

Débora Gomes Salles

The Twitter effect:

The politics of tweeting during the 2018 Brazilian presidential election

Tese de doutorado
Julho de 2020



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO DE JANEIRO
ESCOLA DE COMUNICAÇÃO
INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE INFORMAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIA E TECNOLOGIA
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIA DA INFORMAÇÃO

THE TWITTER EFFECT:
THE POLITICS OF TWEETING DURING THE 2018 BRAZILIAN PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION

Débora Gomes Salles

Rio de Janeiro
2020

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO DE JANEIRO
ESCOLA DE COMUNICAÇÃO
INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE INFORMAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIA E TECNOLOGIA
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM CIÊNCIA DA INFORMAÇÃO

THE TWITTER EFFECT:
THE POLITICS OF TWEETING DURING THE 2018 BRAZILIAN PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION

Débora Gomes Salles

Tese de Doutorado apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciência da Informação, convênio entre o Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia e a Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro/ Escola de Comunicação, como requisito à obtenção do título de Doutora em Ciência da Informação.

Orientador: Prof. Dr^a Rose Marie Santini

Rio de Janeiro
2020

**THE TWITTER EFFECT: THE POLITICS OF TWEETING DURING THE 2018
BRAZILIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

Débora Gomes Salles

Tese de Doutorado apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ciência da Informação, convênio entre o Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia e a Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro/ Escola de Comunicação, como requisito à obtenção do título de Doutora em Ciência da Informação.

Rio de Janeiro, 27 de julho de 2020.

Prof. Dr^a Rose Marie Santini – orientadora

Prof. Dr^a Isabela Kalil - FESPSP

Prof. Dr. Fernando Ferreira – TWIST Systems

Prof. Dr Rodrigo Nunes – PUC/RIO

Prof. Dr. Paulo César Castro – ECO/UFRJ

Prof. Dr. Jorge Biolchini – IBICT

Rio de Janeiro
2020

AGRADECIMENTOS

Agradeço aos meus pais, Ana Lucia e Adalberto, que apesar de não compartilharem desta alegria ao meu lado, sempre buscaram, entre outras coisas, me ensinar o valor do pensamento crítico, do estudo e da perseverança. Obrigada pelo incentivo, dedicação e esforços para que eu pudesse realizar meus sonhos. O amor e a saudade são eternos.

Ao meu irmão Guilherme, meu grande parceiro. Por ser meu ombro amigo, meu principal crítico e melhor amigo. Por acreditar em mim e estar ao meu lado sempre.

À minha saudosa avó Walma, pela confiança que sempre depositou em mim e pelos infinitos desejos de felicidade.

Ao Bruno, pela profusão de afeto e cuidado. Por me mostrar o que é amor todo dia e colorir minha rotina, minha casa, minha vida. Por dividir comigo as aflições e as delícias de escolher estar junto. Obrigada pelo companheirismo, pelas trocas e pela infinita generosidade.

À Marie, por ter sido uma inestimável companhia nessa aventura. Agradeço imensamente o carinho, a paciência, as conversas, as ajudas, as revisões, as orientações. Muito obrigada por tantas oportunidades e por tantas formas diferentes de aprendizado. Nossa amizade e sua confiança inabalável neste projeto sempre me inspiraram, me fazendo acreditar que eu era capaz.

Aos colegas do grupo de pesquisa NetLab, pelo aprendizado e oportunidade de diálogo. Em especial, à Giulia e à Charbe por me ajudarem a segurar essa barra que é gostar de pesquisa.

Aos amigos e amigas, pelo afeto e apoio incondicionais ao longo desses anos. À Margareth, agradeço pelas trocas e parceria.

À equipe da Twist Systems, pela coleta e processamento dos dados, pela ajuda e disponibilidade constantes.

Agradeço à CAPES pela bolsa concedida ao longo destes quatro anos de pesquisa.

Aos membros da banca, a professora Isabela Kalil e os professores Rodrigo Nunes, Fernando Ferreira, Jorge Biolchini e Paulo Cesar Castro, por terem aceitado participar da banca de defesa desta tese, contribuindo e estimulando um trabalho mais completo e rigoroso.

Além dos integrantes da banca final, devo agradecer também aos professores Afonso de Albuquerque e Eduardo Camilo, que participaram da etapa de qualificação da tese, dando sugestões e contribuições valiosas.

