Athens Journal of Social Sciences

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The ***Athens Journal of Social Science (AJSS)*** is an Open Access quarterly double-blind peer reviewed journal and considers papers from all areas of social sciences, including papers on sociology, psychology, politics, media, and economics. Many of the papers in this journal have been presented at the various conferences sponsored the Social Sciences Division of **the Athens Institute for Education and Research** (ATINER). All papers are subject to ATINER's Publication Ethical Policy and Statement.

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Editorial and Reviewers' Board

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The current issue is the third of the eleventh volume of the *Athens Journal of Social Sciences* (AJSS), **published by the Social Sciences Division of ATINER.**

Gregory T. Papanikos
President
ATINER

Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

18th Annual International Conference on Psychology
27-30 May 2024, Athens, Greece

The [Psychology Unit](#) of ATINER organizes its **18th Annual International Conference on Psychology, 27-30 May 2024, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the [Athens Journal of Social Sciences](#). The aim of the conference is to bring together scholars and students of psychology and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2024/FORM-PSY.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **DEADLINE CLOSED**
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- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
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- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
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Conference Fees
Conference fees vary from 400€ to 2000€
Details can be found at: https://www.atiner.gr/fees

Athens Institute for Education and Research
A World Association of Academics and Researchers

18th Annual International Conference on Sociology
6-9 May 2024, Athens, Greece

The Sociology Unit of ATINER is organizing its **18th Annual International Conference on Sociology, 6-9 May 2024, Athens, Greece** sponsored by the Athens Journal of Social Sciences. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers from all areas of Sociology, Social Work and other related fields. Theoretical and empirical research papers will be considered. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (https://www.atiner.gr/2024/FORM-SOC.doc).

Important Dates
- Abstract Submission: **DEADLINE CLOSED**
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Academic Member Responsible for the Conference
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- **Dr. Philip G. Cerny**, Director, Social Sciences Division, ATINER & Professor Emeritus, University of Manchester (UK) and Rutgers University (USA).
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Social Media and Surveillance Capitalism: Facebook, Political Polarization, Orwellian Dystopia, and American Democracy

By Sunil K. Sahu[*] & Punita Sahu[±]

Social media platforms have played a significant role in recent elections in the U.S. and other democracies. While Facebook and Twitter (now renamed X) claimed that they are "on a journey to connect the world," to serve the goals of reforms and to bring about more democracy, their platforms have been effectively used to spread lies, misinformation, and disinformation which led some analysts to argue that we now live in a post-truth world and that the Orwellian dystopia is upon us. This paper is an attempt to assess whether big tech companies have created an Orwellian state in the U.S. We argue that the idiom of the Orwellian dystopia has been misused by scholars, commentators, and politicians on the political left as well as the political right. Our analysis of social media, especially Facebook, shows that the social media companies are not intentionally trying to subvert American democracy. Instead, as a business, they are driven by a profit motive and the logic of "surveillance capitalism."

Keywords: *Cambridge Analytica, Facebook, micro targeting, Orwellian dystopia, post truth*

Introduction

The ever-increasing use of social media, digital technology, and artificial intelligence has allowed business corporations and governments to watch and scrutinize our activities, which has led observers to argue that George Orwell's dystopia is upon us. Since social media platforms have played a significant role in recent elections, it has been argued, especially in response to former President Donald Trump's repeated lies, misinformation, and disinformation on social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, that Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is more relevant today than ever before. Some analysts have argued that the United States could sink into the kind of totalitarian control that Oceania experienced in *1984* (Klein 2021) and that Trump's use of lies and acts of falsifying reality is truly Orwellian—it is a "way of changing perception and of asserting power" (Gopnik 2017). Trump supporters, on the other hand, have called the big tech censorship—Trump's ban on Twitter and Facebook after the January 6 riot on the Capitol—as an Orwellian overreach (Grady 2021). This paper is an attempt to assess whether big tech companies have created an Orwellian state in the U.S. We would argue that the idiom of the Orwellian dystopia has been misused by scholars, commentators, and politicians on the political left as well as the political right. Our analysis of social media, especially Facebook, will show that the social media

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companies are not intentionally trying to subvert American democracy. Instead, as a business, they are driven by a profit motive and the logic of "surveillance capitalism," a concept advanced by Zuboff (2019). Using the concept, we will (a) examine the nature of social media surveillance in China and the U.S., (b) explore the connection between social media and political polarization in America, and (c) evaluate the impact of Facebook and Cambridge Analytica's use of big data and microtargeting on American democracy and its electoral process.

Orwellian Dystopia: China, Not America!

In George Orwell's fictional totalitarian state called Oceania, reminiscent of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union, citizens had no freedom. There were telescreens everywhere through which high ranking Party members could watch and record their activities. The Party and its omnipotent leader, the Big Brother, developed the idea of "newspeak" to manipulate how the people thought in order to have complete dominance over the country and its population. The Party's demand for intellectual obedience in Oceania—that two plus two equals five, to which Winston, the hapless protagonist, finally succumbs—was based on fear, intimidation, and torture.

The contemporary post-truth politics in America, which has been dominated by former President Donald Trump, the ideology of Trumpism, and conspiracy theories such as Q-Anon, may suggest that American democracy has started to resemble the Orwellian dystopia. While it is true that liberal democracy is facing challenges from Trump and the far right and that the guardrails of democracy have become weak (Mounk 2018), it would be exaggeration to say that American democracy has degenerated into an Orwellian state. To better understand what an Orwellian state looks like in a contemporary world, we need to examine authoritarian China, where the state is ubiquitous and controls much of its citizens' lives, especially since the pandemic. The Chinese "Social Credit System," which determines a person's trustworthiness, and the government, under Xi Jinping, has come to control almost every aspect of an individual's life—from getting a well-paid job to getting a house or a car loan or even booking a hotel room. The Chinese state's penetration of society through the use of the Internet, big data, social media, and artificial intelligence (AI) is indeed a dystopian nightmare.

In the U.S., where Trump has shown utter disregard for facts, observers have been led to suggest that America is becoming an Orwellian state. In support of this view, they cite examples such as Trump's claim that his inauguration was the best attended inauguration ever, though the photos and other evidence suggest otherwise (Palmeri 2017) and his repeated claim, without any evidence, that there was mass voter fraud in the 2016 election, the reason why Hillary Clinton won the popular vote, and that the 2020 election was stolen from him, which he continues to repeat as he is trying to win his party's nomination in the 2024 presidential election. These are big lies (Jones 2022), but his supporters believe in these and other lies, including the revisionist history about the January 6, 2021 Capitol riot. In fact, some of Trump's supporters have been retelling the devastating events that

occurred during the Capitol riot, captured on television and smartphone videos from inside the Capitol, stating that the entire event resembled a "normal tourist visit" rather than a deadly attack (Cillizza 2021). These and other false claims have been justified by Trump supporters as "alternative facts" (Jaffe 2017).

It is true that Trump made countless false and misleading claims over the four years he was in the White House—30,573, according to the Washington Post (Kessler and Rizzo 2021)—and he continues to do so. It is also telling that Trump's statements such as "what you are seeing and what you are reading is not what is happening" or "who are you going to trust, me or your lying eyes?" has the ring of an Orwellian dystopia (BBC 2018b). That there has been an erosion of democratic norms under President Trump and that political polarization has deepened since Trump declared his candidacy in 2015 is undisputed. Yet America is far from being an Orwellian state, the state where the Big Brother controlled every aspect of a citizen's life in Oceania. The American state, which is well institutionalized, continues to be governed by the rule of law and the principle of separation of powers. It is worth noting that, as of this writing, over 1,100 January 6 rioters have been charged and 366 sentenced to incarceration, and more prosecutions are forthcoming (Sneed and Perez 2022). Moreover, Trump himself was indicted on August 1, 2023 for his efforts to overturn the 2020 election and block the transfer of power; the House Select Committee had earlier investigated the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and had concluded that Trump was ultimately responsible for the insurrection (Final Report 2022). While conspiracy theories abound on the Internet, and while conservative talk radio and cable television shows continue to carry stories in support of Trump's false claims that the 2020 election was stolen, the results of the 2022 midterm elections suggest that the majority of American voters did not buy into conspiracy theories of the far right and that they are exhausted with the politics of grievance and victimhood, the hallmark of the Trump brand. These and other developments of the past two-and-a-half years suggest that the guardrails of democracy have held, though weakened, despite the countless violations of democratic norms by President Trump. The fact that none of the major institutions that protect Americans from rule by an aspiring dictator—Congress, the courts, the federal system, the press, and the civil servants—lost power during the Trump Presidency speaks volume to the strength of our democratic institutions (Kamarck 2021).

China, by contrast, presents a case where the tyranny of the government over its people appears to be something right out of *1984*. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), under the leadership of Mao Zedong, infiltrated all aspects of civil society, and Mao carried out radical Marxist experiments like the Great Leap Forward (1958-60) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76). Though there was reform and opening in China under Deng Xiaoping and his two successors, the country is once again becoming totalitarian under the leadership of Xi Jinping. Xi's China is denying its citizens their freedoms, and the state is tracking online communication, tracking people physically using facial recognition technologies, controlling all mass media and most social media, and imprisoning large sections of its population in concentration camps (Babones 2021). According to the Council on Foreign Relations (2022), an "estimated eight

hundred thousand to two million Uyghurs and other Muslims, including ethnic Kazakhs and Uzbeks, have been detained since 2017," which may amount to crimes against humanity.

The Chinese state has built a huge digital surveillance system by gathering a massive amount of data. Though the democratic governments also indulge in electronic and web surveillance, such surveillance—for example, in the U.K.—is mitigated and constrained by the existence of a free press and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) available to all citizens (Wired 2023). The Chinese state, by contrast, maintains control through coercion and social management: "There is no rule of law as it is universally understood," writes Vlahos (2019), "and elections are compulsory, with all candidates, most local to the top, pre-approved by the party. Only sanctioned religious worship is allowed. Private enterprise is only free by courtesy … The Internet of course is strictly censored." Xi's social credit and facial recognition systems, mentioned above, and the repression and reeducation of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, evoke all the dark imaginings of the Orwellian dystopia (Maizland 2022). And the pandemics opened the floodgates for more pervasive and sophisticated forms of surveillance (Hillman 2021). In the so-called "brain" of Shanghai, authorities have an eye on everything: "On huge screens they can switch to any of the approximately one million cameras, to find out who's falling asleep behind the wheel, or littering, or not following the Coronavirus regulations" (Vlahos 2019). Orwell seems to have been prophetic.

Surveillance in America, by contrast, is mainly carried out by big tech companies such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft for a profit. According to Zuboff (2019), it is surveillance capitalism, a new economic form. In this form, companies collect our personal information we voluntarily or unknowingly submit and then they monetize our data, which is used to manipulate our thoughts, emotions, and ultimately our actions—what we buy and who we vote for. In other words, tech companies collect huge troves of users' data based on their human experiences and turn them into behavioral data, which is then fed into advanced machine intelligence technologies for processing. Such data are then manipulated into predicting products (music, games, books, politicians, etc.) that anticipate what users will likely do or behave in the future (Gray 2019). According to Zuboff (pp. 10-11), our smartphones, computers, and cloud accounts are monitored by over 5,000 e-trackers per week. She calls the network of social media companies "Big Other" and argues that surveillance capitalists know everything about us, but their operations are designed to be unknowable to us. They predict our future for the sake of others' gain, not ours. They accumulate vast domains of new knowledge from us, but not for us. The advantage goes to the firms that can acquire vast and varied data streams. Social media platforms are "expanding both the scope of surveillance (migrating from the virtual world into the real world of automobile dashboards and home appliances) and the depth of the surveillance (accumulating data on individuals' personalities, moods, and emotions)" (Schleffer and Miller 2021, p. 81). Zuboff's concept helps us understand better the power of social media and its effect, social and political, than the Orwellian dystopia framework.

Social Media and Political Polarization

Social media, born in the explosion of the Internet in the 1980s and 1990s and currently used by approximately 4.8 billion people or 60 percent of the world population (Global Social Media Statistics Report 2022), has fundamentally changed the way we communicate and interact with each other. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have created new opportunities for individuals and groups to engage with others and promote their ideas, causes, and products. Indeed, social media has increasingly affected our culture, politics, and relationships. Everyone today seems to be on some social media platform: teenagers—and increasingly adults—are on TikTok, influencers and small businesses are on Instagram and Facebook, and professionals are on LinkedIn. There are around 221 million Americans who use Facebook (techjury.net), and 58 million are on Twitter (oberlo.com), 166 million on Instagram, and 95 million on TikTok (statista.com). According to a PEW Research Center survey, 86% of American adults use social media (Pew 2022).

Social media has become so powerful that corporations, small businesses, NGOs, professional and non-professional sports, educational institutions, politicians and political organizations, lobbyists, and other social entities have made big investments in building their presence on these platforms. Social media can give voice to those who were previously silenced. For example, in the pro-democracy Arab Spring protests and uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa—Tunisia, Morocco, Syria, Libya, Egypt, and Bahrain—in 2010 and 2011, activists used Facebook and Twitter to organize and amplify their demands. Online networks were crucial in organizing activists, and civil society leaders emphasized the role of the Internet, mobile phones, and social media in the protests (Howard and Hussain 2011). Social media allowed Arabs to exercise freedom of speech and provided a space for civic engagement; it became a platform for political activism and resistance. Since the Arab Spring, dubbed the "Facebook Revolution" and "Twitter Revolution," social media companies have claimed that their platforms serve the goals of reforms and have highlighted the democratizing potential of social media platforms. Facebook asserted that they are on a "journey to connect the world" (West 2022, p. 9) and that their platforms were used to serve the goals of reform and to bring about more democracy. Progressive groups such as Black Lives Matter have used social media to organize political protests to bring attention to their issues since the beginning of the movement in 2013. However, these platforms have been simultaneously used for spreading misinformation, disinformation, and lies with dire consequences. The hope that social media was a tool of positive social and political change and that it would help spread democracy around the world has been dashed as we have witnessed savvy politicians like Trump weaponize Twitter to attack the media and shape public discourse across the media landscape and engage those whom he perceives to be his enemy. Trump successfully pushed his lies—"Russia never meddled in the 2016 presidential election," "Coronavirus is a hoax," and "the 2020 election was stolen"—and constructed an alternative reality which did not rely on empirical

evidence. His lies, however, drew millions of Americans to his orbit (Monahan and Maratea 2021).

The ease with which information can be shared on social media makes it possible for misinformation and lies to spread quickly and widely, leading to the proliferation of fake news and conspiracy theories. Studies have shown that lies laced with anger and hate spread faster and farther than facts (Dizikes 2018) and that people often pay attention to news online that revolves around politically divisive topics. Online messages containing extreme views are more likely to be noticed, circulated, and amplified by the public due to the "echo chamber" nature of social media outlets (Hong and Kim 2016, p. 778). Communicating through Twitter, Trump indeed won the Presidency in 2016 (Cowls and Schroeder 2020). Trump, a prolific tweeter, sent 23,858 tweets in four years as President (Madaminov 2020), and his tweets have been characterized as establishing his version of events and amplifying his scorn (Quealy 2021). The very platform that delivers the news we need, argues Maria Ressa, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and co-founder of Rappler, an online news website in Manila, "is biased against facts." Though an early believer in the power of social media in bringing about positive social and political change, Ressa has been critical of these platforms and has documented how technology's god-like power has "infected each of us with a virus of lies, pitting us against one another, igniting, even creating, our fears, anger, and hatred, and accelerating the rise of authoritarians and dictators around the world" (Ressa 2022, p. 4). She argues that lies "repeated over and over become facts in this online ecosystem" (p. 139) and concludes that "without facts you can't have truth. Without truth, you can't have trust. Without all three, we have no shared reality, and democracy as we know it—and all meaningful human endeavors—are dead" (p. 4).

Social media has therefore played a major role in some of the biggest events in the recent past—from the Arab Spring of 2011 to the U.K.'s Brexit referendum in 2016 and from the victory of Modi in India in 2014 and Trump in 2016 to the election of Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in the Philippines in 2022. Social media platforms have amassed over the past few years an unprecedented concentration of knowledge power which are increasingly used by individuals and groups for their own objectives: white supremacists in the U.S. can assemble far more effectively, and radical Buddhist monks in Myanmar can easily spread incitement to ethnic cleansing (Schleffer and Miller 2021, p. 81). The reliance of politicians on social media has increased exponentially: these platforms are being used for grabbing headlines, responding to opponents, fundraising, contacting voters directly, and organizing election campaigns. As a result, social media companies, which are unregulated, have come to exercise an oversized power to influence how we access information, communicate with those around us, and develop our views of the world. These platforms have come to be viewed more negatively in the U.S. than most other countries. A recent survey by Pew Research found that 64% of Americans view social media, which has made it easier to manipulate and divide people, as bad for democracy (Pew 2022).

What is Big Data and why does it Matter?

There has been an unprecedented advancement in computing power, wireless technologies, AI, mobile communication, and display technologies in the last four decades. The introduction of digital data storage in various forms—magnetic storage, optical discs, and semiconductor memories, which became cost-effective since 1996—has changed the way we produce, manipulate, and store information. We have undergone a paradigm shift in the way we collect, store, process, and analyze data. We are now generating and using data at an unprecedented pace—the global production of data in 2011 had reached a level (1.8 zettabytes every other day) that was higher than what the world had produced from the beginning of civilization until 2003 (Chen et al. 2014). In 2018, the total amount of data "created, captured, copied, and consumed in the world was 33 zettabytes (ZB) – the equivalent of 33 trillion gigabytes, which grew to 94ZB in 2022 (see Figure 1) and is projected to reach a mind-boggling 175 ZB by 2025 (Vopson 2021). (1 ZB is equivalent to 1,000 exabytes or a trillion gigabytes). Digital technologies—social, mobile, analytics, and cloud—are impacting organizations and most areas of human activity, including politics and elections.

Figure 1. *Data Volume 2022-2024*
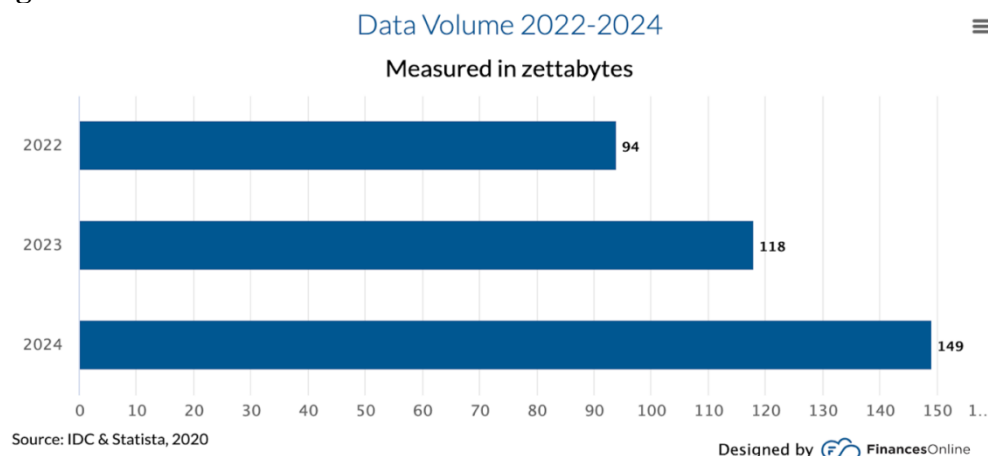
The digital transformation—the adoption of digital technology to transform business processes and services from non-digital to digital—has grown rapidly; it has been partly driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. The growth numbers speak for themselves: In 2018, spending on digital transformation (DX) was $1 trillion, which was projected to reach $1.8 trillion in 2022 and is expected to grow to $2.8 trillion by 2025 (see Figure 2). The emergence of Big Data—and cloud computing — has fundamentally changed the paradigm of computing in data transformation and delivery (Chen et al. 2014).

