*" (2016). Revolving around Thomson's faded career which he hopes to give a dramatic boost by staging Carver's "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love", Thomson hears Birdman's voice taunting him about his aged appearance, his failing career, his broken family. These delusional episodes are instances of Birdman's aggressiveness, psychoanalytically termed "aggressivity", and symptomatic of narcissism. Here, what we have is the messianic image turned into the obscene father of the superego, threatening Thomson's reality with disintegration and fragmentation. By writing a film on the production process of Carver's play, Inarritu and his writers (un)wittingly provide intellectual access to the various psychic symptoms found within the hypocritical and self-obsessed world of Broadway or the commercial machinery of Hollywood comic book superheroes, with their perennial and excessive preoccupations with youth, beauty and money.

Birdman's filmic body discloses the obverse of the invocatory as drive, the appellation to which Althusser (1970) refers as well as the latter's exposure of the ideological state apparatuses; instead we are shown loud excesses, the cause of which is the lack of affirmation: Thomson, after reading a nondescript review of his preview performance, has a fist fight with "ponsy" Shiner that turns into a hysterical catfight; Samantha Thomson puts her father down with "you don't matter, get used to it"; people burst into Thomson's studio; neurotic Lesley shouts and throws a hair dryer at Shiner and Thomson or his alter ego acts out, one using telekinesis whereas the other actual physical strength to throw furniture and accessories against the wall. On one hand, it is histrionics without the Oedipal drama, one recalling Macbeth's words, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing". On the other, one is reminded of the Icarus complex that results in a hubristic fall. The Icarus complex is pertinent not only to our proclivity to take flight from our real world problems, but interpretatively more relevant to human desire and ambition. These qualities inadvertently invite the intrusion of the real that ruptures the imaginary in Miller's diagram, which topographically maps the psychic area where trauma

occurs. However, cinematographically, *Birdman*'s flight metaphor alludes to its predominant cinematic style, a question of form and very much in line with what Baudry acerbically states in "The Apparatus": "That the real in Plato's text is at an equal distance from or in a homologous relationship to the 'intelligibly real' – the world of Ideas – and 'reality-subject' – 'the impression of reality' produced by the apparatus in the cave would moreover be sufficient to make us aware of the real meaning of the world of Ideas and of the field of desire on which it has been built…" (1986, 696-697). Baudry's commentary is psychically telling on at least two levels: first, the propensity for illusions that *homo sapiens* have and, second, without the structuration given by the cinematic *dispositif*, one will not have a narrative nor a film of which to speak. In fact, Baudry's "knowledge effect" complements Lacan's conception of the two epistemological dimensions of psychoanalysis: the knowledge of the imaginary, a reflexive misrecognition that paradoxically promotes the psychic unity of an individual, and, in the case of psychoanalyzing film, film unity, whereby the knowledge of the symbolic becomes prioritized, a reflecting type of analysis motivating psychic transference, one leading to the ego formation whereas the other the subject. Thus, it is the substantive of the earlier Lacanian real that incites the endeavour to know which, in turn, presupposes the intellectual organisation required in such an attempt.

Metz's take on the imaginary signifier is clearly premised on montage and how this editing technique represents cinematic potency. He describes "[m]ontage as supreme ordering" because it is how montage is used that gives to filmic sense. Baudry's citation of Pudovkin's conception of montage "as the art of assembling pieces of film, shot separately, in such a way as to give the spectator the impression of continuous movement" illustrates the director's "ingenious manipulation" of images. While Metz debates whether film is a language or a language system, one based on the dissection of the film to visual or aural units as signifiers and the shot arrangements as significates, a sort of cinematic language that resemble the "linguistics of speech", an issue evinces when one examines his broad use of filmic speech. One cannot simply make equivalent the "sequential arrangement" of filmic components to linguistics despite the fact that Metz calls it "cinematographic syntax". Even as he questions whether film is *langue* or *parole*, a linguistic system or a specific language use, the section, "A non-system language: film narrativity", intervenes in his discussion of the semiotic import of cinematography with the various genres of film as "the spectacle's formula" (1977, 139), indicating that "cinema is only in theory an art of images" (1977, 140). Perhaps the point missed by Metz here is this: this "art of images" is *the silent crux* from which the story-telling begins; it expresses without talking. It also lends the potential to mask an opaque gap within the cinematic image, an invisible lacuna upon which McGowan's *The Real Gaze* is founded.