RESUMO

Em 2018, Jair Bolsonaro foi eleito presidente brasileiro em meio a acusações de se beneficiar de uma indústria de mentiras disparadas nas mídias sociais. Como político de extrema direita, sua estratégia de comunicação se baseou em discursos agressivos, declarações politicamente incorretas, descréditos à grande mídia e informações enganosas. Vários estudos abordaram sua campanha no Twitter do ponto de vista da propaganda computacional, mas ainda restam questões sobre sua estratégia geral de comunicação na plataforma. Assim, o objetivo dessa investigação é analisar crítica e empiricamente os usos e efeitos do Twitter relacionados à disseminação de narrativas políticas, ao agendamento da imprensa, o enquadramento de conversas e a formação da opinião pública durante a campanha presidencial de 2018. Compreender as funções do Twitter nos permitirá fornecer uma análise consistente de como a plataforma foi adequada para a comunicação populista de Bolsonaro. Coletamos e examinamos mais de 26 milhões de tweets publicados durante as eleições, através de diferentes abordagens metodológicas: análise observacional, análise de conteúdo, análise de discurso e análise de redes sociais. O Twitter, além de funcionar como um meio para as pessoas descontentes se expressarem, também se torna o espaço no qual usuários podem se reunir e formar multidões online partidárias. Durante as eleições brasileiras, a arquitetura do do Twitter permitiu a Bolsonaro se expressar sem a intermediação da mídia e encarnar a voz do oprimido e do não-representado. Neste sentido, argumentamos que a utilização do Twitter pela extrema-direita foi bem sucedida por se basear em uma lógica populista de comunicação online.

Palavras-chave: campanha política, Twitter, Brasil, comunicação populista, opinião pública

ABSTRACT

In 2018, Jair Bolsonaro was elected Brazilian president amid accusations of benefiting from an industry of lies fired off on social media. As a far-right politician, his communication strategy was based on aggressive discourse, politically incorrect statements, discrediting the mainstream media and misleading information. Several studies have approached his Twitter campaign from a computational propaganda and disinformation perspectives, but questions remain about his overall communication strategy on the platform. Thus, the objective of this investigation is to critically and empirically analyze the uses and effects of Twitter related to the dissemination of political narratives, the agenda of the mainstream press, the framing of conversations and the formation of public opinion during the 2018 presidential campaign. Understanding the Twitter roles will allow us to provide a consistent analysis of how the platform was suitable for Bolsonaro's populist communication. We collected and examined more than 26 million tweets published during the elections, using different methodological approaches: observational analysis, content analysis, discourse analysis and social network analysis. Twitter, in addition to acting as a means for disaffected individuals to express themselves, also becomes the space in which users could gather and form partisan online crowds. During the Brazilian elections, Twitter's architecture allowed Bolsonaro to express himself without media intermediation and to embody the voice of the underdog and the unrepresented. In this sense, we argue that the use of Twitter by the extreme right succeeded because it was based on a populist logic of online communication.

Keywords: political campaign, Twitter, Brazil, populist communication, public opinion.

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Election timeline	10
Figure 2 - Opinion polls for the first round (Ibope)	20
Figure 3 - Opinion polls for the first round (Datafolha).....	21
Figure 4 - Opinion polls for the second round (Ibope).....	22
Figure 5 - Opinion polls for the second round (Datafolha)	22
Figure 6 - Candidates' twittering activity, consolidated	34
Figure 7 - Cumulative distribution function of number of tweets for every user.....	35
Figure 8 - Collected tweets per week	37
Figure 9 – Candidates' weekly twittering activity.....	38
Figure 11 – Henrique Meirelles' team reply example	41
Figure 12 - Weekly mentions to candidates (in thousands tweets)	42
Figure 13 - Accounts attack Folha on Twitter	43
Figure 14 - Tweet from Ciro Gomes during the first round	44
Figure 15 - Tweet from Michel Temer mentioning Geraldo Alckmin.....	45
Figure 16 - Tweet from Ana Amelia Lemos mentioning Jair Bolsonaro	46
Figure 17 - Tweets with misogynist content produced by Danilo Gentili.....	47
Figure 18 - Weekly retweets to each candidate.....	48
Figure 19 - Ranking of most used hashtags, by week	49
Figure 20 - Most used hashtags' political bias distribution	50
Figure 21 – Volume of hashtag use, according to political bias (in thousands tweets).....	50
Figure 22 - Example of tweets supporting Jair Bolsonaro with right-wing hashtags.....	51
Figure 23 - Ranking of most shared domains (in thousands tweets).....	52
Figure 24 - Ranking of most active users	55
Figure 25 - Timeline of most shared tweets' publication dates	68
Figure 26 - Authors of most shared tweets.....	69
Figure 27 - Authors' ranking.....	70
Figure 28 - Top 20 most cited personas	71
Figure 29 - Top hashtags' ranking	72
Figure 30 - Tweets' topics.....	73
Figure 31 – Tweets' functions.....	75
Figure 32 - Tweets sentiment analysis	76