Figure 2. *Spending on Digital Transformation Technologies and Services Worldwide from 2017-2025*

(in trillion U.S. dollars)
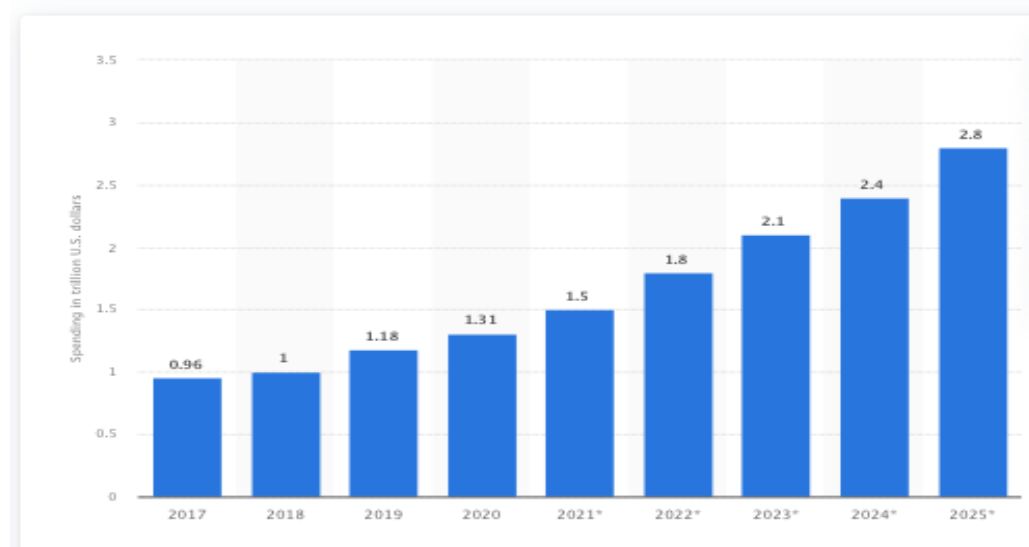
Source: Statista 2022.

There has been a big spike in interest in Big Data in the last decade as seen in the 2022 Google Trends (see Figure 3). Though there is no widely accepted threshold for classifying data as Big Data, it is generally accepted that the concept refers to data sets which are too complex to be dealt with by traditional data-processing software. Dumbill (2013, p.1) defines Big Data as "data that exceeds the processing capacity of conventional database systems. The data is too big, moves too fast, or does not fit the strictures of your database architectures. To gain value from this data, you must choose an alternative way to process it." Technological constraints are key in this definition, i.e., when the dataset does not fit in the available hardware. Davenport et al. (2012) corroborate this definition by focusing on the "new, challenging, and more granular data sources, which require the use of advanced analytics to create or improve products, processes, and services, as well as adapting rapidly to business changes." Other experts have defined Big Data with the "Four V's:" Volume (size is enormous), Variety (heterogeneous sources and nature of data), Velocity (speed of generation of data), and Veracity (uncertainty of data). Big Data, as Priya Kantaria puts it, is a combination of structured data—such as age, height, or gender in a relational database—and unstructured data—such as videos and tweets—at scale and speed. The goal for the enterprise, she continues, is "not collecting data, but deriving actionable insight from the wealth of information that they accumulate on a daily basis. This is where Big Data technologies come in" (Kantaria 2019). Big Data is now fundamental among organizations for productivity growth, innovation, and customer relationships in diverse areas such as manufacturing, health care, public sector, elections, and retail (Chen et al. 2014). In electoral politics, the importance of big data and analytics has been recognized since the 2012 reelection campaign

of President Obama, especially the power of segmenting and microtargeting potential voters.

Figure 3. *Increased Interest in Big Data, Google Trend, Accessed 11/10/2022*
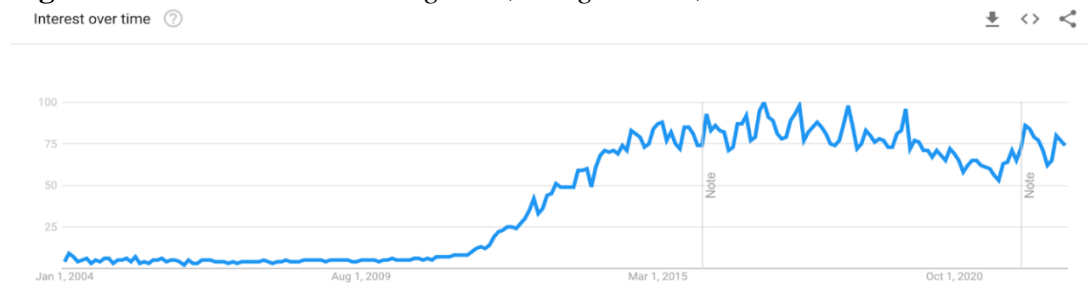
Big Data and Elections

With the rise of Google, Facebook and other social media, Internet of Things (IoT), and E-commerce, more and more data is collected every day than ever before. For example, in 2020, the amount of data generated in the world was over 44 zettabytes (ZB), but today 2.5 quintillion bytes of data is collected every day. Currently, Google handles 1.2 trillion searches every year, and people around the world are spending $1 million per minute on commodities on the Internet. Today, five billion people use the Internet, and it is estimated that by 2025 nine out of every ten people over age six will be digitally active. Data growth statistics show that by the end of 2022, 70% of the globe's GDP will have undergone some form of digitization (Bulao 2022). In the digital economy, data is a valuable asset–"Data is the new oil"—and Big Data is growing at an unprecedented rate. Data visualization tools are used to make big data understandable, and they are used by companies, organizations, and political campaigns.

The first Obama campaign in 2008 kicked off a technological revolution in electioneering. He ran a sophisticated digital campaign in which cloud computing played a big role for the first time. Obama's successful use of online advertising on social networks—MySpace, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr— and his own social space, My.BarackObama.com, transformed the landscape of political advertising. His campaign integrated social networking features into his own social space, where supporters could "form groups, raise money, organize local events, and get information on the voters in their neighborhood" (Howard 2018). The Obama campaign and his team understood the power of the Internet in getting people engaged in the process on a scale never done before. They showed that technology is not just a tool, it can be a transformative force. Obama's victory in 2008 made history, as he was the first African American to be elected as president. His campaign changed the way elections were run and would be run in the future (Aaker and Chang 2009). Thereafter, it became common for candidates to use social media as a communication tool to engage with voters and mobilize them in election campaigns (Lampitt 2013).

In 2012, Obama's reelection team used Big Data and created "sophisticated analytic models that personalized social and e-mail messaging using data generated by social media activity," especially on Facebook (Howard 2018); predictive analytics targeted campaign activities, strengthening the army of volunteers by driving their activities more optimally. The Obama "team of nerds" took the political application of data science to unprecedented heights (McCain 2018). On all social media platforms, Obama was way ahead of Romney (see Figure 4). His online campaign was flawless, while Romney's campaign experienced severe technical problems, especially the "Orca" platform, which was designed for volunteers to get out the vote on Election Day.

Figure 4. *Social Networks and the U.S. Election, 2012*
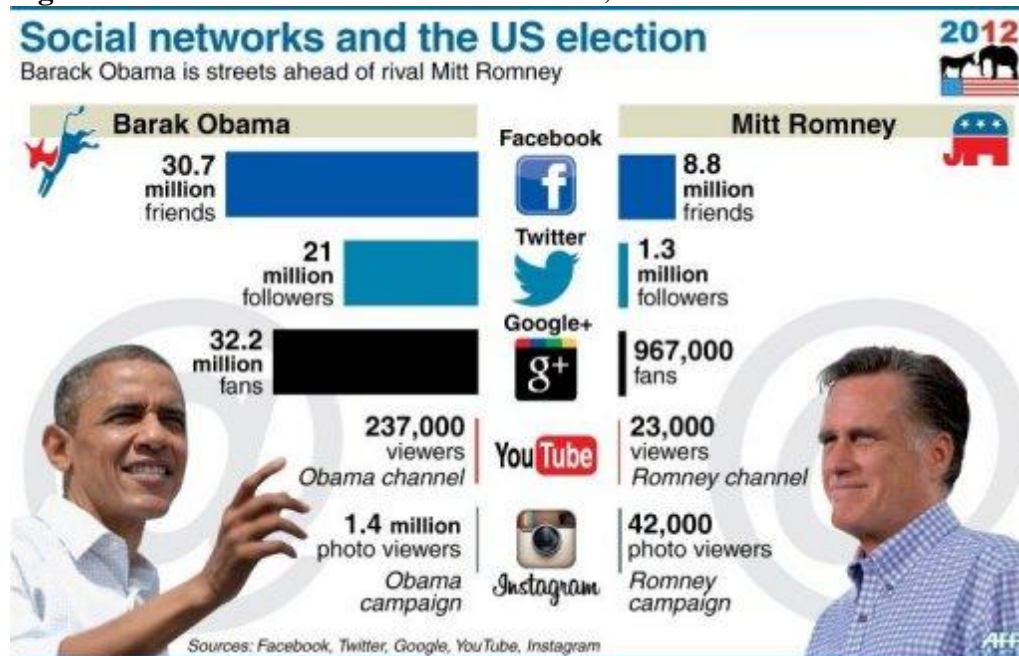
After 2012, the money spent by U.S. presidential campaigns on social media advertising has increased dramatically: it went up from $0.16 billion in 2012 to $1.4 billion in 2016 and $2.9 billion in 2020 (Statista 2023). In the 2016 presidential election campaign, the Clinton team devoted less resources to data and analytics compared to Trump–15% and 38%, respectively. And Trump's effort paid off.

Microtargeting on social media platforms allows a political campaign to exploit the strongest emotions and plays on the fears of the most easily manipulated among us. It is worth noting that until the emergence of Big Data and data analytics in the 2000s, political candidates and political parties used data provided by state or local officials to target voters. Such data had serious limitations as they gave very little or no information about the issues that actually motivated the voter. Microtargeting overcomes this limitation by finding extra datasets, such as commercial data about a voter's mortgage, subscriptions, or car model, to provide more context to each voter. "Using this data along with polling and statistical

techniques," Wylie notes, "it's possible to 'score' all of the voter records, yielding far more accurate information" (Wylie 2019, p. 24).

In the data-driven election campaigns since 2008, Facebook and Google have emerged as the main players; together they account for about 40% of America's digital content consumption. It is worth noting that political advertisements were never a prominent feature for other platforms such as Twitter, TikTok, and Pinterest (Nott 2020). Political campaigns have increasingly used Facebook and Google platforms for harvesting personal data for targeting potential voters. Social media therefore came to wield extraordinary influence. They collect data on users in order to have AI algorithms to determine "what will catch the [user's] eye in an 'attention economy' that keeps users scrolling, clicking, and sharing—again and again and again." (Economist 2017). In the early years of social media there was a hope, as mentioned above, that social media would become a global force for plurality, democracy, and progress. Those hopes have, however, been dashed by the increasing social and political polarization caused by these platforms. Critics of social media have argued that these platforms have become a threat to democracy (Halton 2020). We will explore this critique by analyzing the record of Facebook, especially the ways in which the Obama team harvested data from Facebook and used it for political advertisement, and how that compares with Cambridge Analytica's efforts at harvesting and using personal data in the Brexit referendum and the American presidential election in 2016.

Cambridge Analytica

Cambridge Analytica (CA), founded in 2013 as a U.S. subsidiary company of the Strategic Communication Laboratories Group (SCL Group), a British messaging and public relations firm with close ties with the Conservative Party and British royal family, was a British political consulting firm. It had done work for governments, politicians, and militaries around the world. A unique feature of the company, according to its website, is its ability to combine commercial and public big-data sets with large-scale quantitative research to predict everything from "whether people are likely to vote through to what products and services they are most likely to buy." CA and its parent company SCL have worked in more than 200 elections across the world, including Kenyan presidential elections in 2013 and 2017, Nigeria's presidential election in 2015, and the Indian parliamentary election in 2014, which swept Prime Minister Modi to power (BBC News 2018a). The company claims that it uses "data modeling and psychographic profiling to grow audiences, identify key influencers, and connect with people in ways that move them to action" and that its "unique data sets and unparalleled modeling techniques help organizations across America build better relationships with their target audience across all media platforms" (https://cambridgeanalytica.org/). The company filed for insolvency in 2017 and was acquired by the newly formed successor company Emerdata Limited, which is largely owned by the Mercer family.

In 2014, Cambridge Analytica was engaged in "44 U.S. Congressional, U.S. Senate, and state-level midterm elections" (SCL Group). Two years later, the company was hired by three candidates in the Republican Party presidential primaries—Ted Cruz, Ben Carson, and Donald Trump. CA earned $15 million in the U.S. doing political campaign work in the 2016 election cycle (FTC). According to investigative journalist Carole Cadwalladr, a finalist for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting, the "dystopian data company" ran psychological operations (Psyops)—the same methods the military use to effect mass sentimental change (Cadwalladr 2017). The data analytics firm played a major role in both the Trump presidential election and the Brexit campaigns.

It is worth noting that the Mercer family, known for supporting conservative candidates, was the financial backer of Cambridge Analytica. Robert Mercer, a hedge-fund billionaire, owned 90% of the company, and 10% was owned by SCL. His two daughters, Rebekah Mercer and Jennifer Mercer, sat on the company's board. So did Steve Bannon, until he joined the White House (Prokop 2018). Bannon was President Trump's chief strategist, who held the position of senior counsel for eight months in 2017. In July 2022, he was found guilty of contempt of Congress charges for refusing a subpoena about the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol. Cadwalladr has graphically illustrated the links between the Brexit referendum and the 2016 Trump's presidential campaign (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. *Brexit — How the Campaigns Were Linked*
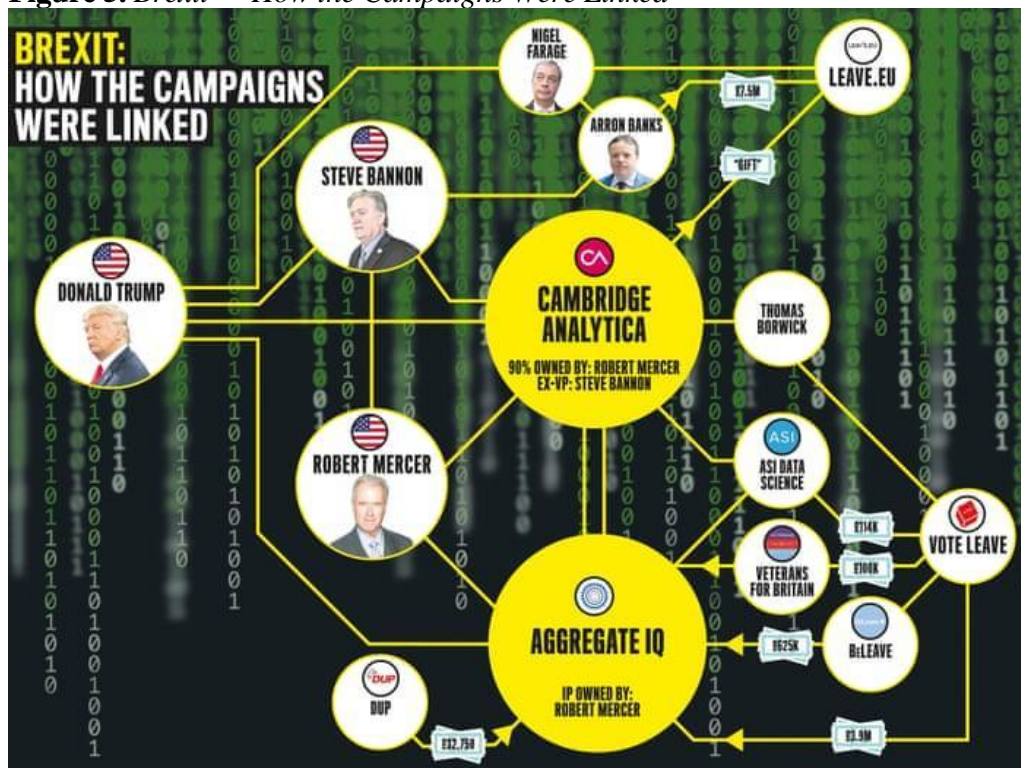
Source: Cadwallader (2017).

CA came to prominence because of the controversy surrounding its role in Trump's presidential campaign and in the Leave-EU Brexit campaign. As

mentioned above, CA's psychographic profiling of U.S. voters, built on Facebook user data, became highly controversial. The firm used those techniques to learn about individuals and "create an information cocoon to change their perceptions." In doing so, according to Chris Wylie, the co-founder of CA, "the firm took fake news to the next level." The psychographic profiling aimed to explore mental vulnerabilities of people based on the idea of "informational dominance," the idea that "if you can capture every channel of information around a person and then inject content around them, you can change their perception of what's actually happening." The firm created "a web of disinformation online so people start going down the rabbit hole of clicking on blogs, websites, etc. that make them think things are happening that may not be" (Associated Press 2018).

CA used the data of about 87 million Facebook users, some of which was allegedly used to psychologically profile American voters, acquired via a quiz that invited users to find out their personality type, and target them with material to help Trump's presidential campaign. After a year-long investigation of the Cambridge Analytica data breach, the Federal Trade Commission found that the company's method of creating behavioral profiles and tailoring and delivering content to social networking sites (SNS) was illegal as it violated the autonomy of Americans and limited their ability to make rational voting decisions. The FTC imposed a $5 billion penalty on Facebook in July 2019, the largest ever imposed on any company for violating consumer privacy. Though the penalty imposed was record breaking, it represented less than 10% of Facebook's 2018 revenues ($55.8 billion), most of which, according to the FTC, was generated by monetizing user information through targeted advertising (FTC 2019). While the effect of this form of microtargeting may have had—and indeed, it did have—a negative effect on the American democratic process and presented challenges to some of its institutions (Hu 2020, pp. 1-6), the company's deceptive privacy disclosures and settings were designed to monetize users' personal information and make a profit, not to influence a particular outcome. After all, Facebook—and other social media platforms—had offered to embed their staff in the digital headquarters of major presidential candidates. Hillary Clinton, however, had refused the offer. But Trump embraced it and made Facebook "both a political consultant and distribution outlet," and the social media company became an active partner in shaping the electorate. Trump used Facebook as "the conduit for fundraising, message shaping, message delivery, volunteer recruitment, merchandise vending, and—most pernicious—voter suppression" (Vaidhyanathan 2018, p. 205).