Structurally, the film is surrealistic without using montage as the key technique of filming. The only montage use is when there are documentary frame insertions: the introductory and multiple scenes of a diving meteorite; the repeated images of sea birds soaring and settling on the islets of a tributary, montage shots of natural phenomena. To quote the film critic found in *Birdman*, Tabitha Dickson, it is the "superrealism" of the long take or continuous shot that, albeit with quite a few visual jolts of the handheld camera, glides along the inner corridors of the theatre leading to its exterior, St. James Square, which then lifts to the sky and dives when Inarritu decides that both Thomson and the audience have to return to reality per se that gives to Baudry's "impressions of reality". This means that what the audience experiences is not the usual filmic continuity; in fact, this heightened use of the long take, reminiscent of Bazin's recommendation that film ought to lay bare the verisimilitude of reality, challenges Hollywood intensified continuity editing. Besides the ironic character portrayals or the unsettling stylistics, the few disjunctive frame insertions further disrupt filmic immersion and, just when one thinks that Edward Norton caricaturizes Mike Shiner as the self-enamored, pretentious thespian, he has some authentic moments with Sam Thomson or Tabitha Dickson. Instead of intensifying

psychic absorption, this film uses cinematography to waylay filmic suture so that the film exposes the ideological abuses of commercial blockbusters, which use *filmic suture for financial reasons*. Taking center-stage, Inarritu's innovative cinematography brings mental release from the filmic capture of Hollywood continuity editing since it auto-reflexively critiques itself. Invoked is the desire for intellectual liberation, one akin to the desire of the analyst, the subject supposed to know, for she is the one endowed with the analytic capacity. Inviting the analysand to speak is the analyst's way of encouraging what Lacan calls "the pass", the Freudian transference from one signifier to the next. The analyst may not really know what ails the analysand psychically but the ethics of psychoanalysis insists that she pushes the analysand's remembrance of a truth her very own. This articulation is not the truth as fact; neither is it the truth as experienced. It is the truth of the analysand's unconscious: a narrative that the analysand enunciates so that the gaping trauma becomes covered by a "tissue sample", the logic of the signifier as the messianic.

This, in turn, calls to question the concept of reality in the phrase "virtual reality". The reality mentioned is obviously taken and reassembled from "objective" reality; a simulation that requires a higher degree of the suspension of disbelief than live-action films. The phrase "cinematographic specificity", used in both Metz's (1991) and Baudry's (1974-75) discourses and read in relation to the Lacanian "unique truth" indicates *something particularly imprinted* in each of us. Thus one cannot simply equate cinematography with speech owing to the fact that the organising dimension of speech is aural whereas that of cinematography is imagistic, which, in fact, takes the specificity of the individual filmic sense of the viewing subject, the subjective point of view, to that of the "transcendental subject" of the omniscient view point, comparable to the shift from the mirror function of ego formation to the multifocal reading manifested by the gliding eye of the camera that eventually results in cinematic effacement, correlating to Baudry's focus on "objective reality" which will be elaborated in the next section.

Metz's characterizing of film as "expressive" is prodigious given that my focus is on the "expressiveness" of the other "systems of signification" which he lists in his footnote, systems that constitute that filmic organisation at the level of codification: "cultural, social, stylistic, perceptual, etc." (1977, 162), the other of Baudry's mention of "the other scene" in "The Apparatus". Notwithstanding Metz's emphasis on speech, the immediacy of the image is definitely more impressionistic, and thereby more psychically powerful, than the aural sign even if Baudry notes that it is easier to evade the image than the sound. It calls to attention how film is an arrangement of images, corresponding to Baudry's description of our ego as „a sum of images", testifying to how film owes its existence to cinematography. According to Oxford Etymology Dictionary, "cinematography", which began its use in 1910, is Greek in origin, with the word-forming element "graph" derived from "graphos", signifying "writing". Thus cinematograph is that which writes, marks or describes, i.e. an instrument for recording. Noting that the webpage on Lacanian psychoanalysis has no entry on psychoanalysis and critical thought, I shall approach what knowledge is in relation to psychoanalysis: how the film analyst analyses the structural dimension of the film so as to go beyond the merely imaginary, the sense-making processes invoked by narrative and analysis, *the recognizing of the organisational aspect of the film's composition as a manner of being attentive to the symbolic in its relation to the real, the muteness of which attests strangely to its organic nature*.