Figure 33 - Tweets register, coded according to communication tone.....	77
Figure 34 - Antagonistic discourse articulations	90
Figure 35 - Bolsonaro tweet - citizen of good	92
Figure 36 - Bolsonaro tweet - citizen of good	93
Figure 37 - Haddad's tweet: democratic ideal	94
Figure 38 - Haddad's tweet: democratic ideal	95
Figure 39 - Haddad's understanding of the people	95
Figure 40 - Bolsonaro's understanding of the people	97
Figure 41 - Bolsonaro's understanding of the people	97
Figure 42 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets	99
Figure 43 - Example #2 of Bolsonaro's tweets	100
Figure 44 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets	101
Figure 45 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets	102
Figure 46 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweet	103
Figure 47 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweet	104
Figure 48 - Weekly retweet networks.....	109
Figure 49 - Weekly retweet network	110

INDEX OF TABLES

Table 1 - Candidates TV air time and campaign expenditure	13
Table 2 - Election results	23
Table 3 - Search terms for Twitter data collection	33
Table 4 - Election Timeline in weeks	36
Table 5 - Content analysis categories	66
Table 6 - Representative tweets from left-wing candidates	79
Table 7 - Representative tweets from right-wing candidates	80

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CASE & CONTEXT: AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2018 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN BRAZIL.....	9
1.1. ELECTION BACKGROUND AND TIMELINE.....	9
1.2. MAIN CANDIDATES	12
1.3. OPINION POLLS AND ELECTION RESULTS.....	18
TWEETING THE ELECTIONS: POLITICAL DISCUSSION ON TWITTER DURING THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.....	24
2.1. DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE OF TWITTER AND PLATFORM AFFORDANCES	25
2.2. POLITICAL USES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS ON TWITTER	28
2.3. ACQUISITION OF TWITTER TRACE DATA	33
2.4. THE BRAZILIAN TWITTERSPHERE DURING THE 2018 ELECTIONS	36
2.5. SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES AND POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS.....	56
DELIBERATING OPPOSING AGENDAS: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN POLITICAL DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC OPINION FORMATION THROUGH TWITTER.....	59
3.1. A DELIBERATIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC OPINION.....	60
3.2. CONTENT ANALYSIS	65
3.3. TWEETS CONTENT AND AUTHORSHIP	67
3.4. OPPOSING AGENDAS	78
3.5. MANUFACTURING PREVALENT AND DISRUPTIVE OPINIONS ON TWITTER.....	81
A SUITABLE MEDIA FOR BRAZILIAN POPULISM? TWITTER CAMPAIGN AND NETWORKED HEGEMONY	84
4.1. POPULISM 2.0 AND SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES	85
4.2. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON TWITTER.....	88
4.3. THE SOCIAL MEDIA PRODUCTION OF EMPTY SIGNIFIERS	89
4.4. POPULIST DISCOURSE AND HEGEMONIC LEGITIMATION ON TWITTER	105
4.5. TWEETING IN THE CATBIRD SEAT	111
WHY TWITTER MATTERS?	116
REFERENCES	119

INTRODUCTION

On January 1st 2019, Jair Bolsonaro was inaugurated the new Brazilian president in front of a crowd of supporters reciting an unexpected chant. The crowd yelled unisonous: “Facebook, Facebook, Facebook! WhatsApp, WhatsApp, WhatsApp!” Despite the surprising victory shout, the episode demonstrated the importance social media platforms had among the politician’s supporters (BEAUCHAMP, 2019). They were not fully mistaken since Bolsonaro himself credited his election to his social media campaign (DE ANDRADE; MAIA, 2018a). His coordinated and controversial online efforts, described by the international press as an “industry of lies” (PHILLIPS, 2018), are embedded in a worldwide trend: social media have been increasingly serving the interests of politicians, and often are associated with authoritarian, populist and spurious initiatives.