Microtargeting and Facebook

Microtargeting—the ability to send highly differentiated audiences just the right messages to change attitudes or inspire action—has emerged as a highly effective advertising campaign strategy. Levy (2008) defines microtargeting as "a way to identify small but crucial groups of voters [or customers] who might be won over to a given side, and which messages would do the trick." "Through the advancement in campaign technology and increasingly large amounts of personal

information for sale to organizations willing to pay for it," writes Bunting (2015), "campaigns have continually narrowed their scope from targeting large demographic groups to targeting voters individually through a process called microtargeting." It does so by going deep into Big Data for segmenting. It uses consumer data such as what they like, who they're connected to, what their demographics are, and what they've purchased in order to segment them into small groups for content targeting (Smiley 2018). Microtargeting in elections was pioneered by Obama in 2012, and it has since been used by all presidential candidates. In fact, microtargeting has transformed the nature of modern electoral campaigns.

Facebook (renamed Meta Platforms or META.O), which owns four of the seven most-used social media platforms outside China—Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram—is the leader in microtargeting. The company's use of Big Data and AI allow "advertisers to identify and reach the very people most likely to react to their messages" (Singer 2018). Facebook likes on hobbies and interests are used to predict personal attributes such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, religious and political views, personality traits, intelligence, use of addictive substances, parental separation, age, and gender. The platform's algorithm enables business and political ad buyers to select audiences based on their profile such as user's location, hobbies, political leanings, and interests as specific as the Museum of the Confederacy or online gambling. Facebook developed and perfected the tool for companies that sold merchandise such as shoes and cosmetics, and in 2014, it decided to move forcefully into the realm of political advertisements. Thereafter, Facebook became the preferred platform for running political ads to microtarget potential voters. It was attractive to candidates because it could target a narrow subset of voters—as few as 20 (Vaidhyanathan 2018, p. 202) out of the 2.9 billion daily users on this most popular social media platform (Dixon 2022).

Facebook's data-mining services, which provide "Custom Audiences from Customer Lists," assembling the right audience from the scattered fragments of potentially similar ones, were used in the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections to influence voter behavior by weaponizing ads in political campaigns. Technological advancements in Big Data analytics and AI meant that there was no longer the need for Cambridge Analytica or the Obama 2012 app; Facebook itself did voter targeting and did it better than anyone else. According to Vaidhyanathan (2018), "Facebook would meld commercial consumer behavior data, census data, public voter records, and records of party and political interactions (donations, volunteering, etc.) to code every voter in the country with an indicator of likely behavior." The company thus provided an ideal data system for targeting voters.

According to Brad Parscale, Trump's digital director, Facebook and Twitter were the reason Trump won in 2016. Facebook was Trump's key advertising channel, where his campaign ran what has been called an "A/B testing on steroids" —running 40,000 to 50,000 variants of its ads on a given day that went up to 175,000 on the day of the third presidential debate in October. Also, these ads were designed to dissuade potential Clinton voters. The microtargeting technology allowed the Trump campaign to target ads at voters in select states with remarkable precision, especially in the battleground states of Wisconsin, Michigan, and

Pennsylvania, states that delivered the Electoral College majority to Trump (Vaidhyanathan 2018, p. 176). In addition, the platform was used to raise the bulk of his $250 million in online fundraising (Lapdwsky 2016). While microtargeting played an important role in Trump's victory, he was skillful in his "earned media strategy"—media coverage that he got for free by saying controversial and outrageous things, and he often succeeded in turning a news cycle by sending a message in 140 characters or less on Twitter. It has been estimated that he earned $5.9 billion in free media coverage, more than every other candidate combined in the 2016 race (Confessore and Yourish 2016, Terrill 2020). That social media—Facebook and Twitter—played a major role in Trump's victory in 2016 is undisputed, but there were other contributing factors—the media savviness of Trump, who came from a 14-season reality-show hosting career and presented himself as a successful businessman and an ultimate political outsider; his messages, which were perceived as authentic and resonated with audiences; and his unconventional approach to campaigning—and later governing—by breaking all political norms.

Conclusion

Facebook (META.O), with its net worth of $230 billion, dominates the commercial and political advertising business, which generates 97.5 percent of its revenue. This dominance amounts to digital imperialism by one company. We have shown that political advertising on the Facebook platform was a game changer for campaigns, candidates, and the public discourse. The company played a major role in Trump's victory in 2016. It is currently the subject of investigations, which started in response to a whistleblower's complaint that the company's products harm kids, particularly teenage girls—and democracy—and that it prioritizes profits over user safety. Facebook, however, has become a much less effective platform after Apple's iOS privacy update in 2021, which made it more difficult for political campaigns to reach potential voters with targeted ads (Feiner and Vanian 2022). The company's continued dominance in political—and commercial —advertising is therefore not guaranteed. In fact, its dominance is being challenged by the growth of Connected TV (CTV) advertising, which is fast becoming a critical component of political advertising campaigns after the pandemic, as evidenced by the growth in the share of CTV in political ads: it is estimated at $1.5 billion out of the projected total of $9 billion in the 2022 midterm elections (Karrek 2023).

There remains, however, a danger that the government security and intelligence services may tap into the data flows of Facebook and other social media, as revealed by Snowden (2023), making Facebook users vulnerable to the power of state surveillance. For now, the guardrail of democracy has generally held, though there has been erosion of some democratic norms under Trump. However, if Trump, the four-times indicted ex-president and the Republican front runner, is his party's nominee for presidency in 2024, which looks likely as we write in October 2023, and if he gets elected, that will mark the beginning of further democratic

backsliding in American political life (Davies 2023). Trump's second presidency would be more extreme and challenging to the rule of law than his first. And there is a possibility that Facebook and other social media platforms could face government regulation soon as Democrats and Republicans are united on this issue. The reform may include possible carve-outs in the decades-old law known as Section 230 that immunizes social media companies from being sued over what their users post. These developments and others discussed above suggest that social media companies, like other private enterprises, are primarily interested in profit making and will do everything in their power to maximize profit. American democracy, though messy, is far from being an Orwellian dystopia.

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She Speaks for Millions: The Emergence of Female Diplomatic Voices in the Russo-Ukrainian War

By Amber Brittain-Hale[*]

This research critically investigates the public diplomacy strategies deployed by a cohort of influential female European leaders on Twitter during the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022-2023. The study comprises eight leaders - Kallas (Estonia), Marin (Finland), von der Leyen (President of the European Commission), Metsola (President of the European Parliament), Sandu (Moldova), Simonyte (Lithuania), Zourabichvili (Georgia), and Meloni (Italy) - representing millions of constituents. By mirroring the analytical attention given to Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, this study scrutinizes the distinct approaches and differences in emotional, cognitive, and structural language use between these influential female figures and President Zelenskyy in their respective Twitter discourse during the crisis. By employing the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC)-22 dictionary, this research intends to uncover unique patterns and nuances in the language use of these leaders, thereby offering fresh insights into the gendered communication and diplomacy employed by the female cohort during conflicts.

Keywords: *Public diplomacy, Female leadership, Russo-Ukrainian War, Twitter communications, Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC), Diplomacy, gendered communication*

Introduction

In the context of the Russo-Ukrainian War (2022-2023), this research foregrounds the fundamental role of communication strategies during crises by exploring the linguistic patterns and messaging tactics of an influential cohort of female European leaders. The innovative nature of this study lies in its focus on the tweets of these leaders, providing a novel dataset for analysis. The leaders investigated include Kaja Kallas (Estonia), Giorgia Meloni (Italy), Sanna Marin (Finland), Roberta Metsola (President of the European Parliament), Maia Sandu (Moldova), Ingrida Simonyte (Lithuania), Ursula von der Leyen (President of the European Commission), and Salome Zourabichvili (Georgia), along with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The study centers on the voices of eight prominent female European leaders who represent millions of citizens and wield significant influence in the regional political landscape. By harnessing the power of Twitter, these leaders have been able to articulate their positions and policy goals related to the conflict to domestic and international audiences. The significant role of Twitter in shaping public opinion and steering foreign policy discourse is recognized and utilized as a critical lens for this analysis (Ayhan & Sevin, 2022; Huang, 2021; Haq et al., 2022).

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The Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC-22) dictionary, a robust tool for discourse analysis, is employed to scrutinize and categorize the emotional, cognitive, and structural language patterns used by these leaders on Twitter (Pennebaker et al., 2022). The findings generated from this investigation promise to shed light on how language is used in framing public diplomacy efforts during conflicts and the implications of these communication strategies on the broader aspects of gender, diplomacy, and leadership during times of crisis (Kostadinova, 2022; Niklasson, 2022; Pamment, 2023; Standfield, 2022).

This research investigates the Twitter discourse of these influential leaders from February 2022 to April 2023, exploring their unique use of emotional, cognitive, and structural language (Twitter, n.d.a; n.d.b.). In addition to the female European leaders, a particular emphasis is placed on President Zelenskyy's strategic and inspiring communication that reflects his emergent global significance (Adams, 2022; Haq & Nechyporencko, 2022).

The LIWC-22 dictionary serves as the analytical tool to examine the public diplomacy strategies of these leaders, measuring how their linguistic choices align with the needs and expectations of key stakeholders (Boyd et al., 2022a; 2022b). A significant aim of this study is to explore the differential and communal aspects of leadership language and public diplomacy strategies between the female European leaders and President Zelenskyy in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian War.

Through this analysis, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and unique nuances of the communication strategies employed by these leaders during the crisis. The potential of these findings extends to enriching leadership communication practices, thus aiding the achievement of successful foreign policy outcomes in times of crisis. This paper ultimately deepens our understanding of how these leaders strategically used Twitter for public diplomacy during the conflict, demonstrating the importance of effective communication strategies in crisis scenarios (Faxon, 2015; Yaffa & Etnous, 2022; Zaharna, 2021).

Background of Public Diplomacy in the Russo-Ukrainian War

As the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022-2023 unfolded, a constellation of female European leaders emerged in the diplomatic arena. These luminaries, including Kaja Kallas of Estonia, Sanna Marin of Finland, Giorgia Meloni of Italy, Maia Sandu of Moldova, Ingrida Simonyte of Lithuania, Salome Zourabichvili of Georgia, Roberta Metsola, the President of the European Parliament, and Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission, command respect in governments and multinational organizations that are historically adjacent to territories with remnants of Russian imperial ambition (Michalski & Adam, 2021; Orsini, 2022; Woolley, 2022).

Displaying resilience and strategic foresight, these leaders charted a course through the tumultuous waters of the conflict. Harnessing the power of diverse platforms - from public speeches and Twitter to appearances at European institutions such as the European Parliament and NATO - they amplified their diplomatic stance and policy objectives, frequently acknowledging Russian

aggression and taking a decisive stance against the threat (Jezierska, 2022; Sandu, n.d.; Sutryin, 2021; Xiao & Su, 2022).

Countries like Estonia, Lithuania, Georgia, and Moldova, bearing the historical imprints of Russian influence or occupation, significantly influence their leaders' reactions and diplomatic stratagems during the Russo-Ukrainian War. This shared historical tapestry heavily colors their diplomatic perspective and shapes their public diplomacy efforts in this conflict (Grajweski, 2021; Marin, n.d.; Zasiekin et al., 2022).

In this study, our lens is focused on an ensemble of eight formidable female leaders who represent the interests of hundreds of millions of people in various political capacities. Each leader's voice resonates with their domestic constituencies and significantly shapes the regional and international political terrains.

From Kaja Kallas, the Estonian Prime Minister representing around 1.33 million people (Estonia, 2022), to Ursula von der Leyen, who commands a broader audience in her role as the President of the European Commission representing around 447.7 million people of the European Union (Germany, 2022), each leader's influence spans differently sized constituencies.

President Maia Sandu and Salome Zourabichvili, representing nations of approximately 2.6 and 3.7 million individuals, respectively (Moldova, 2022; Georgia, 2022), carry their nation's voices. Though their nations, Moldova and Georgia, are not currently members of the European Union, their aspirations for closer EU integration echo Ukraine's ambitions. Like Ukraine, these countries have inked cooperative agreements with the EU, further weaving them into the broader European political and economic tapestry.

The diplomatic communications of these leaders, particularly during the Russo-Ukrainian War, resonate within their respective national boundaries and ripple through regional and international platforms. Their discourse reverberates across their neighboring countries, the broader European landscape, and further afield, influencing perceptions and dialogues during this pivotal conflict.

Gender has emerged as a distinctive factor in the execution of their diplomacy since the outbreak of the war. Leveraging their positions as female leaders, they have showcased a distinct form of soft power in their public diplomacy strategies, potentially introducing nuanced perspectives to conflict resolution and peacekeeping (Enloe, 1988; Jezeirska, 2022; Kaneva & Cassinger, 2022).

The interplay between leadership, history, and public diplomacy is a testament to the multifaceted nature of crisis management. It underscores how the past can shape the present - informing diplomatic tactics and communication strategies of leaders navigating contemporary conflicts. As leaders of European institutions, Roberta Metsola and Ursula von der Leyen have played pivotal roles in shaping the discourse around the conflict. They have effectively leveraged their influential positions and digital platforms to communicate the European Union's position on the conflict, fostering dialogue among nations and advocating for recognition of the threats and decisive action where necessary (Kallas, n.d.; Marin, n.d.; Meloni, n.d.; Metsola, n.d.; Sandu, n.d.; Simonyte, n.d.; von der Leyen, n.d.; Zourabichvili, n.d.).

Table 1. *Tweet Samples for Female Leaders*

Date	Leader	Tweet
March 6, 2023	Kallas	After Soviet occupation, we made **Never Again Alone** our foreign and security policy motto. NATO is a cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic freedom and security. #WeAreNATO
March 6, 2023	Marin	Warm congratulations to PM @kajakallas, on your success in the Estonian parliamentary elections. Looking forward to continuing our close cooperation in EU affairs, NATO, and security policy and our support to Ukraine
October 19, 2022	Metsola	They are standing up for what they believe in. Fighting for our values.Protecting democracy, freedom &amp rule of law. Risking their lives for us. And today, proud winners of @Europarl_EN #SakharovPrize.No one is more deserving. Congratulations to the brave people of Ukraine! https://t.co/SORmU2DSbA
March 29, 2023	Meloni	@ZelenskyyUa We stand with Ukraine. I confirmed our commitment and discussed the goal of just and lasting peace.
April 28, 2023	Sandu	Russia's missile attacks on Ukrainian cities are utterly despicable. Our thoughts go to the families of the innocent victims, including children, whose lives were taken in these strikes. Moldova stands with Ukraine in condemning the aggression. Russia must be held accountable.
April 12, 2023	Simonyte	Seats for Russia's representatives must be reserved at International Tribunal not at UN Security Council. Unless we want #русскиймир to replace rules-based world order and this ⬇ to become the new normal for humanity. 🔗https://t.co/eMgIFNhyUz #ArmUkraineNow
April 16, 2023	Von der Leyen	Warm Easter wishes to the Ukrainian people. As light overcomes darkness, you will prevail. We stand with you as long as it takes. https://t.co/7hxXgjP4zP
April 12, 2023	Zourabichvili	Horrified by the atrocious video showing the decapitation of the Ukrainian prisoner of war. Another crime against humanity. These war crimes must be answered by justice.

Date	Leader	Tweet
		Georgia stands and will stand with 🇺🇦

This research investigates the distinctive public diplomacy strategies employed by these leaders in the face of the Russo-Ukrainian War. It analyzes their strategies compared to President Zelenskyy's "going-public" approach to presidential communication (Cooper, 2019; The Kyiv Independent, 2021; Tulis, 2017). Their adept maneuvering of state communication operations in the face of complex geopolitical dynamics has reshaped international relations, particularly within Europe's context. The diverse interpretations of their foreign policy acumen and communication strategies highlight the need for further academic investigation (Brittain-Hale, 2023a).

The findings of this research have the potential to offer a unique contribution to our understanding of the evolving role of language, digital platforms, and gender in public diplomacy during conflicts. Moreover, this study aims to illuminate the burgeoning role of social media in public diplomacy and foreign policy decision-making, a sphere of academic inquiry that is becoming increasingly important. Thus, the insights yielded from this research could guide strategies to enhance leadership communication and pave the way for more favorable foreign policy outcomes during periods of crisis. By suggesting ways to refine communication strategies based on successful public diplomacy tactics observed, this study significantly impacts and improves leadership.

Research Focus and Significance

The promise of this research lies in its potential to illuminate the nuanced intersection of language, digital platforms, and gender in public diplomacy amid conflict scenarios (Cull, 2021; Erlandsen et al., 2021). Breaking new ground, it not only delves into the realm of a contemporaneous war but also confronts the rapidly evolving dynamics of social media's role in public diplomacy and foreign policy decision-making—an academic territory ripe for exploration and understanding.

The research question that guides this investigation is as follows: What differences can be identified in the emotional, cognitive, and structural language use between female European leaders and President Zelenskyy in their Twitter communications during the Russo-Ukrainian War? This question seeks to elucidate how these leaders utilize language to frame their public diplomacy efforts during the conflict, how their language use differs or aligns with that of President Zelenskyy, and what these patterns might reveal about the broader role of gender, diplomacy, and leadership during times of crisis.

The findings of this study are not merely academic musings—they have tangible implications in the real world. They provide a blueprint for leaders and policymakers, helping them refine their communication strategies and potentially shaping more favorable foreign policy outcomes during crises (Enos, 2021). Based

on the insights gleaned from successful public diplomacy tactics, our research can guide a new wave of leadership communication that is robust, effective, and attuned to the challenges of conflict-ridden times.

In essence, this study transcends mere observation; it offers empirical insights into the complex landscape of diplomatic communication (Ayhan & Sevin, 2022; Bjola, 2021; Falkheimer & Raknes, 2021). It is a significant stride forward in understanding, harnessing, and improving leadership communication during times of crisis.

Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework draws from Lasswell's classic communication model (1938), as updated by Sobolieva (2021). This model incorporates five key elements: the communicator, target audience, message, communication channel, and communication purpose. Applying this model in our context offers a structured approach to analyze the strategic communication employed by female European leaders during crises, specifically the Russo-Ukrainian War.

The proposed model enables the identification of common communication patterns and strategies these leaders utilize to engage international audiences in times of crisis. It also helps evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in advancing the leaders' respective national interests and values. For the purposes of this study, the "communicators" are the female European leaders, and the "target audience" comprises both their domestic and international constituencies (refer to Table 2).

The "message" component is dissected through the LIWC-22 dictionary, enabling an understanding of the linguistic dimensions and sentiment embedded within these messages (Boyd et al., 2020, 2022b). The "communication channel" is identified as Twitter, acknowledging the medium's significant influence on the message's nature, reach, and interpretation.

The "purpose" of communication is analyzed based on how the leaders' messages align with their public diplomacy strategies and foreign policy objectives (Lasswell, 1948a, 1948b). For instance, messages advocating for peace or condemning aggression can be interpreted as attempts to garner international support and exert diplomatic pressure.

While our primary focus is to decipher the communication patterns of female European leaders, we also contrast these with President Zelenskyy's messaging strategies (Zelenskyy, n.d.). This comparative analysis provides a holistic view of public diplomacy approaches during the Russo-Ukrainian War.

By employing this conceptual framework, we aim to enhance our understanding of female leaders' role in shaping international relations during conflicts, underscoring the critical role of strategic communication in public diplomacy.

Furthermore, while the study's main focus is to explore the communication patterns of female European leaders, it also includes a comparison with President Zelenskyy's messaging strategies (Zelenskyy, n.d.). This comparison provides a

comprehensive perspective on the different approaches adopted in public diplomacy during the Russo-Ukrainian War. By adopting this conceptual framework, the study intends to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of female leaders in shaping international relations during times of conflict, with a particular emphasis on the significance of strategic communication in public diplomacy.