This, paradoxically, points to how the commercialism of DC or Marvel Cinematic Universe can be undermined by redirecting focus to psychological implications of Baudry's "impression of reality". The word "imprint" that "impression of reality" brings to mind is key to psychological conditioning, reinforcing the visual dimension of the printed word. *Birdman* interrupts the continuity editing with another film technique that points to the true significance of "seamless reality", a post-production digital technique that DC or Marvel franchises promote, making the animated versions representative of what we call virtual reality in the digital age.

By demonstrating the hidden "real" of filmic creations: the psychic symptoms manifested in the chaotic and histrionic human interactions along the corridors of the backstage of the theatre, *Birdman theatrically satirizes* the superhero fantasy; it also alerts us to the dangers of delusion when the camera pans to Thomson found at the edge of a building about to dive. In other words, when the real is concealed to a great extent by the imaginary, it becomes unsettling and possibly traumatizing once exposed. The cinematic filter, on the other hand, is uncovered by the theatre within the film, an intensified performativity that oddly enhances the constative dimension of *Birdman*, the film as a cinematic frame as well as the *objet petit a*. This narrative or genre interruption becomes heightened by Thomson's television giving us news of Ironman's blockbuster status, subsequently eliciting a satirical response from his alter ego.

Significant to psychoanalytic film theory is Metz's exposition on the "reconstructed model" of reality, an assemblage of images, which is quite different from the documentary film that merely films the event as reproduction. With Barthes, he argues that fiction film can only be called reconstruction and not reproduction because it does not merely copy "the concrete aspect of the original object; it is neither poiesis nor pseudo-physis, but simulation, a product of *techne*. That is to say: the result of a manipulation. As the structural skeleton of the object made into a second object, it remains a kind of prosthesis" (1977, 135-6). This distinction between film as reproduction or film as reconstruction ties in with what Baudry describes as "perception" or "representation" in "The Apparatus": "perception", a word used in art history to define visual interpretation, attests to the subjective viewing of art objects, the reconstruction aspect of films, whereas "representation" is more in line with Metz's discussion of reproduction. It is when an individual mistakes the reconstructed model as the reproduced one, perception confused with representation, that delusion reigns.

Returning to the above discussion of "genre", the intertextual reference to Barthes's quote from *Mythologies*: "[t]he cultural work done in the past by gods and epic sagas is now done by laundry-detergent commercials and comic strip characters" informs us that "genre" is the key to comprehending the self-consciousness of *Birdman*; instead of placing the Hollywood superhero genre on a pedestal, the film ridicules it by revealing the human and all too human Thomson behind the superhuman mask. Not only is the film a film about theatre which, of course, comes from a play, in this case, written by Carver; it is also about how the three- or five-act structure has made a transition from plays to theatre performances to films. *Birdman*, although considered an alternative to mainstream films, is still constructed in accordance to the Aristotelian structure. However, this supposed reproduction can be considered "reconstruction", despite its docu-drama stylistics, an artistic instance of Baudry's "work as a process of transformation", the much-needed Lacanian symbolic realization for psychic healing. This reminds me of Bert Olivier's word, "orthopaedic", psychoanalytically mentioned in his "Lacan's Subject" (2004), which is, of course, *techne* as prosthesis and, in *Birdman*, prosthesis as *object cause*, coming to life because of its high stakes: *the protagonist's love for himself psychically transferred to his love for the art object*, the theatrical production that he has *invested so heavily*. The character arc can be rendered as the half-circular projection of self-obsession to a psychic entrancement by the substitutive object, Lacan's vector drawn from *jouissance* to castration, symbolized by Thomson's loss of his nose. This cultural analysis of *Birdman* bears witness to the fact that psychoanalytic film theory may not be that "shaky" after all.