Increasing scholar attention has been given to the effects of political messages on the electorate’s agenda of priorities, as political figures have heavily relied on media advertising to inform and influence society. This has become even more preeminent since mass media development, voters had more access to candidates because of their mediated presence (MCCOMBS; SHAW, 1972). Information spread by mass media constituted the main contact society effectively had with politicians, making broadcast messages central to democracy. Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948) indicated that the media played a role of social influence as a result of the interests of powerful groups, notably organized business. Media systems shape the views of social reality, linking the public to political policymakers (ROGERS; DEARING, 1988), according to editorial guidelines, assignments selection and news rhetoric.

McCombs and Shaw (1972) have argued that in choosing and displaying news, media outlets played a crucial role in shaping political reality. By forcing attention to certain issues, media messages helped build public images of politicians, especially for those “less involved and less motivated partisans who were heavily dependent on the newspapers for their political news” (MCLEOD; BECKER; BYRNES, 1974, p. 132). The agenda setting hypotheses assumes that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (COHEN,

1963, p. 13). This means that the exposure to political media content creates a hierarchy of importance, influencing the audience to adjust the eminence perceptions of political issues.

Rogers and Dearing (1988) argue while the media creates a public agenda, it can evolve to a policy agenda. Katz and Lazarsfeld (2017) envisioned this process of information spread as a "two-step flow" communication dynamic: the media would firstly circulate the discussion of an issue, which would pass on to opinion leaders by interpersonal exchange. This means that most of what people know about politics would come to them second or third hand, either from the media or from other people (MCCOMBS; SHAW, 1972). Hence, the agenda set by the press would be capable of "indicating which issues are being discussed by the candidates, those that will be discussed by friends in the future, or those that will be used by other voters in their decisions about the candidates, and therefore be the key issues in the campaign" (MCLEOD; BECKER; BYRNES, 1974, p. 140).

As Internet and social media developed, patterns of socioeconomic and political relationships online come to resemble those of the real world (MARGOLIS; RESNICK, 2000). Scholars have been attempting to explore the implications of new media on the political landscape, but given the broadness, novelty and complexity of these consequences, results are often mixed, ungeneralizable and conflicting. As social media becomes progressively ubiquitous, with a significant expansion even by Internet growth standards (GAINOUS; WAGNER, 2014), understanding how these platforms influence the political landscape still remains relevant and necessary.

Our understanding of social media is a critical perspective of the different forms of sociality on the Internet (FUCHS, 2014). In other words, we are concerned with questions of power related to the combination of many media and information and communication technologies embedded in social media platforms. This is especially important since social media has become such an important tool for political campaigning. Although digital platforms have clearly transformed our perspective of political communication and its effects on the public, Dimitrova and Matthes (2018) assert it is difficult to see clear monolithic effects, making it crucial to address the complexities of social media content, use, and effects in innovative ways.

In this scenario it is important to draw attention to the inherent double-sidedness in user participation, since users become simultaneously empowered, productive agents, and a target for companies to exploit. Thus, the comprehensive definition of social media adopted in this thesis is based on Bechman and Lomborg (2013): social media presuppose de-institutionalized, interactive and networked communication, with users regarded as producers.

However, de-institutionalization is only partial, since ownership of the main internet access points is still concentrated within a few international media players. These companies have the power to structure the possibilities and patterns of communication in specific ways, creating different degrees of asymmetric power structures between users and companies.

This means that there is an agenda of research on how the new online media changed the way people communicate between each other and with political actors and institutions. Stromer-Galley (2014) argues that a multi-way communication enabled by social media could make traditionally hierarchical and controlled political campaigns more decentered and thus involve more ordinary users in campaigning activities. However, this does not mean that these technologies have been used in truly democratic ways. Although democracy in the truest sense is about broad participation by the citizenry, with all voices equal, online campaigns have been structured as a means to an end: winning the election for the candidate (STROMER-GALLEY, 2014).

In the political arena, social media has also gained plenty attention due to its potential for indicating public opinion or political support (and the consequent attempts to influence it). As DiGrazia et al. (2013) argue, social media activity can provide a valid indicator of political decision making, when we take into account the attention received by political actors on these platforms and compare it to the other politicians or candidates. Digital trace data has been suggested as a remarkable and versatile set of evidence for the impact of real-world events on society, with some even advocating a predictive power of this data (GAYO-AVELLO, 2013) and with other researchers seeking to measure the public's evolving response to stimuli (ELMER, 2013).