Table 2. *Select Female Leaders in Europe*

Leader	Country	Role
Kaja Kallas	Estonia	Prime Minister
Maia Sandu	Moldova	President
Ingrida Simonyte	Lithuania	Prime Minister
Sanna Marin	Finland	Prime Minister
Giorgia Meloni	Italy	Prime Minister
Roberta Metsola	Malta	Pres. of EU Parliament
Ursula von der Leyen	Germany	President of the EU Commission
Salome Zourabichvili	Georgia	President
Volodymyr Zelenskyy	Ukraine	President

Relevant Literature

The evolving landscape of public diplomacy, particularly the role of female leadership in Eastern Europe and the impact of digital communications, is a subject of increasing academic and political interest. The dynamic evolution of public diplomacy involves communication and engagement between a government and foreign audiences, aiming to promote and enhance a nation's image, values, and interests through various means such as cultural exchange, educational initiatives, media engagements, public addresses, and online campaigns (Lasswell, 1930; 1938; Sobolieva, 2021).

The rise of social media platforms, including Twitter, Telegram, and Instagram, has expanded the reach of mass communication, resulting in greater internationalization and convergence in the social, political, economic, and cultural spheres (Scacco & Coe, 2016; Scacco et al., 2018; Tulis, 2017). This digital transformation has significant implications for public diplomacy and how leaders communicate with domestic and international audiences (Bjola, 2021; Falkheimer, 2021; Pamment et al., 2023; Papanikos, 2022).

In the context of conflict resolution and peace processes, the role of women is increasingly recognized, as emphasized by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (Enloe, 1988; Faxon et al., 2015). However, women's representation in formal peace processes remains disproportionately low, highlighting the need for effective strategies to increase their involvement (United Nations, 2000). Effective mobilization and networking strategies are key factors in amplifying women's political influence and fostering a more resilient democracy (Faxon et al., 2015; Neuman, 2008; Niklasson & Towns, 2022). The challenges female diplomats face in post-communist diplomatic institutions have been investigated, shedding light on the gender-related dynamics in diplomatic work (Jezierska, 2022; Kostadinova, 2022; Niklasson, 2020). These studies offer insights into the institutional and micro-political contexts in which Eastern European diplomats operate and develop, enhancing our understanding of the relationship between gender and diplomacy.

The impact of digital diplomacy, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been explored, highlighting its potential to shape worldviews and significantly influence international relations (Bjola, 2021). Female leaders in Eastern Europe have increasingly embraced digital platforms to engage with domestic and international audiences, leveraging the opportunities provided by digital communications (Bjola, 2021; Niklasson, 2020; Sutyrin, 2021).

Political discourse is crucial in navigating power dynamics, collaborating with institutions and players, and maintaining hegemonic dominance (Huang, 2021). Leaders employ legitimation strategies aligned with the components of the investigatory framework to construct dialogue. The power of rhetoric and discourse, dating back to ancient Greece, remains relevant in modern discourse analysis and offers valuable insights into the construction of political dialogue (Enos, 2021; Krizek, 2017).

Despite the extensive research surrounding the Russo-Ukrainian War, digital diplomacy, and linguistic analysis (Scacco & Coe, 2016; Scacco et al., 2018; Tulis, 2017), a distinct research gap remains evident regarding the unique role and communication strategies of female leaders during the conflict in 2022-23, especially their narrative constructions on Twitter. The exploration of public diplomacy, as maneuvered by post-Soviet female leaders amidst such a crisis, has been notably sparse, leaving an intriguing area of strategic digital communication largely untapped (Bjola, 2021; Niklasson, 2020).

Furthermore, the specific application of linguistic tools, such as the LIWC-22, in the examination of Twitter discourse associated with the war has been largely uncharted territory, particularly from the perspective of female leadership (Boyd et al., 2022; Pennebaker et al., 2022; Niklasson, 2022; Stephenson, 2022). Such a gap signifies a compelling need for more in-depth investigation into the interplay of gender, leadership, and public diplomacy during conflicts, notably in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian War and the potential role of LIWC in analyzing Twitter narratives.

The political discourse of female-led countries, juxtaposed with the case of Ukrainian President V. Zelenskyy, presents a unique opportunity to further probe into the convergence of gender, leadership, and public diplomacy during crises

(Bjola, 2021). An intricate analysis of leaders' specific communication strategies, linguistic patterns, and their alignment or divergence requires further academic exploration (Erlandssen et al., 2021; Niklasson, 2020; Stephenson, 2021).

Moreover, a comprehensive analysis of President Zelenskyy's public speeches during the Russo-Ukrainian War elucidated discernible patterns in his diplomatic discourse, including solicitation of external assistance, expressions of steadfast resolve, call to action, and statements of gratitude. These findings, derived from Linguistic Text Analysis (LTA) and Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) methods, offer insights into the evolving rhetoric of leadership communication during crises (Brittain-Hale, 2023b).

While significant strides have been made in understanding the role of female diplomats in Eastern Europe, much remains to be uncovered regarding the multifarious influences of gender dynamics, digital communications, and specific political contexts on their diplomatic effectiveness. This underlines the necessity for further research to disentangle these dynamics, foster women's effective participation in diplomacy, and elucidate their impact on political discourse and public diplomacy.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses, to investigate the communication strategies of female European leaders during the Russo-Ukrainian War of 2022-2023. The methodology involved data collection and analysis using the LIWC-22 software and the R programming language.

Data Collection and Sampling

The data collection phase of this study spanned from February 2022 to April 2023, aligning with the duration of the Russo-Ukrainian War. A systematic sampling method was employed to ensure a representative sample of tweets from the selected female European leaders.

The aim was to compile a comprehensive dataset of tweets from the official Twitter accounts of eight female European leaders: Kallas, Marin, Meloni, Mesola, Sandu, Simonyte, von der Leyen, Zourabichvili, and Zelenskyy (see Table 2). These leaders were chosen to represent diverse perspectives and messaging strategies during the conflict. To extract the tweets, the researchers utilized the Tweepy application and collected tweets at distinct selection intervals (Python, n.d.; Tweepy, n.d.). The collected tweets were then cleaned and prepared for analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis for the current study was performed using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC)-22 and logistic regression analyses. The LIWC-22 software was employed to analyze the tweets. LIWC-22 categorizes words and word stems into over 2,300 categories and more than 64 psychometric dimensions. This software comprehensively examined the linguistic dimensions and priorities observed in the tweets.

Logistic regression models were constructed to predict the change in log odds (i.e., the logit) of binary outcomes using a transformation of the linear regression equation. Thus, instead of modeling how much change in the outcome is expected from a 1-unit increase in a predictor, logistic regression models the change in expected log odds of achieving a "success" (i.e., a Zelenskyy Tweet in the current study) from a 1-unit increase in the predictors. All analyses were performed using R software (R Core Team, 2022).

Limitations and Challenges

This study warrants careful interpretation given certain conditions. The LIWC-22 tweet corpus, based on the study, was trained on English-language tweets, and adjustments and translations were made to accommodate this (Boyd et al., 2022; Pennebaker et al., 2022). As such, the study might not encapsulate culturally specific messaging in non-English tweets, which could potentially shape the communication strategies employed by these leaders during the Russo-Ukrainian War.

Additionally, the focus of the study was primarily on Twitter as a medium of communication. This could restrict the scope of understanding the full breadth of elected leaders' communication strategies. To develop a more holistic perspective of their communication strategies during crises, future research would benefit from considering other avenues of communication, like traditional media outlets and interpersonal diplomacy.

Results

We initially divided the dataset into training and testing subsets to ascertain whether there are discernible differences in emotional, cognitive, and structural language used between female European leaders and President Zelenskyy in their Twitter communications during the Russo-Ukrainian War. Table 3 presents detailed information on the number of tweets incorporated in the complete dataset and the training and testing subsets. Moreover, Table 4 offers a comprehensive correlation matrix for the training and testing samples.

Table 3. *Number of Tweets Analyzed by World Leader in Whole, Training, and Test Datasets*

Leader	Whole Sample ($N = 18{,}951$)	Training Sample ($n = 11{,}406$)	Testing Sample ($n = 7{,}545$)
Kaja Kallas	3200	1935	1265
Sanna Marin	3203	1945	1258
Giorgia Meloni	3214	1963	1251
Roberta Metsola	551	322	229
Maia Sandu	2443	1454	989
Ingrida Simonyte	700	439	261
Ursula von der Leyen	3250	1934	1316
Volodymyr Zelenskyy	243	154	89
Salome Zourabichvili	2147	1260	887

Table 4. *Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix of Variables Used in Logistic Regression Models*

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Analytic	--	-.21***	-.18***	-.10***	-.24***	-.41***	-.17***	.04***
2. Clout	-.20***	--	.13***	.39***	.64***	.22***	.34***	.10***
3. Authentic	-.18***	.09***	--	.20***	.29***	.39***	.15***	.01
4. Emotional Tone	-.07***	.40***	.21***	--	.48***	.21***	.43***	-.01
5. Drives	-.25***	.63***	.28***	.49***	--	.42***	.41***	.16***
6. Cognition	-.44***	.22***	.39***	.21***	.44***	--	.21***	-.00
7. Affect	-.13***	.36***	.16***	.44***	.46***	.23***	--	.38***
8. Culture	.02	.11***	-.00	.02	.19***	.01	.39***	--

Note: Values in the upper triangle represent the correlations within the training dataset ($n = 7,545$), and values in the lower triangle represent the correlations within the testing dataset ($n = 11,406$).
***p   <   .001

Next, using the training sample, a stepwise logistic regression was conducted to determine which LIWC-22 indices significantly differed between Zelenskyy and the cohort of female world leaders. The overarching LIWC-22 categories of Analytic, Clout, Authentic, Emotional Tone, Drives, Cognition, Affect, and Culture were entered as predictors of a binary variable identifying whether the Tweet was from the cohort of female world leaders (coded as 0) or Zelenskyy (coded as 1). The model produced by the stepwise logistic regression had significantly better fit than the null model, $\chi^2(6) = 189.4$, $p < .001$. Final model estimates are displayed in Table 5. As can be seen, the six predictors that were found to be significant were all positive, indicating that Zelenskyy tends to use more analytic reasoning, more (positive/negative) emotional tone, as well as more motivation, cognitive, affect, and cultural words in his speeches than his female counterparts.

Table 5. *Stepwise Logistic Regression Model Coefficients (N = 11,406)*

	β	SE	z	p	Multiplicative Change in Odds (e^{β})
Intercept	-10.658	0.894	-11.92	<.001	---
Analytic	0.049	0.009	5.32	<.001	1.05
Emotional Tone	0.011	0.002	4.58	<.001	1.01
Drives	0.056	0.013	4.19	<.001	1.05
Cognition	0.075	0.014	5.23	<.001	1.08
Affect	0.037	0.014	2.69	.007	1.04
Culture	0.064	0.016	3.88	<.001	1.07

To ensure the validity of these findings, a separate confirmatory logistic regression was conducted using the testing sample. In this analysis, the overarching LIWC-22 categories of Analytic, Emotional Tone, Drives, Cognition, Affect, and Culture were entered as predictors of a binary variable identifying whether the Tweet was from the cohort of female world leaders (coded as 0) or Zelenskyy (coded as 1). The model produced by the confirmatory logistic regression had a significantly better fit than the null model, $\chi^2(6) = 104.3$, $p < .001$. Final model estimates are displayed in Table 6. As can be seen, the Analytic, Emotional Tone, Cognition, and Culture indices were still significant predictors of Zelenskyy's Tweets as opposed to his female counterparts. However, Drives and Affect were no longer significant predictors. Overall, these results indicate that the primary reliable differences between the Tweets of the cohort of female world leaders and Zelenskyy's Tweets are his increased use of analytic reasoning, the more (positive/negative) emotional tone they convey, and his use of cognitive and cultural terms.

Table 6. *Confirmatory Logistic Regression Model Coefficients (N = 7,545)*

	β	SE	z	p	Multiplicative Change in Odds (e^{β})
Intercept	-11.411	1.338	-8.53	<.001	---
Analytic	0.059	0.014	4.24	<.001	1.06
Emotional Tone	0.017	0.003	4.91	<.001	1.02
Drives	0.029	0.019	1.54	.123	1.03
Cognition	0.087	0.023	3.85	<.001	1.09
Affect	-0.018	0.025	-0.73	.465	0.98
Culture	0.069	0.021	3.25	.001	1.07

Discussion

The communicative dynamics of female European leaders and President Zelenskyy during the Russo-Ukrainian War offered illuminating insights, revealing gender-specific nuances. These leaders articulated a distinct set of priorities, invariably emphasizing Ukraine's sovereignty while concurrently advocating for peace, diplomacy, and humanitarian undertakings.

Capitalizing on the potency of Twitter, these female leaders effectively advanced peace, diplomacy, and humanitarian concerns during the conflict. Empathetic overtures, collaborative signals, and an unmistakable focus on nonviolent conflict resolution marked their communication. They intended to shape the war's narrative, rallying international support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

These leaders demonstrated an unyielding commitment to their cause, leaving no ambiguity about their stance on Ukraine's sovereignty. Their messaging delivered a consistent narrative, supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity, defending its rights, and advocating for a peaceful resolution.

Their emphasis on empathy, collaboration, and nonviolent conflict resolution underscored their commitment to peace, rallying international solidarity for Ukraine. Leveraging Twitter, they engaged the global audience, steering the conflict narrative and reinforcing the importance of maintaining Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The communicative actions of these female leaders significantly championed peace, diplomacy, and humanitarian efforts during the Russo-Ukrainian War. Their firm resolve and proactive communication underscored the transformative power of leadership. Their approach demonstrated the crucial role of empathy and

collaboration in conflict resolution while steadfastly upholding the principles of sovereignty and human rights.

Interpretation of Results

This exploration, built on a mixed-methods approach employing quantitative and qualitative analyses, uncovers noteworthy gender-specific subtleties in the communication strategies adopted by female European leaders and President Zelenskyy during the Russo-Ukrainian War. The study's robust methodology, involving the LIWC-22 software and the R programming language for data collection and analysis, reveals distinctive patterns in the leaders' Twitter conversations.

Female European leaders, including Kallas, Marin, Meloni, Metsola, Sandu, Simonyte, von der Leyen, and Zourabichvili, emerged as potent voices on the diplomatic stage, using Twitter to broadcast messages marked by empathy, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to nonviolent conflict resolution.

These women leaders are not merely engaging in dialogue; they are shaping the international narrative, delineating the contours of the conflict, its implications, and Ukraine's steadfast commitment to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Their communication constitutes a crucial part of global discourse, one they lead with conviction and principle.

In their discourse, these leaders extend beyond mere communication. Their statements, characterized by empathy and an unwavering commitment to nonviolent resolution, indicate their dedication to peace. Their communication imparts information and strategically rallies international support for Ukraine's cause. This fervor underscores the situation's urgency and the necessity for collective action to support Ukraine's sovereignty.

In the broader context of international relations, these gender-specific subtleties could represent a transformative shift in leadership styles during times of crisis. As these women navigate the tumultuous waters of the Russo-Ukrainian War, they underscore the vital role of empathetic and collaborative approaches in conflict resolution while staunchly upholding the principles of sovereignty and human rights.

Their collective actions illuminate the power of communication and underscore the value of diverse voices in diplomatic discourse. This study's findings contribute to a comprehensive understanding of effective leadership during conflicts, serving as a beacon for those seeking peaceful resolutions and justice.

Ultimately, the nuanced gender-specific approaches these empowering European female leaders and President Zelenskyy adopt in their communication strategies underscore their unwavering dedication to Ukraine's sovereignty. These findings, illuminating their tireless efforts for peace, diplomacy, and humanitarian progress, enrich our understanding of the transformative potential of leadership. It shines a spotlight on the critical role of empathy and teamwork in conflict resolution while remaining steadfast on the foundational principles of sovereignty

and human rights. These revelations, gleaned from a rigorous and systematic analysis of their Twitter communications, highlight a fresh perspective on leadership and diplomatic strategies during international crises.

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Ontological and Temporal Complications of the Social Sciences' Approach to the Intersubjectivity in the IR Field: The Example of Constructivism and Phenomenology's Proposal[1]

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As international relations are directly related to societies and social/ socio-psychological dynamics, the main axes of the IR theorising refer to social sciences to the point of making the IR studies a branch of them. However, they also differ fundamentally from them since they constitute a purely intersubjective field, including their "actors". Social sciences, while also operating in intersubjectivity, have their independently present and accessible actors, therefore a certain anchor in the objectivity. Social sciences theorise and build explicative narratives of genetic nature for phenomena and events, which are independently assessable on that ontological ground. The IR theorising, by importing social sciences' theoretical grounds and genetic approaches into their purely intersubjective sphere without being validly able to produce a similar anchor, bring serious ontological and temporal complications into their study of IR phenomena and events. These complications are amplified by a particular branch of the IR theorising, the constructivism, as it also theorises-therefore-narrates the IR intersubjectivity itself on social sciences' grounds and through their genetic approach, which are exogenous to IR. On the other hand, the IR phenomena and events may be studied in their pre-theoretical, immediate, post-genetic, intersubjective appearance/givenness on their own ontological and temporal grounds. Phenomenology, with contributions from the phenomenological ontology, already provides such an attempt with fundamental notions and tools

Introduction

Current international relations studies rely heavily on social sciences in their understanding of and approaches to phenomena and events, in their definitions of the actors and explanations of their interactions. This is displayed by these studies' main theoretical axes, namely realism/structural realism, liberalism and constructivism, whereas as a fourth, critical line of thought, the post-structuralism refers to the same grounds as well, if only "negatively". After all, the IR theorising takes social sciences as axiomatic grounds and methods, adapting them to international relations to the point that the IR itself becomes a social science.

This appears to be only natural, since it would be difficult to question the IR actors', phenomena's and events' direct relationship with individuals and groups which meaningfully exist within societies, therefore with social and socio-psychological dynamics. This is certainly so in the larger and relatively "newer"

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[1]This is a personal work and does not reflect the views of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

sense of the international relations, where many types of actors and relationships are defined. It is also valid in the narrower, more classical, perhaps archaic sense of the IR, which is almost exclusively centred on interstate interactions.

On the other hand, the IR field is fundamentally, purely intersubjective. Its actors, phenomena and events are not self-standingly, objectively present. As such, they contrast not only to the matters of the positive sciences which have self-standing, objective reality, but also to the proper sphere of the social sciences. However social sciences' phenomena and events are also intersubjective, such as norms, values or institutions, their actors are real, self-standing and accessible as such, possible to assess as such. They are ontologically anchored to objectivity. The IR has no such correspondence and no such anchor.

When social sciences constitute the ground of the IR studies, this differentiation between the two spheres become problematic in ontological and subsequently, in temporal senses. Social sciences, due to their anchor to the objectivity, may and do proceed with theorising about the geneses of their entities, phenomena and events in defining them and the patterns of their interaction. Their constructs and findings may be assessed against this relatedness to objectivity, which is accessible independently from the theoretical construct. However, the IR field's lack of such anchor makes the genetic approach to phenomena and events exogenous to the field, even artificial, even despite deduction from collective experiences, since deduction toward theorising itself has *telos* as *a priori* and no *a priori* imported from social sciences into the IR theorising has the ontological anchor it otherwise possesses in its proper field. The current variants of the IR theorising become therefore closed circuits, a series of genetic narratives about phenomena and events that are built on exogenous grounds. They precede the intersubjective, immediate, pre-theoretical givenness/appearance of the IR phenomena and events and fit them into the framework they bring forward as malleable material. Imposing the theoretically narrated geneses upon the immediacy of these appearances further add a temporal distortion to this ontological complication, since they are by nature post-genetic.