Metz's footnote xx elaborates the semiotic *emphasis* for psychoanalytic film theory as the "double articulation" of film. The subject of enunciation here is the film discussed and the subject enunciating is the film's expressiveness, which is a split cine-subject symbolized by not just Thomson and his alter ego, Birdman, but also Thomson and Shiner, the egotistical narcissist. The women are also fractured signifiers of good and bad mothers or lovers. Moreover, Metz's five levels of codification signal why a semiotic reading is necessary: first, how

perception depends on *the structural play of space and time*; second, "recognition and identification of the visual and audio objects" within the filmic diegesis; third, the "symbolisms and connotations" that accompany the cultural reading; fourth, the narrative structures and five, "*the set of properly cinematographic systems that, in a specific type of discourse, organize the diverse elements furnished to the spectator by the four preceding instances*" (emphasis mine, 1977, 162). Examining closely its structuration, the symbolisms and connotations of the film are refracted initially so as to interweave later to configure a psychic labyrinth, evident in the multiple character parallels as well as the intertextual allusions. If this film is superrealistic, Baudry's "more real than the real", it is "filmic reality" unfolded by the camera transitioning to the "social" reality of Times Square with Thomson's fans using social media to send recordings to each other of the actor's semi-naked, frenzied rush to his next theatrical appearance. One can place Metz in Baudry's camp because he describes the narrative flow as "…the course of real events refracted through an ideological point of view" (1977, 136), thus signaling the elemental extraction of the apparatus from objective reality in order to create the filmic reality. In a film that uses in a sustained manner the long shot, what Metz states in the following citation is crucial: "…they fall back on what is called, for better or worse, the 'tracking shot' (and which implies nothing other than a *noncodified mobility of the camera*, *a movement that is truly free*) where traditional film syntaxes distinguish between rear and forward 'dolly,' 'pan,' 'tilt,' etc" (ibid). Quoting Metz aids my response to Rizor's point one of contention. The long take cinematographically corresponds to the "escape" theme of this film, which, ironically, means nothing unless understood in relation to the cinematic capture of Hollywood blockbusters, McGowan's cinema of integration. When the noncodified mobility of the camera gives to a truly free motion, the filming technique of *Birdman* visually illustrates cinematographic emancipation by way of filmic sensibility to cinematic sense, albeit one founded upon "the unexpected virtue of ignorance" promoted by the dream screen and analogous to the imaginary release for which Thomson longs and he supposedly achieves as Birdman. It is the playful cinematographic structure of this film, not the narrative configuration, that adds to the connotative richness of the film.

Of import to my thoughts on the realism of one-take filming is the reiteration of words such as "real", "reality", and "truth" or phrases with these words in *Birdman*, for instance when Birdman tells Thomson after the latter has met with his wife, arguably the only rational and psychically stable character in the film, that he ought to have taken the offer of a "reality show" on his family, perhaps a snide, underhanded jab at reality television programmes not only says a lot about the overlaps between appearance and reality; the superrealistic nature of this film *psychoanalytically theorizes* what Baudry call "more real than the real", signaling again the omnipotence of the camera's eye. Social reality, which goes under the intersection of the imaginary and the symbolic in Lacanian psychoanalytic schema, can be considered now as constructed artificially through the use of the various communicative channels, an ontological state encapsulated by Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message". While not disavowing social media because of its convenience and usefulness, reality per se is definitely more complicated than what is communicated through these devices. *Birdman*, in its dalliance with what Lacan calls "a real of non-sense", cited in Miller's the drive as speech, unintentionally reveals the constructed nature of the Symbolic, evident in how Thomson, as a failed symbolic figure, cannot control his actors, crew or family members.

Baudry's Apparatus Unveiling of the Gaze

Baudry's "The Apparatus" examines the role of cinema in producing subject effects by comparing it to the psychic apparatus described in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*.

Metapsychologizing film, he privileges the cinematic image, given that visual representation takes precedence in and through the optical apparatus, the *camera obscura*, which was invented at about the same time as the birth of Western science, with focus going from objective reality to that of subjective reality. Citing Baudry's "The Apparatus" renders obvious the concept of desire in psychoanalysis. This desire for womblike comforts is a concept linked to the gaze as conventionally defined: "[w]e can thus propose that the allegory of the cave is the text of a signifier of desire that haunts the invention of cinema and the history of its invention" (1986, 697). This section examines the role that desire plays in the technological progress of media productions, resulting in epochal as well as paradigm shifts; as Baudry explains: "…their existence (the instruments of visual communication) has at its origin a psychical source equivalent to the one which stimulated the invention of cinema" (ibid). Though Freud replaces the optical metaphor with the "mystic writing pad", apposite in its metaphorical nature to my proposition that "belief" (which Miller describes as *the menage a tois* of truth, meaning and fiction) to which Baudry alludes must take into account not only of the Lacanian triadic structure but also the Freudian conscious, preconscious and unconscious systems. Filmic essence resides precisely where the imaginary coincides with the symbolic, comparable to what we call reality per se, the *topos* where the systematization of belief takes place with no actual guarantee of truth, thus explaining how primary ego construction occurs and why it shifts with later identifications.