Although interpersonal conversations have always been key to the public sphere, only recently scholars began to observe the parallels between online "buzz" and mass media content (RUSSELL NEUMAN *et al.*, 2014). Communication scholars have recently recognized that social media, due to their convenient and easy-to-use tools for posting content, simplify and facilitate news sharing (KÜMPEL; KARNOWSKI; KEYLING, 2015) and have become a constitutive part of online news distribution and consumption (MITCHELL; PAGE, 2014). Rogstad (2016) argues there are pressing questions about how social media platforms relate to traditional mass media, specially regarding issue salience in each medium.

The notion of intermedia agenda setting discusses the ways media content influences and is influenced by other media content (MCCOMBS, 2004). The relationship between social and traditional media is, in general, reciprocal, but social media still have a limited

power to influence issue salience in legacy media (CONWAY; KENSKI; WANG, 2015). In the networked digital media era, citizen participation in agenda-setting processes has gained weight: a “reverse” agenda setting process was identified on the internet by which social media users, as members of the public sphere, direct attention to an issue in a way that compels the news media to increase coverage (JIANG, 2014; KIM; LEE, 2006; PAPACHARISSI, 2013; SAYRE *et al.*, 2010).

Some authors indicate that social media, and Twitter more specifically, act as a filter and an amplifier for mainstream media content, rather than an alternative news source (ROGSTAD, 2016). This means that symbolic political and ideological messages can be usefully disseminated when packed as relatable culture-grounded content. As Penney (2017b, p. 136) argues, “by lending publicity to favored pieces of journalistic content through various selective forwarding activities (linking, sharing, etc.), citizens contribute to the production and shaping of attention” on particular news stories, reinforcing the common belief in its social relevance. As a selective forwarding and curatorial agency practice, the circulation of news on social media can advance certain political agendas, ideas and interests.

Several political institutions and organizations are attempting to effectively exploit the persuasive power of electronic word of mouth for strategic ends. The connectedness and ubiquity of social media represents an important aspect of the contemporary hybrid media system (CHADWICK, 2013), as this phenomenon relates to the use of Twitter to communicate, obtain and share information and opinions about traditional media, unifying traditional media and online networks. Marketing initiatives have fostered participation by encouraging social media users to share branded viral content in hopes that this peer-to-peer communication will be persuasive. Despite the difficulty in quantifying the impact of public participation in media-based symbolic actions, the pervasiveness of this intermediary motivation may indicate that citizens believe that, to some degree, these political online practices are meaningful (PENNEY, 2017b).

Howard (2005, p. 153) argues, with the internet, “democracy is deeper in terms of the diffusion of rich data about political actors, policy options, and the diversity of actors and opinion in the public sphere. Citizenship is thinner in terms of the ease in which people can become politically expressive without being substantially engaged”. Thus, the assumption that digital media would redistribute power from the traditional political elite to marginalised groups has not been fully confirmed. As contemporary politics seem to be reshaped by algorithms, data analysis, and big data, manipulation strategies have also flourished online.

According to the 2019 Oxford Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation (BRADSHAW; HOWARD, 2019), political actors are using social media to manufacture consensus, automate suppression, and undermine trust in the liberal international order. A combination of different actors including trolls, social bots, sock puppets, fake-news websites, politicians, highly partisan media outlets, mainstream media and foreign governments are playing different roles in producing and sharing disinformation for financial and political gains. There have been a growing number of studies and articles about social bots and computation propaganda in recent years, but researchers are still attempting to develop precise bot detection tools and most studies are still prioritizing technical and conceptual discussions about these agents (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018a).

Several countries have witnessed the spreading of disinformation and manipulation campaigns tied to governments, such as Bangladesh, Iran and Venezuela (FRENKEL; CONGER; ROOSE, 2019). Other nations have suffered foreign online interventions, with the Brexit referendum campaign in the UK and the Trump election in the USA as the most striking examples (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018a; WOOLLEY; HOWARD, 2019). Before this unmistakable wave of algorithmic propaganda (BOLSOVER; HOWARD, 2017), other technical-political initiatives have appeared at the heart of 21st-century politics: in its early days, the internet was seen as a fertile ground for activism. As Garrett (2006) indicates, these new technologies changed the ways in which users communicate, collaborate and demonstrate, since they facilitate the adoption of decentralized, non-hierarchical organizational forms, and make movement-entrepreneur-led activism more feasible.