These problems of the current IR theorising require a debate on the very nature of the IR phenomena and events, therefore on the intersubjectivity. However, one particular line of thought in the IR theorising does the same, yet with a genetic understanding. Constructivism adopts the intersubjective nature of the IR field. However, it approaches intersubjectivity genetically, in an act of theorising and again on the ground of social sciences. It narrates, on this ground and through social dynamics and communicative processes, the genesis of the intersubjectivity itself. It therefore does two things the other branches of the IR theorising do not, at least directly or at that scale: Firstly, it furthers the acts of theorising and narrating into the genuine ontological grounds of the IR field, radicalising the abovementioned complications. Secondly, it rigorously employs social sciences' notions and methods in the IR field, leaving much less place to "assumptions" such as that of objectivity of the State-as-actor in the realist school, which in fact serve to provide the immediate and intersubjective recognisances of phenomena and events an escape route. Everything becomes subject to social and socio-psychological *a prioris* and narratives in the constructivist theorising. Therefore, not only the

debate on the intersubjectivity in a context that is related to IR theorising needs to refer particularly to constructivism, but also grounds for a non-narrative method of working with the IR intersubjectivity should be proposed. These grounds are already present, not within the sphere of social sciences but within the philosophy, in a branch of it that is directly related to ontology and temporality, that works with intersubjectivity in this framework and that *unintendedly* devises tools for approaching the *sui generis* phenomena and events of the IR.

In this vein, the first section of this paper shall be reserved to a general debate on the ontological and temporal complications of the current IR theorising in employing social sciences' notions, proposals and methods. The first sub-section shall present a general framework on the matter, in reference to the main axes of the IR theorising. The second sub-section shall dwell on a particular result of these complications, which is the discrepancey between the singularity of the IR phenomena and events at their pre-theoretical and intersubjective immediacy of givenness/appearance and the current multiplicity of genetic narratives about them, stemming from the artificial multiplicity of theoretical constructs that alter/ reshape the singular givenness through their varying *a prioris*.

The first part of the second section shall focus on a debate on intersubjectivity, in reference to constructivism for reasons mentioned above. The second sub-section shall esquisse the proposal of phenomenology under this light, as a possible way to approach the IR phenomena and events at their singular, pre-theoretical, intersubjective and immediate givenness, in contrast to the social sciences' proposals the current IR theorising, in particular the constructivist thought, imports into the very grounds of the study with complications.

The Ontological and Temporal Complications of Social Sciences in the IR Field

Social Sciences' Genetic Approach in the IR Theorising

Social sciences are before all, "sciences". They search for valid patterns in order to explain phenomena and events. Validity is that of repeating causal links, which are theoretically definable and empirically demonstrable. They do not significantly differ from the positive sciences as to their attitude toward their study objects. Yet, the nature of their objects substantially differs from those of the positive sciences as they involve intersubjective constructions of entities and meaning-attributions to phenomena and events which do not objectively exist, in the sense of independence from collective recognisance/belief. This self-evident difference is certainly acknowledged by the social sciences yet scarcely affects their scientific "attitude" and rigor in the study of the non-objective/intersubjective phenomena and events. This becomes possible as they are not totally devoid of an anchor in the objectivity. Their objects may certainly be intersubjective, yet their main subjects are independently "there". The individuals' groupings with their behaviour patterns and communicative processes are objectively present. They are accessible as such and their self-standing presence provides the social sciences with ground for pursuing/developing scientific methods and attitude in their studies

of related phenomena and events. In other words, social sciences mainly operate through explaining the intersubjective phenomena and events on the ground of objective, self-standingly present subjects-in-interaction.

However, the IR field has a peculiarity which distances it from the social sciences' "objectivity ground". It is purely, fundamentally intersubjective, not only as to phenomena and events that are studied but also as to its immediate subjects/ actors. These are appearances and collective recognisances. No one has directly, non-mediately experienced a State, a nation, a war, a border, an international organisation as the experience of a physical phenomenon or occurrence or individuals in social groups and interactions. Such experiences become possible only through the medium of collective meaning-attribution to other entities, acts and occurrences. A "real", "physical" official represents (and appresents) the State or an organisation on a matter, official papers constitute the concrete media in displaying the validity of the act on behalf of the State, organisation or their appendages which also refer to it, uniforms and insignia convey the presence of "legal" armed forces, their clashes are recognised as war between their States, some buildings "incarnate" institutions, border signs "mean" jurisdictional demarcations between States and so on. Having no direct correspondences in the objective reality in the narrow sense, IR actors, phenomena and events are referred-to, gain meaning and are experienced on the ground of their pre-theoretical, intersubjective immediacy of givenness through other but meaningfully related occurrences, in fact they make these occurrences possible and meaningful.

Inquiring about the "true" subjects/ actors of the IR phenomena and events could constitute the main counter-argument to the proposal of the differentiation of the IR from the social sciences, due to its lack of objectivity anchor. If the apparent subjects of the IR field, for example the State, are not objectively present but gain appearance only mediately, the subjects that make them are nevertheless "real" and same with those of the social sciences. Consequently, in order to establish an objectivity anchor and thus provide the social sciences with a valid ground in the field of the IR, the relationship between self-standingly, objectively present subjects of the social sciences and the purely intersubjective actors/subjects, phenomena and events of the IR field needs to be defined and elaborated. Here, the almost reflexive definition of the said relationship becomes genetic/ constitutive, defining the coming-into-being of the IR actors and their behaviour patterns as engendered by the social dynamics/communicative processes of the objectively present subjects of social sciences. As such, the IR actor is to reflect these genetic-natured social elements and dynamics as its very substance in its interactions, which take form of IR phenomena and events. In other words, the IR study becomes reducible to matters of social sciences.

The genetic approach varies regarding which social sciences discipline is referred-to in the study of IR phenomena and events. The realist/structural realist, marxist, liberal and constructivist schools refer to different social/socio-economic/ socio-psychological fields and notions in building their fundamental proposals as to the nature and behaviour patterns of the IR actors in their interaction.

For example, face to a given phenomenon or event such as the war, the realist/ structural realist approaches, be they systemic or reductionist in Waltz's terms,

rely on "objective", even "quantifiable" *social* patterns of power-relations, interests or threats on the ground of their "assumption of the objectivity" of the State as a kind of microeconomic agent (see for example Waltz 1979, Waltz 2001, Morgenthau 1948, Mearsheimer 2014, Gilpin 1981, Walt 1990, Lebow 2010, Snyder 1984, Copeland 2015). The Marxists refer, in the same cases, to a genetic narrative of the actor and of its behaviour patterns in the form of class dialectic and –for example- imperialism or hegemony as the reflects on international behaviour (see for example Lenin 2011 or for the specific case of Germany Blackbourn and Eley 1984, Blackbourn 1998). The (neo)liberal view shall put forward a genetic narrative referring to rationality, irrationality, inclination to interdependence and relationship with normative frameworks related to regime and international behavior (see for example Deudney and Ikenberry 1999, Lipson 1984, Keohane 1984, Nye 2002, Risse-Kappen 1995, Keohane and Nye 1977).

In this context, a particular branch of the IR studies, the constructivist thought, is of special importance, with its variants (Wendt 1999, Onuf 1989, Onuf 2013, Katzenstein 1996, Katzenstein 2010, Checkel and Katzenstein 2009, Kratochwil 1989, Finnemore 2009, Finnemore 2004, and as examples to "philosophical" grounds, see for example Schutz 1967 and Habermas 1987). Face to an IR event, it puts forward mechanisms of social and socio-psychological construct, referring-to *selected* social sciences-based notions and proposals as main genetic factors. These may be perceptions, discourses, identities, cultural patterns, social interactions, political/economic/ideological/cultural stratifications, practices and motivations, institutions/international institutions, which serve to build a genetic narrative. It understands the IR agents, phenomena and events as products of social and communicative processes, which meaningfully appear on the ground of social structures, norms, group identities and so on. At the same time, constructivism has another distinctive feature that is related to the ontology of the IR field: It recognises the intersubjective nature of the IR in contrast to the other schools' varying degrees of assumption of objectivity within the field. As shall be debated in the following section, these two proprieties of the constructivist thought produce a unique and very consequential combination. Constructivism is more flexible as to its emphases and methodology in comparison with the realist/ structural realist, Marxist and liberal lines of thought, since it is not immediately restricted by concrete and relatively few fundamental proposals but by a whole spectrum of social sciences from which the selection of *a prioris* prove to be suppler. It also theoretically penetrates deeper into the ontology of the IR as it, while recognising intersubjectivity as the nature of the IR field, makes of intersubjectivity an object of social sciences that is approached genetically.

On the other hand, social sciences may have but a mediate link to the subjects/ actors of IR phenomena and events, in contrast to their immediate one to their true subjects. Whereas social sciences' theorising and genetic narrative have this anchor of self-standing objectivity-of-subjects, it is not so when they are imported into the IR field. Yet theorising operates as if such an anchor existed after all, as the very condition of its own possibility to operate, since there would be no other ground due to difference between the proper sphere of social science and the one into which they are imported. As such, social sciences' differing postulates

engender not only an explanatory framework which the IR theorising intends to, but also an unintended "alternative" reality that is composed of actors, behavior patterns, phenomena and events that are constituted, altered, reshaped, fit in the said framework which precedes them.

In other words, the IR theorising brings an ontological complication into the IR study by reconstituting the IR actors, phenomena and events as it refers to social sciences' postulates through a genetic approach, in order to create an objectivity anchor for a purely intersubjective field. The IR actor, phenomenon or event as they meaningfully appear/ are given in their immediacy differ from, or at least are eclipsed by their reconstruction on a theoretical basis which precedes their immediacy. The theoretical basis precedes the immediately given phenomenon, actor or event without being anchored to their sphere of existence. Here the social sciences provide the IR theorising with these "imported" *a prioris* and constructivism, in particular, furthers their altering effects deeper into the ontological ground of the IR, the pure intersubjectivity.

The ontological complication appears as the IR phenomena and events are not accessible directly through self-standingly present subjects/actors of social sciences, but through the IR subjects, such as States, which are themselves purely intersubjective. Here, even the self-standingly present actors, such as decision-makers, agents or their groupings, consequently their acts, become meaningful only in their relationship with these intersubjective entities. On the other hand, social sciences need to approach, against the immediacy of the intersubjective givenness, the expression of the State as an actor as a mere *convenience of expression* (Salice and Schmid 2016, pp. 2–13, referring to Stein)**.** As mentioned above, the social sciences-referring theoretical bases have access to such entities through preceding, theory-built meanings/genetic approach instead of what immediately appears in their givenness. In a field where the only self-standing element of an actor, phenomenon or event is its immediate and intersubjective givenness, social sciences' mediate access to it instead of at least partial directness of access in their proper sphere, results in the alteration of the immediate givenness on a genetic theoretical ground beforehand.

Furthermore, the ontological problem brought by social sciences into the IR theorising also engenders a temporal distortion in the study of a given IR phenomenon or event. The immediate appearance/givenness of the IR actor, phenomenon or event is, by nature, *post-genetic*. Its temporality is "now", which is not necessarily equivalent to its theoretically narrated moment of coming-into-being. This does not mean that the intersubjective givenness is an isolated moment: It appresents/co-presents a past-self as well as an anticipatory horizon toward its future. However, these temporal extensions originate and gain meaning from the present immediacy, whereas the theory brings upon the same immediacy a pre-formulated narrative of the past, in particular that of its coming-into-being, its genesis, which adds a temporal complication to the ontological one. The narrative naturally extends toward the anticipatory horizon of the givenness. Like the ontological problem, the temporal distortion may be prevented or corrected within the proper sphere of the social sciences thanks to the self-standing presence of, therefore to independent and direct accessibility to its actors. However, within

the IR field, the pure intersubjectivity of and mediate accessibility to the actors, phenomena and events preserve the distortion within the confines of the narrative issue of imported grounds of theorising.

On the Singularity of the Givenness of the IR Phenomena and Events

The IR theories' ground of social sciences, which are quite freely manifold due to the lack of anchor in the IR field which permits selectiveness in theorising, conduct to the multiplicity of genetic narratives of IR phenomena and events. Face to the givenness of a particular phenomenon or event, there may be –and often is- as many narratives as there are theoretical *a prioris*, constructs or critics to them, each being coherent with its own grounds. Such multiplicity is not only tolerable but may also be productive within the proper sphere of the social sciences, since an independent connection to objectivity is there, if not to the extent of the positive sciences' matters. There, narratives and theoretical constructs may be assessed against objectivity with a significant robustness. However, when social sciences' proposals and constructs are imported, as groundwork, into the purely intersubjective field of the IR, such assessment becomes difficult, if not effervescent. The result becomes a multiplicity of narratives on phenomena and events, each being assessed against its own fundamental proposals and each being apparently coherent and "explicative" since their genetic narratives reshapes, at various degrees, the phenomenon or event at hand in accordance with these proposals themselves.

However, a phenomenon or event is strictly singular, both ontologically and temporally. It is encountered/experienced/given singularly, as appearance/ occurrence at a specific moment. It is not bound to the multiplicity of the genetic narratives about itself. It is intersubjectively self-standing at the moment of its givenness, akin to an appearance of objectivity. This self-standing givenness is unaltered, without intervention of theoretical *a prioris* and ensuing narratives, which artificially precede the givenness at its immediacy and which impose their genetic narrative upon their post-genetic appearance. The multiplicity of social sciences- referring genetic narratives about the IR actors and their behaviour patterns as well as those about the IR phenomena and events contrast to the singularity of the phenomenon or event that is being studied and to the individuality of the actor as it is intersubjectively given to recognisance.

Here the question is not to choose a theoretical ground and a –genetic- narrative that would be more "accurate" in comparison to others which are already there or contingent. Due to the nature of the IR field, the accuracy of a theoretical construct often correlates to the possibility of "explicative alteration" of the phenomenon or event in accordance with the theoretical construct itself, except obvious, irrefutable cases of discrepancy. Even then the theory may, occasionally, be adapted to "irregularities" the given occurrence presents. The structural realist differentiation between the theory of international politics and the field of foreign policies constitutes a good example to that, as the individualities of actors, in other words "why the actors similarly placed in a system behave in different ways" are transferred to a vague-and separate area of "internal compositions of the actors", thus purifying the theoretical construct itself (Waltz 1996). After all, there are as

many alterations/reshaping of the studied phenomenon or event as there are theoretical constructs and narratives, almost invariably built on imported proposals of the social sciences.

The immediate givenness of the phenomenon or event is not a narrative. It does not appear through a genesis or meaning attribution on a preceding, theoretical ground. Still, it appears meaningfully. In contrast to phenomena and events of positive and even, to an extent, of social sciences there may not be independent, self-standing occurrences in the IR field which need to be "given" meaning in order to be grasped. Without meaning, the givenness itself may not occur in the IR field, as it is purely intersubjective, therefore purely *not-self standing*. In other words, meaning and occurrence are ontologically inseparable and temporally simultaneous in the IR field. The social sciences-referring IR theorising intervenes at that point and separates this ontological and temporal unity of meaning and occurrence. This intervention becomes deeper in the case of constructivism, as it deals with the intersubjectivity itself and the "meaning" on a theoretical/genetic basis. From this separation stems the multiplicity of narratives, in accordance with the multiplicity of the separating sources, of the theoretical constructs.

And yet, what is given is pre-theoretically and meaningfully "there". It appears singularly in the intersubjectivity. This singular appearance constitutes the not-narrated, unaltered substance of the phenomenon/event and provides the IR study with the sole possible anchor akin to the objectivity anchor in other fields of study. As such, the phenomenon/the event, as it appears, constitutes its own anchor, in reference to which it can be studied. Here the study needs to begin by the singular immediacy of givenness and not by the pre-postulated reflective frameworks that intervene in the substance and the temporality of it. This anchor provides the IR studies with an alternative to the ontological and temporal complications engendered by the social sciences' ground-references. Such a study would begin by the singularity of givenness and not from a selection among multiple "preceding" constructs or by building a new one of the same nature.

The Constructivist Theorising Ground and Phenomenology's Proposal in the IR Field

The Question of Intersubjectivity

The very existence of constructivism in the IR studies makes a debate on the nature of intersubjectivity necessary. Constructivism takes intersubjectivity, in the appearance of social construction, as its *theoretical* ground and while doing so, also theorises intersubjectivity itself, with the same ontological and temporal complications that were mentioned previously. Moreover, the theorisation of intersubjectivity and subsequent building of narratives follow the most direct –yet selective- importation of the social sciences' proposals among the IR theories, amplifying the complications.

The constructivist theorising of intersubjectivity does encourage, at a very fundamental level, the pursuance of a genetic approach at a more fundamental

level compared to other branches of the IR theorising. As an example, the constructivist search for the genesis goes quite beyond the realist/structural realist theorising, since the latter also relies on assumptions of objectivity, which the constructivists do not. Whereas the realist school takes a sort of self-standing objectivity and the State's actor character as granted (Morgenthau 1948) or the structural realist school repeats the same assumptions in reducing the States to quite uniform units of a system, gaining limited individuality within the framework of assumed parameters of interaction such as power-relations, interests and threats (Waltz 1979), the constructivist thought tends to dissect these assumptions. The dissection is performed on the ground of other assumed parameters that focus on the coming-into-being of the entities, phenomena and events. However these parameters vary among the constructivist works, such as identity-building, norm-building, social practices, communicative patterns, discourse and so on, they may be reduced to a common ground, which is that of the social sciences.

Here, the constructivist thought does not only theorise the genesis of phenomena and events in line with these parameters, but also the coming-into-being of the intersubjectivity itself as phenomenon. At that point, the constructivist understanding of the nature of intersubjectivity and means to work with it replicates the directionalities of more profound lines of thought, such as Schutz' phenomenology and Habermas' communicative action. Schutz's outline of the *awareness* of intersubjectivity (Schutz 1967, pp. 198–201, also Schutz 1970) and his criticism of the causal adequacy in favour of meaning-adequacy (Schutz 1967, pp. 229–236) might have opened the way to a rigorous study of the pre-theoretical, which would have its repercussions in the IR field as well. Still, a shift to the sociology *as intermediary* seems to have "balanced" his otherwise phenomenological work, which presents a similarity with the constructivist approach to the IR intersubjectivity. As for Habermas' understanding of the lifeworld/intersubjective environment as coherent sum of inter-communicated/learned "things" including thought processes, roles, identities and consequent behavior, while being adequate to his proper sphere of work, which is that of social sciences, when indirectly imported into the field of the IR studies through constructivist theorising, loses its ontological anchor, becomes researcher's postulates related to the genesis of entities and occurrences of another kind, detaches from the post-genetic immediacy of givenness and therefore leads to complications that are mentioned before (see Habermas 1987, pp. 119–198).