Significant to this discussion on film is Baudry's description of how the primary and the secondary identifications work in their constructions of the ideal ego and the ego ideal. The ideal ego, a construction occurring at the primary level, is premised on a misrecognized mirror reflection of wholeness: the mirror image is the *figurative stand in* for the child, further reassured by the maternal caregiver. During the secondary stage, wherein the formative scene for the subject of the symbolic is both substitutive and synecdochic, the image of perfection stands in place as the signifier for personal identification. Psychoanalytic film theory informs us that the play of reflection concerns not the mirroring of reality but that of images even as film provides "impressions of reality". Filmic identification focuses on the relations between the subject and the camera. According to Baudry, "[u]ltimately, the forms of narrative, the contents of the image, are of little importance so long as an identification remains possible" (1974, 45). The following citation is important to the understanding of Baudry's take on the boundedness of film identification; filmic mirroring, to him is closed with "no exchange, no circulation, no communication with any outside" (1974, 44), indicating the finiteness of ego construction even as the subjective point of vision is a point of fixity, given the determining significance achieved in the individual's identity construction. But the later Lacan places emphasis more on the ego ideal, the construction governed by the symbolic order. Crucial to this secondary process of identification is the individual placing himself at this point of perfection looking upon himself as "subject". Birdman's voice functions as this symbolic process. Producing Carver's play not only permits another opportunity to reinvigorate his acting career; it also reminds him of why he embarked on an acting career, a regressive move symbolized by the napkin with Carver's acknowledgement, what Zizek calls the *objet cause*. It is this double identification, first, through the imaginary order for "the imaginary integration of the self" (1974, 45), before it passes to the symbolic order that prompts the ego to pursue "the ideal vision" forever missed even if it never were.

Still Cartesian in its inclination, Baudry privileges the "eye" as the "active center" and the "origin of meaning" (1974, 40), illustrating how the eye of the camera records the narrative as it unfolds whereas the eye of the human subject, which is beside it, watches the narrative as it is communicated. Just before he closes his essay, he refers to the "I" that has an imaginary function, quoting Lacan that "that it is to this unreachable image in the mirror that the specular image gives its garments" (1974, 45). Calling this "new mode of representation", which is the

normalized traditional perspective used by the Renaissance painters, *perspectiva artificalis*, Baudry reveals the instrumental use of the visual apparatus, by virtue of its corresponding progress with scientific development. It makes the reality captured by the film appear transparent or neutral, albeit true for some documentary films is not true for fiction films. It is objective reality as raw materials that is "always worked upon, elaborated, selected" (1974, 42) by the filmic apparatus, its hegemonic significance concealed by the normative appearance of plot development. Once ordered to make narrative sense, ideological capture occurs with the audience's psychic submergence, which also explains the reason for Baudry's likening of the projector, the darkened room and the screen to Plato's cave (1974, 45); the enchainment of the prisoner "demonstrate[s], reveal[s] and make[s] understood what sort of illusion underlies our direct contact with the real, would imagine or resort to an apparatus that doesn't merely evoke, but quite precisely describes in its mode of operation the cinematographic apparatus and the spectator's place in relation to it" (1986, 693). Captivated by the shadows cast on the wall by the firelight, an individual prisoner will not be inclined to think for himself and, as a result, has no self-awareness. This scene of primal regression signals the subject's passive positioning that McGowan also describes in his discussion on how the viewing subject relinquishes conscious control when engrossed by filmic images. While discussing the "inherent mobility of the cinematic mechanism", Baudry unwittingly and subtly undermines his side-by-side positioning of the human eye and the eye of the camera: "[t]o seize movement is to becomes movement, to follow a trajectory is to become a trajectory, to choose a direction is to have the possibility of choosing one, to determine a meaning is to give oneself a meaning" (1974, 43), an ontological passage that appropriately poetizes and privileges the camerawork of *Birdman*, transiting from subjectivity to objectivity, an objectivity Sean Cubitt's "Suture" (2014) calls the "omni-voyant gaze" of the filmic apparatus.

What is this "hidden or disguised truth in idealism" that Baudry states in "The Apparatus"? The disguised truth in idealism is *the founding technics* that the imaginary overlays, the apparatus testifying to how reality as represented by the symbolic is ordered in and through social conventions and codes, which otherwise can turn out to be meaningless. This sublimating passage from one scene to the other is a displacement that permits access from one place to another (1986, 693): the other scene of the individual's psyche, the gaze of the Other. It is movement from the spectator's unconscious system to the conscious one in the process of attaining meaning. This corresponds to the analyst position, the one who supposedly knows, in relation to the analysand's speech so that an acknowledgement of her or his own truth can be effected. Read in relation to the film, this movement is not an emergence normatively understood; it is more the descending movement of the camera as it optically lands on the reality of the ground: the traffic chaos of New York city, the masses of urbanites, the neon lights along the streets. It is as if the material base of the apparatus, after having to take the violence enacted upon it by our noetic designs, decides to avenge itself by showing us the unpalatable side of humanity as it swoops down on the throngs of people jostling, transport vehicles steaming or the massive concrete jungle of the metropolis bustling. As Baudry states: filmic motion can counter the "single perspective for the image projected" by photography. This happens when the multiplicity of viewpoints enabled by cinematography oppose the subjective viewpoint of the viewer, creating what Lacan alludes to as a stain in the mirror and the later psychoanalytic thinkers call the "gaze". However, the illusion of continuity, dependent on Baudry's "persistence of vision", is a condition that rests upon differential erasure, providing a ground for identification. Any filmic disruption, in the form of a visible cut or an actor refusing to be in character, discloses the invisible hand that gives it signifying synthesis, the cinematographic apparatus. *Birdman* exposes all the above with the extensive use of the tracking shot, which ingenuously lays bare the inherent discontinuity and signifying disjuncture. Thus Lubezki's apparently free-wheeling cinematography counters the assumption that the audience is

absorbed by the narrative flow given by continuity editing, one premised on continuity, direction and movement. Meaning is only ever achieved by the *perceptual "relations* between points and a curve in geometry", a visual communication that filmic psychoanalysis intuits. Lacanian psychoanalysis, besides being used as a form of clinical practice, is undoubtedly imbued with an epistemological side. This is made evident in the chapter, "The rat in the maze", found within Lacan's *Seminar XX*, which not only suggests our capacity to be psychologically reconditioned; there is the implication that, in certain circumstances, *the individual has to resist psychic manipulation.*

Miller's Deadlock of Sexuation

Miller's "The Drive as Speech" refers to Lacan's infamous line on the deadlock of sexuation. It gives him the opportunity to speak of *our relation* to failure at "the *specifically sexual level*" (1997, 15), a structural negativity in lieu of the temporal deferral that accompanies the acquisition of language. This access to phallic *jouissance* is through partial drives, the scopic drive in one's look or the oral drive in one's speech, as demonstrated by Lacan's large vector that moves from *jouissance* to castration, a vector linked by the demonstrably phallic function of the drive, located beyond the pleasure principle. Man, with his privileged relation to the phallus, apparently does not enter the sign of castration since his phallus is his fundamental idiocy; woman, in her castrated state, seeks to attain the phallus in and through her child. This is clearly evident in *Birdman* when Thomson's partner announces that she with child, eliciting his negative reaction whose concern, at that point, is his theatrical production, seeing the infant's imminent arrival as an obstacle to his desire. Man's relation to the phallus is described as fullness whereas the woman's relation to it is one of loss. This structuration of the difference between genders, a fundamental distinction that leads to a sexual impasse in their interactions has other implications besides sexual desire; it expresses a fundamental alienation within any societal interrelation, thus necessitating a conjoining prosthesis.