In line with the fundamental nature of theorising within the pure intersubjectivity of the IR field, the constructivist study tends to define, as *a priori*, the genetic ground of the phenomena and events. This tendency is apparently amplified by the constructivist criticism of the realist school, which concentrates on its assumption of objectivity, yet without questioning the very nature of theorising in doing so. Consequently, constructivism theorises the "alternative" to taking the IR field as objective, therefore the intersubjectivity, building a genetic narrative that precedes the immediate, encompassing givenness of it. The constructivist thought therefore reproduces the ontological and temporal complications of the IR theorising at a level even more fundamental than other theoretical approaches in the field. In questioning the assumption of objectivity of the realist approaches, such as that of

States, it also avoids the immediacy of the meaningful givenness of the IR entities, phenomena and events, incorporating them into its genetic narrative.

Now we face a dilemma in approaching the constructivist thought as regards the IR field. On the one hand, the constructivists recognise intersubjectivity, even not using the term specifically but replacing it with the social construct, as the nature of the IR field and on the other hand, they do this precisely for theorising, therefore for their genetic approach and subsequent narrative. The very act of adopting intersubjectivity as theoretical ground makes it also an object of theorising, therefore of a genetic narrative of its own. Here, the genetic approach of theorising automatically and in fact ironically necessitates an anchor in the "objectivity", even when defining and narrating intersubjectivity. The constructivist thought therefore imports the social sciences' notions for such a purpose, reproducing the ontological and temporal complications which are mentioned before.

As mentioned at the beginning of this sub-section, constructivists do not understand the IR field's entities, phenomena (and events related to them) of the IR field as objectivities with self-standing meanings, but intersubjective constructs and meaning-attributions. On the other hand, the theoretical ground imported from the social sciences varies as to which notion is being underlined as anchor for the ensuing genetic narrative, both of the intersubjectivity itself and the intersubjective constructions, which were also mentioned above, through examples of the constructivist literature. In other words, the multiplicity of constructivist narratives stems from the adopted social sciences-referring theoretical grounds, which vary as to their *selected* notions. These subsequently precede the immediacy of the encounter with IR phenomena and events, pre-define their geneses, impose upon and shape them in their narrative. At a fundamental level, the intersubjectivity itself is narrated as such, its coming-into-being is pre-defined as to its "mechanisms" such as communicative processes, social stratification and explained through geneses of values, identities, beliefs, of discourse, of political, cultural, institutional narratives and so on. Beyond a question of accuracy, the constructivist works themselves reinterpret "worlds", in Onuf's terms, yet according to its pre-postulates (Onuf 2013). It gives significantly less room to omission and assumption compared to the realist/structural realist thought, for example as regards the State, which is by nature beneficial to preserve, to an extent, the immediacy of givenness in the IR study: Constructivism does not, after all, neglect its theoretical dissection and genetic narrative. In other words, the constructivist theorising radicalises, with Wendt's partial exception, social sciences' ontological and temporal complications within the IR studies.

At that point a parenthesis should be opened for Wendt's approach, which he names "thin constructivism" due to its concessions on important points to "materialist and individual perspectives and endorses a scientific approach to social inquiry" (Wendt 1999, pp. 1–4). This may be combined with, for example, his legitimisation of referring to the State as an "actor" (Wendt 1999, pp. 193–245), however it is but a socially constructed entity. In fact, these "concessions" appear to stem, inversely, from the problems of the "scientific approach to social inquiry", the theoretical/genetic approach in other words, which prove to be

incompatible with the immediate, pre-theoretical, intersubjective referentiality to the elements of the IR field, in this example to the State-as-actor, as a "living entity".

Here, one argument against the exogeneity of theorising/ground-building to the intersubjective givenness can be deduction, which signifies the link between the experience of the said phenomena and events and the formation of a theoretical ground, from the former toward the latter. However, the act of deducing is possible only with a preceding referentiality, as deduction may not be random, chaotic, arbitrary. Here the theoretical ground, in its exogeneity, again precedes the said link, providing the act of deducing with directionality and selectiveness, in fact an almost pre-ordained *telos*, in accordance with the exogenous, *a priori* proposals of the IR theorising, The preceding referentiality in the constructivist thought is the selected –according to the individual constructivist work- proposals of social sciences and not the immediate, intersubjective one, such as in the example of the appearance of the State-as-actor. Deduction becomes therefore the drive of building a –genetic- narrative on the pre-existing theoretical grounds, instead of preceding the said grounds as their genetic drive.

At that point another paranthesis may be opened for Kratochwil's *Rules, Norms and Decisions*, as regards his statement on the three worlds of knowledge, the one of the observational facts, that of the intention and meaning and the world of institutional facts (Kratochwil 1989, pp. 21–45). The author separates the sphere of positive sciences and that of the subjectivity/subjectivity-guided occurrences. Then and in fact from the second one rather than the first, he makes the distinction of rules/norms that resemble to sanitized and well-delimited intersubjective constructs. He privileges the "third" world and proceeds into its genetic narrative within the IR sphere, with pre-selected parameters, all apparently being deduced (Kratochwil 1989, pp. 43–44). In the ensuing analyses, sociology's and socio-psychology' proposals but also and emphasisingly language and discourse, also through preceding postulates and selectiveness, guide the work *toward* concepts also pre-formulated. Deduction serves exogeneity of theorising to givenness, instead of serving to avoid it. The same paranthesis should include the author's *Praxis On Acting and Knowing* (Kratochwil 2018) on the same ground, where a critical approach to the constructivist understanding of social sciences results in the proposal of importing other disciplines' fundamental proposals into the study ground, in other words, of enriching the selective pre-postulation of deductions aiming at "substantive problems" that also pre-formulated as to their substances and forms of working-with (Kratochwil 2018, pp. 13–46), persisting the exogeneity of theorising to givenness.

In accordance with the constructivist thought, intersubjectivity can be defined as the collective meaning-attribution as well as collectively attributed meanings which make objective/self-standing or non-objective/not self-standingly existing things, entities, phenomena or events. In this sense, intersubjectivity becomes collectively lived reality as well as the collective act of living reality. Now in both senses, it should be true that intersubjectivity is both the product of ongoing/inherited social/socio-psychological/communicative processes between individuals and these processes themselves as they constitute the act of collective bestowal of meanings, in other words, collective genetic act of the lived reality. Intersubjectivity

should therefore be a matter of social sciences, in particular of sociology and socio-psychology, but only as long as the study is confined to the genetic processes of phenomena and events and as long as it is directly related to observable true subjects and groupings as accessible study matters in the objectivity. Yet in the IR field, the study of an intersubjectively given phenomenon or event in its singularity and immediacy is neither a genetic one (that of the object's or the collective meaning-attribution act's coming-into-being) nor is related to true, self-standing subjects directly (but mediately, as the subjects are themselves intersubjective).

Consequently, intersubjectivity of the IR field differs from that of the social sciences' proper sphere, as it does not permit a direct relationship between the true subject and the object, therefore an objectivity-anchored genetic theorisation applicable to it. Intersubjectivity here appears not as a derivation of the objectivity but an already-present and all encompassing, living, meaningful reality of its own.

The IR intersubjectivity is therefore an environment which is self-anchored and post-genetic, with entities, phenomena and events with the same proprieties. True subjects that are involved in their immediate, living givenness do not "make" these singular, immediate givenness in contrast to the constructivist thought: Instead, as they are related to them in the living moment of their experience and within their context, they gain their own meanings and validity from them, such as identities or roles like decision-makers, implementers or opposers. Consequently, the study may not be centred on theorising and narrating the intersubjectivity's or the intersubjective givenness' *construction* by subjects which refer to them in the first place, without even repeating its ontological/temporal complications that were mentioned before. In other words, the IR study, as that of an intersubjective environment and of intersubjective phenomena and events within, needs to be anchored to their immediate, living givenness.

This necessity sends to another line of thought in relation with intersubjectivity, which is different from social sciences: Phenomenology and phenomenological ontology.

However, it is of note that the Husserlian phenomenology approaches intersubjectivity also in genetic terms, quite similarly with social sciences (see also Schnell 2010). Husserl *narrates* the *genesis* of intersubjectivity in the Vth Mediation (*Cartesian Meditations*) on the ground of communicative processes, in the form of the ego's experience of the "Other", its grasping the "Other" in empathy yet with its irreducibility to "mine-ness", leading to the knowledge of the collective constitution of the world. (Husserl 1982, pp. 92–105, 108–116, Husserl 2001, pp. 27–29, 63–87, 382–383). In the Vth Meditation, he describes the "personalities of higher order" (including the State) also as to their genesis, which is again the result of communicative processes (Husserl 1982, pp. 128–135). Husserl attempts to remedy the complications stemming from this genetic approach in his later work, the *Crisis*, where he redefines intersubjectivity as transcendental and pre-given (Husserl 1970). That attempt remains however genetic and social/communicative, as the pre-givenness signifies a cultural heritage –which had been constituted in the past through same processes- and not the post-genetic immediacy of givenness. It therefore reproduces the ontological and temporal complications of the constructivist thought. In this sense, Schutz's work constitutes a sort of bridge between the

Husserlian phenomenology and the constructivist understanding of social sciences, yet on these "problematic" grounds related to intersubjectivity proposed by the Vth Meditation and the *Crisis* (Schutz 1967).

On the other hand, the Heideggerian phenomenological ontology brings forward another understanding of intersubjectivity, one that overcomes Husserl's "regression" into genetic theorising (Heidegger 1985, Heidegger 1996). Heidegger depicts intersubjectivity on the ground of inherence of the being-with-others to being, as the very state of existence within the world. Intersubjectivity is, in other words, the state-of-being rather than a communicatively co-produced or socially/ historically inherited awareness: In fact, because of the inherence of intersubjectivity to being that communicative/social processes become possible at all. Intersubjectivity thus precedes any genetic act, individual or collective, in fact provides any genetic act with ground and not the other way around. It is because the being is precedingly, pre-reflectively interactional within a self-evident, pre-given, pre-genetic intersubjectivity that social/communicative processes, non-solipsistic experience, meaning-attribution and constitution/genesis of things can be possible. It thus contrasts to both Husserlian intersubjectivity formulas and to that of the social sciences, as well as to that of the constructivist thought. Heidegger uses two interlaced terms for intersubjectivity: *Mitsein* signifies the inherence of being-with-others to being that precedes any communicative process of genetic nature and in fact that enables them to take place meaningfully. *Mitwelt* depicts the inherence of the intersubjective world/environment to being, lived-in as innerworldliness (Heidegger 1985, pp. 238– 239, Heidegger 1996, pp. 111–112). This understanding of intersubjectivity answers to the problem of singular, immediate, post-genetic appearance/experience of the IR phenomena and events, underlining at the same time the exogeneity of theorising to purely intersubjective givenness.

A Phenomenological Proposal

Is it possible to avoid, within the IR studies, the ontological and temporal complications of adopting social sciences' ground, in particular that of the constructivism? In avoiding them, is it possible to perform a rigorous study that properly takes the intersubjective nature of the IR into account?

Avoidance of the genetic approach necessitates a firm study ground akin to the positive sciences' and to a degree, social sciences' objectivity anchor, yet within the purely intersubjective field of the IR. As the nature of the IR field does not permit direct observation of its actors, phenomena and events in contrast to those of the positive sciences and to an extent, of the social sciences, where then such an anchor may be found -and not built-?

If what is at hand as irrefutable, unaltered, not pre-built experience pertaining to the IR field is only the immediate and intersubjectively meaningful givenness/ appearance of the phenomena and events, then perhaps the "anchor" for its study also needs to be looked for there as well. This contrasts to attempting to select/ build/theorise a study ground which engenders ontological/temporal complications, since such a ground becomes exogenous to the givenness and *artificially* precedes it ontologically and temporally. As mentioned previously, the constructivist thought

even furthers these complications by theorising the genesis of intersubjectivity itself, which it otherwise correctly adopts as the nature of the IR phenomena and events.

Then how to anchor the study to the immediate, intersubjective givenness of the phenomena and events? The Husserlian phenomenology offers notions and tools those are applicable to the intersubjective field of the IR, which is to be understood in Heideggerian terms as mentioned previously. The notions are related to appresentative links and the temporal states of phenomena and events that form their givenness as synthetic unities.

The extension of the moment of appearance toward a meaningful synthetic unity of givenness means neither a genetic or volitional act from the part of the researcher, nor a temporal process with precedence-subsequence, but merely constitutes a convenience of expression for pointing at the appresentative links in terms of substance and temporality that form, at the very immediacy of givenness, a synthetic unity that is substantially and temporally "complete", meaningful. Husserl employs the term appresentation in the Vth Meditation, in describing the monadological intersubjectivity on the grounds of the ego's experience of the "Other". The immediate appearance of the "Other" appresents, in the form of empathy, its equivalence to "I" as well as its "otherness" which is irreducible to "I" (Husserl 1982, pp. 92–105, 108–116), thus giving the "Other" in a meaningful synthetic unity rather than a merely incomplete image. Within the intersubjectivity that is inherent-to-being and post-genetic, appresentative links are even more prominent as they make appear the givenness in a meaningful synthetic unity (also see Husserl 2001, pp. 27–29, 63–87, 382–383).

Here, what is immediately, pre-reflectively given as the phenomenon or event is a synthetic unity including its also immediate, direct, intersubjective appresented contents, which are not attributed in reference to a preceding construct and as part of an ensuing genetic narrative. This constitutes the intersubjective anchor for the study of a phenomenon or event and gives, in the individual case of a particular phenomenon or event, its ontological data, its immediately and intersubjectively appearing, self-evident *substance*. This is equivalent to the observation of an occurrence in the objective reality.

Secondly, the immediate givenness as a synthetic unity may not be an isolated "moment" in temporal terms, which is present then and not present, not valid, not-existent in its immediate past or immediate future. The intersubjective givenness of something is temporal, as any occurrence in the objective reality, as the *conditio sine qua non* of the experience of something. At the moment of appearance/ givenness, the phenomenon or event appresents a past of itself and an anticipated future, in other words a "temporal thickness" (Husserl 1964, p. 87). Therefore, the synthetic unity of the givenness includes, along and interlaced with the substance, also the appresentation of its temporal states of past, present and future, expressed in terms of that very substance.

The Husserlian phenomenology employs the term retention-protention for the actuality of the givenness that appresents its immediate past and immediate future (Husserl 1964, pp. 39–50, Carr 1991, pp. 24, 40–45, also Rodemeyer 2006, pp. 73–176). This temporal state, while being the immediacy of the givenness, is still a continuing, progressive "moment" which does not include a past or a future-as-

anticipatory horizon in the sense of non-actuality. However, it is this very actuality of the givenness that appresents its non-actuality, therefore these two temporal states. The Husserlian phenomenology names the appresentation of the not-immediate past and future as recollection and anticipation respectively (Marion 1998, pp. 77–97, Carr 1991, p. 24, Rodemeyer 2006, pp. 12–13). On the other hand, Husserl also detaches these two temporal states from the intersubjective givenness itself, focusing on "making" them as temporalisations, thus furthering his genetic approach into the coming-into-being of the past and future besides the actuality of the intersubjectivity and intersubjective givenness (Carr 1991, p. 24). Here, similarly to the case of the nature of intersubjectivity, the Heideggerian understanding of the inherence-to-being provides the temporal states of the givenness with its non-genetic definition. Heidegger's three temporal *extases* of having been (with), dwelling-with and to be-with (Heidegger 1985, pp. 238–239, Heidegger 1982, pp. 266–267, Heidegger 1996, pp. 111–112) express, in temporal terms, the givenness' fundamental inherence to the subject that *within* intersubjectivity in a fundamental, existential, non-genetic relationship with the intersubjectively given "things" (being-as-*Mitsein* within the *Mitwelt*). This connects the recollection (past) and the anticipation (future) to the retentional-protentional actuality in forming (the description of) the synthetic unity of givenness (Bernet 1994, also Ozigci 2022). With this note, the Husserlian terms of retention-protention, recollection and anticipation as temporal states of the givenness may be employed as they are express better the object of study than the Heideggerian *extases* which rather focus on the "life of the subject" as related to phenomena, events, things.

Now, how to reach to the synthetic unity of the purely intersubjective givenness? In order to reach to the phenomenon and the event as they are given in their intersubjective immediacy, phenomenology proposes reductions, of universal and eidetic character (Brainard 2002, pp. 68–74, Husserl 1982, pp. 71–81, Husserl 1983, pp. 57–59, 220–221). The universal reduction is bracketing the "natural attitude" of approaching the things, phenomena and events as self standingly meaningful objectivities (Luft 1998). This reduction puts into perspective the mental acts such as assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, predications, emotions that form meaningful appearances from encounters with things, phenomena and events (Kueng 1975, Schmitt 1959, Husserl 1982, pp. 71–81; Husserl 1983, pp. 57–59, 220–221). As such, the universal reduction makes theoretical attitude also "discernible" and at the same time, possible to suspend with all its attached contents. The universal reduction needs to be a constant in the study of the IR phenomena and events in order to be able to bracket the theoretical/genetic approach and ensuing narrative (also see Luft 2004). However, the study of these phenomena and events on the ground of intersubjectivity would not need to go into the egological mental processes themselves in the natural direction of the universal reduction. This reduction, at the level of bracketing mentioned above, provides another reduction with ground, one which is directly related to "objects" of experience and not to the experiencing subjects themselves. This reduction is eidetic.

The eidetic reduction to experience is toward the objects's, here the IR phenomenon's/event's *"generic way of presenting itself, its Erscheinen"* (Taminiaux 1988, p. 62, Bernet 2016, Heidegger 2005, pp. 210–211). In the intersubjectivity

of the IR field, this "generic way" becomes the meaningful, immediately given substance, which is unaltered by the theoretical attitude and construct. The bracketing here would mean putting into perspective any judgement and predication that is not simultaneous with and inherent to the givenness. The eidetic reduction is not applied to an idea but to a state of affairs, an occurrence, an event in the everydayness, to something which is immediately, intersubjectively, individually, pre-theoretically given. The reduction needs to be restrained by the individuality of the givenness, therefore should not denature it by altering/reshaping its immediate meaning and content, for example in reducing the givenness to its supposedly constitutive components, in repeating the ontological complications brought by, in particular, the social sciences into the IR study. In other words, the eidetic reduction should not reproduce a genetic narrative from "the other end" of the study, from the givenness toward an artificial *a priori* ground. It suspends/ brackets any narrative pertaining to the givenness at hand, including any *act* of narrating it through mental acts relating the subject to the object' that is also the matter of the universal reduction. The *residuum* of this reduction, the studied givenness' "generic way of presenting itself", is its intersubjectively and immediately meaningful substance, the phenomenon or event in its irreducible appearance, its "what", its *noematic core* in Husserl's terms (Husserl 1983, pp. 60–64, 220–221).

The noematic core of the phenomenon/event, thus constitutes the anchor, the available ground for studying the givenness as a meaningful synthetic unity within the IR intersubjectivity. At the same time, it is the object of elaboration and alteration, therefore subject to IR theory's, in particular constructivism's ontological/ temporal complications. Consequently, a phenomenological proposal in the IR studies must reside on separating exogeneity, in particular the theoretical/ genetic exogeneity from the elements of the givenness' synthetic unity. These elements, substance and temporal states, are appresented in immediacy. Therefore, they are directly reducible to the noematic core of the givenness being studied, whereas elements which are exogenous, which are parts of the genetic narrative, are reducible to the theory's *a prioris*. Consequently, the eidetic reduction would ultimately serve to discern and describe the phenomenon or the event in its synthetic unity, as it is given in its unaltered, pre-theoretical state.