What is of utmost significance is this: *the universal value of the castration complex is regulated meaning.* Miller insists that it is not the model of *jouissance* that is important nor the fact that the phallus has become a signifier. It is the non-relationality of the phallic signifier; when it becomes purely subjective and unrestrained, it does not have a dialogue with the Other. Miller states that "…the primary status of *jouissance* is not sexual. Its status is phallic" (1997: 20). Thus what the phallus represents is crucial. When it does not relate to the Other, it leads to some kind of fixation; phallic *jouissance,* in Marxian terminology, is "objectification" for one's gain in fullness. What this fullness is can be seen in the master's discourse: the master's stupid enjoyment of the fruits of the slave's knowhow. According to Miller's playful description, this *solitariness* of phallic *jouissance* that results in fixation shifts to the "*solidarity* of *jouissance*" that reduces the other sex to a mere image or signifier. It is like being in love with one's idea of a woman rather than being in love with the actual woman. Miller mentions that feminism is one of the resisting instances to such sexual reduction: "women are against this reduction to a sexual object" (1997: 21). While this writer is not professedly feministic, she is against such reductive male-female, male-male or female-female interactions. There is in actual fact no solidarity only solitariness because "[i]t gives rise to the reduction of the Other as a sexual object" (1997: 21). This phallic *jouissance*, the word is used here multiple times because there is no word in English that provides a precise translation, poses difficulty to the Other because it prevents authentic intersubjective relationship.

Miller addresses the title of his chapter by posing the question: who speaks when one speaks of the unconscious? Using "blahblahblah" to indicate the non-sensical chatter of the unconscious, which come from an other scene; in the case of *Birdman*, the meaningless

pandemonium does come from the other scene, the backstage. The "who" that speaks is the "it" of the Other, the "obscure zone" (1997: 23), a domain that one occasionally intuits but cannot know exactly. The nothingness that Lacan calls "a real" in the imaginary is another word for chaos, the obverse of "the real" in the symbolic that signifies the natural order. This real within the imaginary produces effects that can be traumatic in the privileged schema of communication. The lesson learnt regarding the drive as speech is the fact that there is no "dialogue" between the heterosexual two and, in line with the aforementioned, neither is there actual "dialogue" between desire and the object of that desire. *Birdman* demonstrates this deadlock of sexuation not only by showing us the many failed heterosexual relations: while the woman seeks the Other, as in seeking affirmation from the Other by being that which the Other desires, the man seeks to be alone in his fullness (1997: 23); this description of failure also applies to Thomson's relation to his theatrical production, a relation inadvertently vulnerable to frustration, betrayal and defeat.

McGowan's Gaze of the Real

McGowan's psychoanalytic film theory is brought to the fore here with what he calls worldviews, "the four approaches to the gaze": the cinemas of fantasy, desire, integration and intersection. Cinema of fantasy examines how the gaze visually distorts the filmic field so that the invisible becomes visible. The second type of cinema exposes the spectral absence within the field of visibility as the traumatic real, the vacant, undead gaze of the camera that incites desire. Part three is on integrative films, integration being the conventional productive process since it mirrors the primary process of identification; they "incite desire only to resolve it into a fantasy scenario that provides a screen through which the spectator can experience the gaze without its attendant trauma" (2007, 19). Cinema of intersection reworks the merging of fantasy and desire by "allowing an experience of the gaze without the fantasmatic screen" (2007, 20). Of advantage to this paper is the manner in which McGowan theorizes the real gaze, an approach that critically reconsiders the Althusserian ideological interpellation in light of Lacan's "knowledge of the Real". This knowledge accedes to the fact that there will always be a point of impairment in any power structure. The stake of McGowan's discussion foregrounds how Althusser fails to account for the success that the theorist has in recognizing and conceptualizing the misrecognition underscoring ideological interpellation, especially when all individuals are interpellated successfully. The answer lies in the alternate positioning of the theorist, what McGowan calls "the mode of resistance to ideology rather than the product of ideology" (2007, 173), a positioning at the point of "the real".