Conclusion

Intersubjectivity constitutes the fundamental character of the IR field. In contrast to those that belong to the sphere of the social sciences, not only the phenomena and events of the IR field gain their existence intersubjectively, but also its very actors. Whereas individuals and their collectivities are self-standingly present in the objective reality, no element of the IR has direct correspondence in the objectivity. On the other hand, intersubjectivity constitutes a secondary, *a posteriori* interactional environment for the social sciences, which is itself constituted and reproduced by true subjects and their groupings. Consequently, the genesis and the formation of intersubjectivity and intersubjective contents constitute

the main focus of the social sciences. However, the IR field entirely consists of immediate, inherently intersubjective and post-genetic givennesses, which take ontological/temporal precedence. Yet the study of the IR phenomena and occurrences practically constitutes a branch of social sciences despite this fundamental difference between the two fields of study. Acting as social sciences in an otherwise pure intersubjectivity, the IR study relies on genetic theorising and genetic narratives, bringing ontological and temporal complications stemming from this fundamental incompatibility.

In particular, the constructivist IR theorising further accentuates these complications. In contrast to the realist/structural realist or liberal theorising as well as their variants, it correctly adopts intersubjectivity as the study ground. Yet, it also adopts proposals, approaches and methods of social sciences and deepens their ontological/ temporal complications, as it applies their genetic narrative to the very substance of intersubjectivity along with the IR phenomena and events. As such, the very ontology of the IR field becomes subject to the thoroughly genetic theorising of constructivism, with no assumptive omissions of the other IR theories which gives them an ontological "superficiality" that works, to some extent, to the benefit of the study of the givenness. Still, the very existence of constructivist thought forces a thorough debate on the nature of intersubjectivity and on the importation of the social sciences into the fabric of the IR studies. This debate displays a need for an IR study that would focus on the singular, intersubjective, pre-theoretical, post-genetic immediacy of the IR phenomena and events, on their givenness as meaningful synthetic unities.

Here phenomenology may propose a solid, non-imported and (even partially differing from Husserl) non-genetic ground for the IR studies, relying on intersubjectivity itself as inherent to the singularity and immediacy of IR phenomena and events. In contrast to social sciences' genetic constructs that artificially position themselves prior to intersubjective givenness of phenomena and events and subsequently alter them in their narratives, an ontological ground proper to the nature of the IR field may be spotted through phenomenological concepts and tools. Universal and eidetic reductions provide the study with these tools to reach the IR phenomena's and events' immediate and intersubjective "noematic cores". The furtherance of reductions toward their appresented contents serves to discern exogenous, theoretical/ narrated attributions to them from substantial and temporal elements that are directly related to their givenness. As such, a description of IR phenomena and events in their unaltered, un-narrated synthetic unity may become possible, on their "original" ontological ground.

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University Students' Perspectives on Sexual Orientations

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The aim and scope is to reveal and examine the attitudes and opinions of the students towards LGBTI+s. The study was designed in quantitative-total population sampling method with the participation of 291 students. When the results obtained from the scales are analyzed, the scores obtained from the attitude scale towards Lesbians and Gays are found 33,07±8,75 which can be evaluated as slightly above the average, indicating that the participants are closer to negative attitudes, while the scores they get from the homophobia scale to be found 80,88 ±27,30, that is below the average, indicating that they are more tolerant. The family structure of the participants show that the father has a higher education level and is working; the mother is not working (63.5%), that is, the patriarchal structure is dominant. The answer to the idea of providing to (74%) or receiving from (78%) LGBTI+s was "wouldn't be a problem" to a large extent. It has been observed that there is no gender-based discrimination in attitudes towards homosexuality, homosexuality between men and women is considered equally (73%). When the homophobia scale is evaluated, it is noteworthy that the tolerance of individuals towards themselves or their families has decreased. So much so that about 62% of the participants were angry or bored at receiving sexual attention from their own gender and 22% were proud. In order to establish a positive relationship, health personnel must have the ability and competence to establish an accepting and respectful relationship. In this context, it would be useful to emphasize the necessity of continuing to include courses emphasizing cis-heteronormative cultural and social structure in the curriculum of students.

Keywords: *LGBTI+, sexual orientation, gender equality, social work, health worker*

Introduction

With this study, it is aimed to examine the attitudes and opinions of university students studying at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the School of Health towards LGBTI+ individuals who may serve in the future. In this context, the possible negative effects of the patriarchal structure, which is dominant in the geography and culture we live in, on the thought patterns, attitudes and behaviors of individuals cannot be denied naturally. However, it is of great importance in terms of professional ethics that people who will work as health personnel provide services without discrimination. Therefore, determining the views and attitudes of health sciences students towards sexual orientation is also valuable in terms of understanding the changes that need to be made in the content of the education curricula.

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Sexual orientation refers to an individual's emotional and sexual attraction to individuals of a specific gender or gender identity (Cook 2021). Attitudes and opinions about sexual orientation can vary widely among individuals and communities, and can be influenced by various factors, including cultural and religious beliefs, personal experiences, and social norms.

In patriarchal structures, attitudes and opinions on sexual orientation can be complex and varied. Patriarchal structures typically prioritize male power and dominance, and may view any deviation from traditional gender roles and norms as a threat to this power dynamic (Coward 2022). As a result, individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) may face discrimination, marginalization, and even violence in patriarchal societies. Some individuals and groups within patriarchal structures may hold negative attitudes and opinions towards LGBTQ+, based on their own beliefs and biases. These attitudes may be influenced by religion, cultural traditions, and social norms that stigmatize non-heterosexual identities and behaviors. However, it is important to note that not all individuals within patriarchal structures hold these negative attitudes and opinions. There are also many people and professional or civic organizations who challenge and resist patriarchal norms, and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and equality.

Overall, the attitudes and opinions towards sexual orientation in patriarchal structures are complex and multifaceted, and are influenced by a range of factors such as religion, culture, and social norms (Coward 2022). However, it is important to strive for greater acceptance and inclusivity of all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, in order to create a more just and equitable society. In this context, patriarchal structures in healthcare can perpetuate gender-based discrimination and inequality, including for LGBTQ+ individuals. This can manifest in various ways, such as healthcare providers assuming heterosexuality or cisgender identity, overlooking LGBTQ+ healthcare needs, or providing inadequate or discriminatory care. Efforts to address these issues include increasing education and awareness about sexual orientation and gender identity among healthcare students, as well as promoting more inclusive and equitable healthcare policies and practices.

It is of great importance in terms of the quality of services that the students who are on the way to becoming a health personnel treat the population they will serve in the future with the same quality and equal treatment without any discrimination. One of the important and primary ethical principles of being a healthcare professional is not to discriminate. In this context; health professionals start their duties by taking an oath that they will provide the best possible service to everyone (gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, language, religion, political opinion, etc.) who needs their help and services. From this point of view, it is of great importance to reveal the attitudes of the students who studied at the health sciences faculty for four years towards sexual orientation differences.

Literature Review

According to the definition made by the American Psychological Association, sexual orientation is expressed as the sexual, romantic and emotional stimulation and desires of the individual towards others in line with their sexual orientation and identity characteristics. Sexual orientation is not a choice. The orientations are linked to the biological system and psychological impulses, including intense emotional states such as falling in love. This definition reveals that sexual orientation is not a matter of preference. The concept of sexual preference, which was used in the past, has therefore begun to be expressed as sexual orientation (American Psychological Association 2016).

In the most general sense, homophobia is defined as negative emotions, attitudes and behaviors exhibited towards people with different sexual orientations (Herek 1984). What is noteworthy here is that the phrase "different" used to define homophobia evokes the idea that heterosexuality is normally accepted. Homophobia can also be understood as an ideology of intergroup relations accompanied by certain stereotypes, which is formed as a result of the conceptualization of homosexuals as an "outgroup", which is also affected by processes that can be thought of as more individual (personality, self-perception, cognitive structures, etc.) (Göregenli 2009). Although the movement initiated by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals to seek their social rights has created a positive change in various societies around the world in the last decade (Detenber et al. 2013), the number of people who are discriminated against because of their sexual orientation is still quite high. This may cause many homosexuals to hide their sexual orientation (Bakacak and Ōktem 2014). It is stated that individuals who do not hide their sexual orientation are faced with exclusion, stigmatization, verbal-physical attacks and hate crimes in various areas of society (American Psychological Association, 2008). Experiencing such discrimination and exclusion problems can cause homosexual individuals to experience psychological problems such as depression, alcohol and substance use, and even drive them to commit suicide (Eskin et al. 2005).

When we look at the development of societies' attitudes towards homosexuality in the historical process, it has not been long since homosexuality was perceived with morally condemning and exclusionary judgments, even in developed countries. In the United States of America, homosexuality was seen as a disease or a perversion until 1973, but after the American Psychiatric Association decided that it was not a mental abnormality, it began to be accepted as an alternative way of life (Lehrman 2005). Today, at least in the West, it can be said that the claim of deviance against LGBTIs is outside the academic and scientific platform (Cesur-Kılıçaslan and Işık 2015)

Research conducted by Ryan et al. with lesbian, gay and bisexual youth in the USA and England in 2003 showed that young people are more exposed to discrimination than adults and are more vulnerable to attacks (Ryan and Rivers 2003). In recent years, the increase in the rate of victims, especially in schools and public spaces, has occurred in parallel with the increase in visibility. The increase in visibility and the efforts of people to exist as they wish in the public sphere

mean an important step in increasing freedoms and dealing with violence, on the other hand, it increases all kinds of discrimination and violence as it threatens the established ideology of masculinity (Göregenli 2009).

Discrimination on the University of Oregon campus has shown that people of different colors, of different religious beliefs than Christianity, gays and lesbians, people with different types of disabilities, and the poor are labeled as "immoral, violent, dangerous, stupid and lazy" in much the same way (Cullinan 2002). No overt violence, not even a negative portrait, is to paint no portrait, and nothingness is a message: you are not existing!

According to Stevens, since the Second World War, we have been slowly entering an era of great tolerance. Homosexuality has been decriminalized in many world democracies. Since the 1990s, the number of countries where same-sex marriages and same-sex partnerships are accepted has been increasing (Stevens and Tanrıyar 2011). Undoubtedly, it is possible to find many examples that weaken Stevens' claim that the age of tolerance is entering. As a matter of fact, despite the positive developments, patriarchal values still prevail in all societies and LGBTIs are exposed to discrimination/exclusion practices.

A study conducted in 2002 shows that LGBT adolescents cannot receive adequate service due to the homophobic attitudes of those working in social service institutions established to protect children. Studies show that social workers have negative myths or stereotypes about different sexual orientations at substantial rates (Quinn 2002).

These negative attitudes and beliefs appear everywhere, at home, at school, in peer groups, and in society as a whole. Therefore, LGBTI+'s may encounter discrimination and pressure, even exclusion and violence when seeking support from their families, social environment and places considered reliable institutions. While LGBTIs face discrimination in almost every area of their daily life such as work life, health center/hospital, school, they are exposed to abuse and violence by their families and social environment and are rejected. It is known that they are subjected to physical and sexual assault, tortured and even killed almost all over the world (UNHCHR 2013). As a result of these negative experiences, children or young people may be excluded from the education process. However, belonging to the group in adolescence is one of the most important needs. Cultural and social norms define and exclude different sexual orientations as deviant lifestyles. The dominant culture produces homophobic attitudes and marginalizes adolescents with different sexual orientations. As a result, these children experience problems related to mental health, self-esteem and identity, the risk of suicide increases, the rate of living on the street increases (Göregenli 2009). Young people who grow up under these conditions carry all this individual and social pressure with them from a young age as they become adults of the future. The saddest thing is that the situation does not change when they grow up and become adults: their right to participate in social life, to be employed, to be treated equally, even their right to life can be taken away just because of their orientation (Danyeli Güzel 2017, Yıldırım Aykurt 2020). In this case, the absence of social services can be vital. Social workers and all professionals working in this field have a responsibility to work to ensure the social welfare of marginalized and stigmatized groups, change

their conditions and achieve justice in this regard. Creating and encouraging healthy human relationships and interactions is essential in this process.

It is also important for the study to understand the attitudes in Turkey, the country where the majority of the students participating in the study come from. Because it will reveal both the understanding of the culture adopted by the participants while answering the questions and the reason for the similarity of many public interventions due to the political structure between the north of Cyprus and Turkey.

Despite the efforts of non-governmental organizations to secure LGBTI rights, it is seen that there is no regulation on the subject in Turkey's national legislation, just like in the north of Cyprus. This situation causes LGBTIs with special needs to be ignored in institutional structures such as Ministry of Family and Social Policies (ASPB), Ministries of Health, Justice, Labor and Social Security, municipalities, to which they can apply for the solution of their problems. These structures do not take responsibility for issues that are not clearly defined in the legislation, and the problems of LGBTIs are often beyond the scope of the services provided. In addition to ignoring the problems of LGBTIs in institutional structures, it is also possible that they are excluded and exposed to violence by those working in the public sector (Cesur Kılıçaslan and Akkuş 2016).

Many LGBTI people do not reveal their sexual identity to physicians and give up treatment due to fear of discrimination or intolerant reactions. This can lead to nutritional problems, drug or alcohol abuse, depression, and mental health problems, including suicide and suicide attempts, as well as physical problems. states should put in place appropriate training and work policies/programs for health professionals to enable them to offer the highest accessible health standard to all people (Kaos 2016).

In addition to health inequalities, studies show that LGBTIs are at higher risk than heterosexual individuals in terms of mental problems, general health problems, substance abuse and risky behaviors such as self-harm and suicide attempts (Alpert 2015, King et al. 2008). With these inequalities faced by LGBTIs who cannot access health services, encounter wrong attitudes and behaviors, and have problems with accessing health information, their health status may worsen. Individuals experiencing such difficulties cannot protect both their physical and mental health (Hoffman et al. 2009, Meads et al. 2009, Sevilla González and Álvarez Licona 2006). The knowledge, attitudes and skills of health professionals are extremely important in preventing the health inequalities experienced by LGBTIs at risk. Preventing the inequalities experienced by LGBTIs in the field of health is only possible with the development of education and cultural competence (Hardacker et al. 2014).

Studies show that healthcare professionals do not have sufficient knowledge about LGBTI, their knowledge, attitudes and behaviors towards this group are negative, and as a result, rights violations related to sexual identity and gender orientation occur (Beycan Ekitli and Çam 2017, Bonvicini 2017, Heck et al. 2006). Similarly, another study states that LGBTIs have difficulties in communicating with healthcare professionals, experience fear due to the prejudices of healthcare professionals about their sexual orientation, and experience embarrassing

situations when expressing their sexual identity (Alencar Albuquerque et al. 2016). Due to all these negative experiences, LGBTIs avoid revealing their sexual orientation to health professionals and cannot receive qualified health services (Araújo et al. 2006).

When the studies carried out in the north of Cyprus are examined, it is revealed that the majority of LGBTs are exposed to discrimination by their families and social circles, and that they have difficulty in accessing reliable services (Dürüst and Çağlar 2015, Uluboy and Husnu 2022, Yolaç and Meriç 2021). In the studies carried out by the Queer Cyprus Association, besides the problems faced by LGBTI+s in accessing basic human needs such as shelter, health, food and employment, negative experiences in accessing social services were observed.

In the mapping study of LGBTIs' access to social services in the north of Cyprus, it is noteworthy that the rate of applying to health institutions in the face of the problems they experience is quite low (13.8%). this is interpreted as not being equipped to provide sufficient support for a permanent solution that will eliminate the concerns of reliable services that can be obtained from public institutions (Erzeybek Şemi and Uluçaylı 2021).

To conclude, culturally, LGBTIs face a common set of challenges in achieving health care and the highest possible level of health. These inequalities in health services; was due to structural and legal factors, social discrimination, and culturally incompetent health professionals (Ünal et al. 2018).

Methodology/Materials and Methods

The study was designed in a quantitative research design that provides the opportunity to work with numerical data. In this study, which was conducted to determine the attitudes of the students of the International Cyprus University Faculty of Health Sciences and School, total population sampling method was used.

Since it is thought that there will not be any problem in reaching the determined population and it is thought that the population will be limited and narrow in terms of scope, sampling method was not preferred and it was aimed to reach the whole population and the total population sampling method was applied (Ural and Kılıç 2005). In order for the full census to be implemented, the desired universe should be suitable in terms of factors such as size, determined financial situation and time (Balce and Demir, 2007).

In this instance, 345 Turkish and Cypriot students enrolled in the Faculty of Health Sciences/School in 2019-2020-2021 who constitute the population of the research. Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis, and students were asked to read and accept the informed consent form before participating in the study. In this context, a total of 333 students participated in the study, but 291 valid data were obtained. Therefore, 291 students who answered all the questions constitute the sample of the research.

Data Collection Process

At the beginning of this process, an application was made to the Cyprus International University Ethics Committee, to which the students were affiliated, and necessary permissions were obtained. Afterwards, the scales that can be used were reviewed with the literature study. The first two parts of the data collection tools developed by the researchers regarding on this review. After the data collection tools were developed, they were arranged and finalized by taking the opinions and feedback of 3 academicians who are experts in the field. Also, it is decided to use 2 scales which validity test were already completed. The necessary permissions were obtained for the use of the Attitude Scale Towards LGBTIs scale, which was adapted into Turkish by Duyan and Gelbal in 2004. Since the participants speak Turkish, the Turkish version of the scale, which is adapted by Duyan and Gelbal, is used. Besides, to understand the attitudes of the students towards LGBTI's, this scale has enough competent questions. Since the people who adapted the Hudson and Ricketts Homophobia Scale were inaccessible and open to use, it was used without the need for a permission. The process was started with three researchers and after two researchers decided not to contribute to the study, the study was continued and completed with a single researcher.

Data Collection Tools

In order to determine the tools of data collection, the literature was examined in detail. As a result of the examination, it was decided to use the questionnaires collected under 4 different headings to achieve the purpose.

The first two parts were developed by the researchers, and the first part called "Personal Information Form" includes 14 items to learn the demographic information of the participants. In the second part, a total of 8 determinative questions regarding the sexual orientation of the participants were included. In the last two parts, two different scales, which were reached as a result of the literature study, were used. Accordingly, in the third part, the scale named "Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gays", which aims to measure the attitudes of the participants towards homosexual individuals, was used; in the last part, the "Hudson and Ricketts Homophobia Scale" was used.

A detailed explanation of the forms and scales used is given below:

1. **Personal Information Form:** There are questions about the participants' age, gender, department of education, nationality, marital status, socio-economic status and demographic information of the family.
2. **Questions about sexual orientation:** There are general questions about the relationship status and sexual orientation of the participants.
3. **Attitude Scale towards LGBTIs:** The validity and reliability of Attitudes Scale Towards LGBTIs, developed by Herek in 1988, was conducted by Duyan and Gelbal in 2004. The 5 items of the scale, which consists of ten items in total, are aimed at determining the homosexuality of the women and the remaining 5 items of the men.

Participants are asked to state their opinions by marking the answer that comes closest to them in the 5-point Likert-type question form. Accordingly, the degrees of the items are listed as "I strongly disagree", "I do not agree", "I am undecided", "I agree" and "I totally agree". 4 items in the scale have a positive meaning and 6 items have a negative meaning and the scoring changes accordingly. In the scoring of positive items, the statement "I totally agree" is calculated as "5 points" and the statement "I strongly disagree" is calculated as "1 point". Negative items will be scored with the opposite calculation. High scores obtained from the scale indicate negative attitudes towards homosexuality, while low scores indicate a positive attitude towards homosexuality (Duyan and Gelbal 2004)

4. **Hudson and Ricketts Homophobia Scale:** The original homophobia scale, which was developed by Hudson and Ricketts in 1980 and adapted by Sakallı and Uğurlu in 2001, consists of 25 items (Sakallı and Uğurlu 2002). However, during the adaptation, the Turkish form was arranged as 24 items. The items in the scale were prepared in a 6-point Likert type. The "1" score given to the items represents the expression "strongly disagree", while the "6" score means "I totally agree". The high score obtained from the scale indicates the high level of homophobia. Items 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 23 and 24 in the scale are positive statements and reverse scoring is done.

Data Collection Process

In the period when data will be collected, education in schools continued online, with the announcement of lockdown due to the Covid-19 outbreak. For this reason, while it was planned to collect the data face to face, this process was continued online. In this context, data collection tools were delivered to students via google forms. In order to increase the diversity and quantity of data, data were collected from students enrolled in health sciences between 2019-2021.

Results

A total of 291 students participated in the study, which was conducted to examine the attitudes and views of university students studying at the Faculty of Health Sciences and the School of Health Sciences towards LGBTI+ individuals.

Within the scope of the socio-demographic information of the participants, the findings related to their gender, citizenship and family structure were examined. In this context, 44% of the participants are men and 56% are women.

When the data obtained within the scope of the region, they live in were examined, it was seen that 88% of the participants were of Turkish origin. In addition, it is seen that a majority of 78% grew up in city life.

When we look at the religious beliefs of the participants, 86% stated that they are Muslim, 7% believe only in one creator and do not believe in religion, and 5% are atheists.

When the family structure of the participants is examined, it is remarkable that those who come from family life with many children and 2 children constitute the most crowded group with a rate of 35%.

In order to understand the distribution of socio-economic and educational status on the basis of gender in the family structure of the participants, questions were asked about their parents' education and working life. The results obtained were reflected in harmony with the patriarchal structure, as predicted. Accordingly, 10% of the mothers and 3% of the fathers of the students participating in the study stated that they were illiterate. When we look at university graduation, it is seen that the rates are close to each other, 25% of the mothers and 28% of the fathers have received university education. However, the striking part is that despite this similarity in education levels, there is a gap between the sexes in taking an active part in working life. While 63% of mothers are not in working life, almost all of fathers (99%) are in working life. In this context, it is concluded that women stay away from working life due to patriarchal role distribution even if they receive education and the effects of patriarchal life are dominant in family life.

It was found that 35.8% of the participants in the study had a homosexual friend.

The majority of the participants (67.4%) stated that it would not be a problem for their colleague to be gay. A similar group (65.6%) stated that they would not mind if their manager was gay. Therefore, when the rate of negative attitudes in short-term and non-sharing relationships such as service delivery is compared with the rate of sharing more in an environment, and engaging in a long-term and continuous relationship, it has been observed that negative thoughts increase.

When their attitudes towards the provision of services to homosexual individuals when they become professional staff in the future are evaluated, a significant majority of the participants (81%) stated that they would consider this situation normal, while 18% stated that they had a negative attitude and did not prefer it. Similarly, it was concluded that getting service from a gay professional is not a problem for the vast majority (82%), and 18% do not prefer it.

When the attitudes towards homosexual individuals are examined, it is noteworthy that there is no discrimination on the basis of gender. It was observed that they were equally (73%) tolerant of both male and female homosexuality. Although attitudes towards homosexuality of both sexes are positive, it is a result that can be reached from the answers that female homosexuality is met with more tolerance, albeit with a small margin. The relationship between gender and attitudes towards the idea of working with a gay co-worker was examined and a statistically significant relationship was found ($F=8.749$; $p<0.05$). In other words, it was concluded that men have more negative attitudes than women.

The total score obtained from the results of the scale on attitudes towards lesbians and gays was found to be 33.07 ± 8.75. The total score obtained from the Hudson and Rickets Homophobia Scale was found to be 80.88 ± 27.30. According to the results obtained from the scales, low scores indicate positive attitudes and

high scores indicate negative attitudes. In this context, the results obtained from the Attitudes towards Lesbians and Gays scale show that participants are more likely to exhibit negative attitudes, while the scores they get from the Hudson and Rickets homophobia scale indicate that they adopt more tolerant attitudes. The fact that there is no big difference between the results suggests that people have scores close to the average and that positive attitudes can be increased by increasing their awareness level.

When the questions regarding on homosexual interest toward themselves in Hudson and Rickets Homophobia scale is evaluated, it is noteworthy that the tolerance of individuals towards themselves or their families has decreased. So much so that 62% "I would get angry if someone of my own sex showed sexual interest in me", 60% "I would be annoyed if someone of my own sex showed sexual interest in me", 40.9% "it bothers me if someone of my own sex finds me attractive", 22% "someone of my own sex is attracted to me" showing sexual interest makes me proud" and 40.9% agreed with the statements "it bothers me that people of my own sex find me attractive". On the other hand, similar answers were obtained in the questions about attitudes towards the family: 54.6% stated that they would be disappointed if their child learned that he was homosexual.

It is concluded that the attitudes towards homosexuality in the society are more tolerant than the attitudes towards the family and the individual. Those who state that they are not uncomfortable being in an environment where homosexuals are present make up 56%, while those who are not bothered by going to a bar where homosexuals go make up 54.1%. With the statement that my closest same-sex friend is homosexual, the largest majority, with 44.1%, stated that they were not bothered.

The relationship between the education level of the parents of the students participating in the study and their homophobic attitudes was examined. Accordingly, when the relationship between mother's education level and homophobic attitudes was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically negative low-level correlation (r=-.163; p<0.05). There was no statistically significant difference when looking at the fathers (p>0.05). In other words, based on these findings, it is concluded that as the education level of the mothers increases, the homophobic attitudes of their children decrease.

When the relationship between the gender of the participants in the study and the scores obtained from the Hudson and Rickets Homophobia Scale was examined, a low-level correlation was found statistically positive (r=0.248; p<0.001). Accordingly, it is possible to say that men have more homophobic attitudes than women.

When the homophobia scores obtained were examined, it was seen that whether the participants had a homosexual acquaintance or not had an effect on the level of homophobic attitude. It was concluded that among the people participating in the study, those who have a homosexual friend have lower homophobic attitudes (r= ,402; p<0,001).

When the level of having an active sexual life in the gender focus was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference

(F=27,339; p<0.001). In this context, it was found that almost three times more men (46.5%) than women (17.8%) have an active sexual life.

Discussion

It was tried to understand whether the demographic findings about the family life of the students participating in the study had an effect on their perceptions of gender and sexual orientation; because the family, where we first socialize, has a great importance on the social, emotional and cognitive development of the individual.

When the effect of religious beliefs on homophobic attitudes is examined, it is concluded that Muslims are more homophobic (85%) than those who has another belief. However, the fact that the majority of the students participating in the study believe in Islam inevitably leads to this result. According to the research report conducted by Yıldırım and Yıldız (2022), as religious beliefs and experiences increase, negative attitudes towards homosexual and LGBTI+ groups also increase. There is an important differentiation between those who reveal the practices of believing as well as just believing. In the event that belief and belief are transformed into life, a distant and distant attitude develops against homosexuality and its organizational pursuit, LGBTI+. When belief remains a purely abstract thought, a more flexible, ambiguous and normal perception of homosexuality is observed (Yıldırım and Yıldız 2022).

It has been concluded that women are less involved in business and working life in families where students are raised. Therefore, the relationship between being a member of a traditional patriarchal family and having homophobic attitudes was examined. The tradition is that people establish a control mechanism in social life as an authority, independent of their will and actions. It controls social consent by appointing and managing the functioning of social life in society. Thus, tradition becomes one of the old but timeless basic dynamics of society (Çetin 2005). The formation and traditionalization of the tradition has a strong basis with the emergence of a sacred origin as a reference to itself. Thus, it is interpreted and internalized in a way that completely covers every area that exists in society, and even if it changes, it continues to exist without losing much and enters the process of extinction after a long time (Yılmaz 2005). The codes of the patriarchal structure that dominates in the traditional society are mostly associated with the sacred and the practices that emerge in line with this mentality become legitimate (Korkmaz 2022). In other words, it is legitimized that the roles assigned to men and women in a patriarchal structure continue unchanged and that women take more responsibility at home and stay away from education and working life.

Dominant masculinity values, which claim that homosexuality directly threatens masculinity and therefore is a social moral 'problem' rather than an individual tendency, are embraced by most men without question (Sancar 2011). This adoption has a great role in marginalizing and subordinating gay men (Barutçu 2013). In this context, it can be concluded that homosexuality is not welcomed in a culture where patriarchy is dominant.

Few of the participants stated that they had a gay friend. In other words, according to the results of the study, having a gay friend is effective on having homophobic views. In the report on the research on gender perception in Turkey, 78.1% of the participants state that they would feel uncomfortable and uncomfortable to be or be in a group of LGBTI+ groups. Those who stated that they would not be disturbed were 21.9% (Yıldırım and Yıldız 2022). In an another study conducted with university students, when the homophobia scores obtained were examined, it was seen that whether the participants had a homosexual acquaintance or not had an effect on the level of homophobic attitude (Kara 2018). Allport (1954), in his social relationship hypothesis, stated that if members of different groups communicate with each other and get to know each other, they can see the similarities between them, and in this context, it is possible to reduce the prejudices and therefore conflicts between the groups (Allport et al. 1954). In parallel with this hypothesis, researchers stated that people who have negative attitudes and prejudices towards homosexuals can reduce their own prejudices by communicating with homosexuals. In support of this suggestion, many studies have found that people who have positive communication with homosexuals and also develop social relations have a decrease in homophobic attitudes (Anderssen 2002).

More than half of the participants in the study stated that they would have a positive attitude towards the idea of having a gay colleague. According to a study commissioned by French "High Authority to Combat Discrimination and Promote Equality" (HALDE), working within the framework of the European Parliament's decision to "fight homophobia" dated April 26, 2007, there are between 1.2 and 2 million gay workers or job seekers in France. %40 of them say they have been exposed to homosexuality at least once in the workplace, and %85 say they have been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. Again, a survey of 1,400 homosexuals in France shows that even in France, one of the most sexually free countries in the world, %66 of homosexuals hide their sexual orientation at work (Kaos GL-LGBTİ+ News Portal 2008).

It was learned that the majority of the participants were tolerant in the data obtained about receiving service from a gay professional and providing service to a homosexual patient. It is among the ethical responsibilities of professionals to develop an intervention that is egalitarian and embracing human rights without discrimination. In this way, it contributes to the development of well-being by considering the best interests of individuals. Homosexual individuals are hindered in benefiting from public services and even they cannot receive services or they give up receiving services except in obligatory situations due to discrimination. For example, it is known that 67% of the processes of using mental health services by homosexual individuals result in negative results due to homophobic attitudes (Lambdaistanbul 2006). In a study conducted by Erzeybek Şemi and Uluçaylı (2021), it is revealed that almost half of the social workers in Northern Cyprus (40%) do not remember whether they have received an anti-oppression and discrimination training or have not received such training. They emphasized that this rate is not to be underestimated, as it may pave the way for them to display discriminatory or oppressive attitudes knowingly or unknowingly while in contact

with people in service delivery. When the social needs of LGBTI+s are not met, problems arise such as not being able to access resources (shelter, employment, health, social assistance), pressure and exclusion, insufficient social support, and factors affecting identity development (Buz 2011). In this context, it is recommended to provide trainings focusing on the topics of gender equality, LGBTI+ rights, working with minorities, people who are exposed to violence, oppression and discrimination, for the personnel who will work in the field of health services for LGBTI+s. In addition, it is mentioned that it is important to prepare and distribute resources such as the "LGBTI + Handbook of Rights to Benefit from Health Services" in our existing health institutions in order to increase the awareness and knowledge of the personnel, for the services to be of higher quality and efficiency (Erzeybek Şemi and Uluçaylı 2021).

Considering the attitudes towards homosexuality of both sexes, female homosexuality being more tolerant can be interpreted as the sexuality of two women in the patriarchal structure taking place in masculine fantasies. In addition, the connection between men's homophobic attitudes and not towards women should be evaluated. In the literature, the fact that the society, especially men, thinks that 'lesbianism does not pose any danger, and that they can even appear in the media with pornography as a fantasy material' draws attention to the fact that lesbians are less exposed to exclusion and discrimination compared to other orientations and even more accepted than trans and gay people (Erzeybek Şemi and Uluçaylı 2021, Güner 2015). It can be said that one of the reasons why homophobia has tended to men rather than women throughout history is related to the phallus-centered understanding of sex, which can be expressed as "no penis, no sex" (Baird 2004). While the female body is perceived as a body that can be entered, completed and owned, this is not the case for men. Therefore, while the sexual relationship between two women is perceived as innocent and inconspicuous since there is no phallic situation, the situation is different for men. The sexual intercourse of two men is regarded as intolerable and hateful, as it represents the union of two phallic representations of bodies that are unthinkable to enter (Barutçu 2013). In some studies, it has been found that men have more negative attitudes towards homosexuals of their own gender than women (Herek 1988). In a study conducted with students studying at university in Turkey, the rate of men who stated that they would have negative thoughts towards male athletes who disclosed their homosexuality was found to be higher than the rate of men who stated that they would have negative thoughts towards female athletes who disclosed their homosexuality(Saraç and Toprak 2017). There are studies showing that people who strongly adopt traditional gender roles with a prejudiced and stereotyped perspective on gender roles approach homosexuals with more negative attitudes (Sakallı and Uğurlu 2003).

Although the findings show that homophobia is tolerant, the increase in negative feelings when homosexual attention is directed towards them indicates that they are actually homophobic. This is just an indication that they are trying to suppress their homophobicity. In summary, it can be concluded that there is a homophobic community, but they try to suppress it and pretend to be tolerant. Homophobia literally means the fear of homosexual orientation. It is also an

indication of the prejudiced approach and discriminatory behavior towards this orientation. Homophobic individuals exhibit this attitude towards individuals with a homosexual orientation and also towards LGBTI+ individuals as a whole (Önen et al. 2017). It is necessary to know that homophobic attitude is fed by extreme ideologies such as heterosexism (Özcan Elçi 2018).

In the findings of a study, it was concluded that the participants, who stated that they would react to homosexuality in different ways (such as treatment, embarrassment, disappointment, rejection from adoption) when it comes to their own children, exhibit a more accepting attitude when it comes to others (others' children). This means that most of the society (86.28%) does not approve of different sexual orientations and identities. While a more flexible attitude is developed by evaluating gender equality and homosexuality in terms of freedoms and rights in the abstract, it is seen that they are not treated in the same way in practical relationships (Yıldırım and Yıldız 2022).

The effect of the education level of the parents of the participants in the study on their homophobic attitudes was examined. While it was seen that the education level of the fathers did not have a significant effect, it was concluded that homophobic attitudes also changed in direct proportion to the education level of the mothers. Similar results have been found in the literature. Homophobia scores were higher in males and those with lower parental education levels (Durmuş et al. 2021). An increase in education level makes attitudes towards homosexuals more positive, whereas conservatism increases homophobia (Heaven and Oxman 1999, Herek 1984). With the findings obtained here, it can be concluded that the higher education level of mothers directly affects the society's more tolerant and respectfulness, based on the fact that women are responsible for raising children in patriarchal societies.

It was found that men participating in the study had more homophobic attitudes than women. A study on university students' attitudes towards LGBTI+s, similarly to the results of this study, revealed that male participants had more negative attitudes towards LGBTI+s than female participants (Çelik and Erciyes 2021). In previous studies, it has been reported that attitudes towards gender change according to sex (Gui 2019, Özdemir et al. 2019, Seven 2019, Zuo et al. 2018). Contrary to the study of Kara and Karaca (2022), some studies have found that women's attitudes towards gender roles are more egalitarian than men (Daşlı 2019, Kara 2018, Zuo et al. 2018). In addition to these studies, it has been shown that male university students in the Netherlands have more traditional and stereotypical thoughts about gender compared to female students (Verdonk et al. 2008). In this context, it is possible to say that in the literature review conducted in many studies, studies revealing that men are more homophobic than women (Bakır Ayğar et al. 2015, Ciocca et al. 2017, Costa and Davies 2012, Kara 2018, Nieto-Gutierrez et al. 2019, Şah 2012, Saraç and Toprak 2017, Set and Ergın 2020). When the results of the studies are evaluated together; it is thought that gender alone is not a determining factor in attitudes towards gender (Kara and Karaca 2022). In the study conducted by Durmuş et al in 2021, homophobia scores were found to be higher in men, similar to the results of this study. Looking at the relationship between attitudes towards homosexuality and gender, in parallel

with studies abroad, it was found that female participants had more positive attitudes towards homosexuals than male participants (Duyan and Duyan 2005).

When the level of having an active sexual stage in the gender focus was examined, it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference (F=27,339; p<0.001). In this context, it was found that almost three times more men (46.5%) than women (17.8%) have an active sexual life. It is clearly seen that in the evolution of the family in the historical process, female sexuality was limited over time and continued under the dominance of the male-dominated structure (Adak, 2012). Similarly, studies show that women have less sexual life before marriage than men (Bertan et al. 2007, Giray and Kılıç 2004). Today, sexuality is still considered a taboo subject and oppressive restrictions are imposed on women's lives (Civil and Yıldız 2010, Coşkun and Gökdemirel 1997, Khan 2002). In this context, it is an expected result that women's sexual life is less active compared to men as a result of a patriarchal society.

Conclusions

With this study, in which 291 people participated, it was aimed to reveal the attitudes of university students towards homosexuality. The data obtained regarding the socio-demographic information of the participants reveal that the majority of them are of Turkish origin, have a patriarchal family structure and come from a structure with many children.

The clues about the family structure of the participants were evaluated with the participation of their parents in the working life and education processes. In this context, it has been revealed that women are more disadvantaged than men in both working life and participation in education.

When the responses of the participants about their attitudes towards homosexuality were examined, it was seen that the majority had tolerant attitudes. In addition, it was found that men have more homophobic attitudes than women and that having a gay friend affects attitudes positively. However, on the other hand, the findings that a very large majority will react negatively to a homosexual interest directed towards them, show that they actually internalize homophobic attitudes. In fact, it is understood that they do not internalize the behavior that is considered correct at the cognitive level at the point of putting them into practice and experiencing them.

Based on the results of the study, it is understood that some studies should be done in order for the social structure to evolve into an inclusive perception of the other. In this context, the responsibility of local governments and the government to revise their social and educational policies comes to the fore. It is recommended that classes on social gender equality, sexual identity and orientation be added to the education curricula starting from the pre-school age, and sexual health lessons from the adolescence period. In the university period, it is recommended that courses such as gender equality and sexual health should be included not only with theoretical lectures, but also with institution visits and by organizing conferences with people who have experienced problems in these fields.

On the other hand, it is important to carefully address the intervention processes for disadvantaged groups in the courses on professional ethical values. Increasing both knowledge and awareness levels by organizing in-service trainings for professional staff will also contribute to reducing discriminatory and phobic behaviors. Because as these subjects, which are taboo, myth and unknown, are discussed and learned, it will be understood that they should not be feared. Only in this way will it be possible to provide professional, developing and remedial services by accepting that everyone has a dignity and honor as a human being.

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