Aligned with the thesis that *Birdman* psychoanalytically theorizes a real within the imaginary is the acknowledgment of *the necessity for the real within the symbolic wherein truth and meaning reside*, which McGowan undeniably states: "[w]ith the emergence of the new Lacanian film theory, the theorist no longer battles against the cinema but becomes cinema's ally in the struggle to reveal the gaze" (ibid). Cinema of intersection, the filmic genre that tackles the issue of the real, promotes the "alliance between the theorist and the cinema" by "depicting the gaze directly" (2007, 175). Integrative cinema dupes us into believing that there is no absence in the big Other, by virtue of the illusion of autonomy and mastery. The fourth type of cinema shows the "insubstantial status" of the symbolic, traumatizing the subject whose discovery leaves him bereft of fantasmatic support. By enabling this encounter with the Real, the cinema of intersection celebrates *jouissance* as a manner of attending to the real within the Other, which, despite its incompleteness, liberates an individual from any symbolic dependency. McGowan's exposition of the real as the impossible gestures to how "The Other does not exist" in the following axioms: "one seeks the Other; one seeks all alone" (2007), which correspond

to Miller's conception of the fundamental alienation underpinning any social interaction. *Birdman* inversely affirms McGowan's cinemas of integration and intersection, which separates the world of desire and the world of fantasy only to integrate or intersect these two worlds, because of its open-endedness. *The filmic conclusion as a point of ambiguity exposes the craftiness of the imaginary by showing up the film's status as a film, an artistic product that frees the audience to their subjective musings or the film critic to her objective review.*

We can read the ending of the film as either a dream sequence, a fantasmatic screen, that occurs after Thomson's staged suicide, concluding with his death, or interpret the hospital sequence that follows his attempted suicide on stage as filmic reality. In the second scenario, Thomson succeeds in achieving critical success as well as reconciliation with his estranged family. This intersectional closure, instead of using a dream insertion, works with the lack of what Baudry calls "cinematographic representation" to conclude the film. Cinematic resolution is presented firmly as Miller's "solidarity of *jouiisance*" with Thomson achieving accidental success and a smiling Sam watching Thomson take wing out of the window. The audience does not know if Thomson actually jumps to his death. But if he did, the first scenario can be described as an almost failed integrative filmic move that takes his eventual flight as the obviously imaginary redemption. Here, Groves's affirmation of cinematic affect is exemplified by the viewer's perceptual alignment with the protagonist's. However, if cognition is the theoretical stake, the filmic end affirms the *poiesis* of the aviating flow that starts from the silent placeholder of Baudry's "dream screen" and concludes with the analytical passage of motion, direction and purpose quite the contrary to the din from a real within the imaginary.

Conclusion

Given that the writing of this essay was encouraged by Elsaesser's advice to examine the metaphorical abundance of psychoanalytic film theory, I shall conclude with a word on Elsaesser's "media archaeology", a term that recalls the filmic transition made from analogue to digitisation in "What is Left of the Cinematic Apparatus, or Why We Should Retain (and Return to) It". His genealogical mapping of apparatus theory, which, in the Anglo Saxon world, was called "screen theory", "after the journal that promoted it most actively", and later known as "suture theory", calls attention to the fact that filmic identifications abound owing to the desirous nature of the human individual, an affirmative nod to Miller whose medical metaphor is indicative of the stitching together of open flesh. Elsaesser's archeological endeavour also efficaciously figure (re)mediation as filmic suture that psychoanalysis theorizes. He looks to the "rewriting of the past in light of the future" (2011:33). Reconsidering the post-cinematic here means placing the theoretical emphasis on the real within the symbolic, *a noteworthy reprising of the real* attentive to the material medium that visually or/and aurally projects and organizes besides the physical artifact itself, the things-in-themselves that we may never absolutely know. Notwithstanding, it is also how the real must be acknowledged so that an understanding of the virtual, whether imaginarily or digitized, can be achieved. Both, by the way, can be thought of as extensions of each other. In other words, the real is necessary to how we comprehend the ontological underpinnings of the virtual just as we must approach the expressive with an intuition of the silenced, the Lacanian real external to symbolization. Thus the imaginary that constitutes the ideal-ego, a false completeness based on reifying an image, despite being the source from which all the other ego ideal type of identifications will occur, requires a symbolic intervention of the mother-child dyad, reinforcing the individual's "ideal" facet that sparks off her desire, a maturing process that Lacan insists is ontologically necessary. However, the taint in the mirror, which Inarritu's *Birdman* makes explicit, a result from the suppressed ungovernable instincts of the human race, will return as the repressed, indicating

the unwholesomeness within the imaginary besides the lack of authoritative guarantee. Armed with this knowledge, I shall align myself with McGowan who, in his filmic psychoanalysis, celebrates this symbolic unsettling because it emancipates us from our social dependencies such that our faith in an inherited world of imperfections can be renewed time and again in and through the promise of perfection.

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