Propaganda played a troubling role in boosting Jair Bolsonaro into the Brazilian presidency in 2018 (HUNTER; POWER, 2019). Bolsonaro, a far-right fringe figure and longtime legislative backbencher, was elected amid accusations of benefiting from a powerful and coordinated social media campaign intended to discredit his left-wing opponent (PHILLIPS, 2018). Bolsonaro's controversial online efforts to win the Brazilian presidential election have been the subject of investigation (i.e. CAMPOS MELO, 2018; HUNTER; POWER, 2019; ISAAC; ROOSE, 2018; PHILLIPS, 2018). As the candidate credited his election to his social media campaign (DE ANDRADE; MAIA, 2018b), it is important to highlight that officially it did not stand out on online ads (D'AGOSTINO; OLIVEIRA, 2018), but by an apparently "spontaneous" grassroots support.

In a research carried out by our research NetLab (SANTINI; SALLES; TUCCI, 2021), we demonstrated that Jair Bolsonaro used the 2016 municipal election to prepare his communication strategy for the presidential dispute in 2018 by testing potential targets and

narratives. Bolsonaro developed techniques to increase the visibility of his ideas through the targeted use of social media trolls, sockpuppets, cyborgs and bots. These political social media messages exploited pre-existing social tensions, such as fractured social cohesion, reduced trust in institutions and damaged democratic processes. Our results indicated that, at least two years before his presidential victory, Bolsonaro and his family were testing techniques to identify potential voters, monitoring and measuring polarized narratives acceptance and developing “computational politics” (TUFEKCI, 2014) tools. A digital army has been gradually built online to support Jair Bolsonaro, confirming previously published news (GRAGNANI, 2017).

Nonetheless, as stands, literature can still profit from several interrogations regarding how political campaigns are structured and disseminated, such as: How did candidates rely on social media to communicate their messages and to aggregate supporters? How did political actors use social media to influence society’s perceptions? To what extent did the Internet revive civic participation by increasing access to political information? How did online campaigns modify the social perception about political parties and the ways they operate? How relevant were social media platforms for overall communication campaigns? What kind of message and political strategies are being developed in order to shape public opinion? What are the effects of social media in political campaign strategies?

Hence, the main purpose of this thesis is to discuss the uses and effects of Twitter related to the dissemination of political narratives, the agenda of the mainstream press, the framing of conversations and the formation of public opinion during the campaign for the 2018 Brazilian presidential election. Our ultimate objective in understanding Twitter roles is to provide a consistent analysis of how the platform was suitable for Bolsonaro’s populist communication. In order to achieve this main goal, we have defined specific objectives:

- To provide an overview of Twitter political discussion during the elections, describing and characterizing candidates’ performance and relevance on the platform.
- To investigate and interpret popular topics, identifying the relationship between trending content and public opinion, in order to understand how opinions intersect, collide and are formed on Twitter.
- To examine the discursive articulations mobilized by the main campaigns, critically analyzing how Twitter provided an ideal channel for populist discourse.

Several reasons substantiate our choice for Twitter, such as little privacy restriction by its users (ZIMMER; PROFERES, 2014), automated access and extraction of data via the Application Programming Interface (API) (BRUNS; WELLER, 2014), and a rich dataset that enables different research approaches, ranging from statistical through anthropological (WILLIAMS; TERRAS; WARWICK, 2013). In face of Twitter data availability and the volume of works about the platform, we will be able to draw comparisons more easily between our results and the published literature. Twitter is also an interesting case of study due to its relationship to mainstream media, either through its agenda-setting power (SKOGERBØ; KRUMSVIK, 2015), two-step flow function, especially through news sharing (KÜMPEL; KARNOWSKI; KEYLING, 2015) or second screening use (GIGLIETTO; SELVA, 2014).

To achieve the aforementioned aims, the thesis was organized in four chapters. In the next chapter, we will present an overview of the elections, presenting the candidates, the main events and the results. Next, in the second chapter entitled '*The Brazilian elections on Twitter: political discussion during the 2018 presidential campaign*', we will provide a robust and critic description of the electoral discussion, based on the allusions to and posts from the presidential candidates. Our aim is to investigate how the candidates structured and implemented campaign strategies online and how this affected the overall political discussion on Twitter during the 2018 presidential election. We resorted to a mixed-methods approach based on the platforms digital trace data so we could describe and discuss the posts' volume, frequency and main characteristics. We described and discussed user's activities, visibility indicators, as well as temporal tendencies related to the Brazilian presidential elections based on a dataset comprised of 26,013,051 tweets posted by 2.194.471 users.

The third chapter, '*Deliberating opposing agendas: the interplay between political discussion and public opinion formation through Twitter*', is an investigation of popular content shared during the election. Although political discussions have flourished online and political content is more available, democratic advances and practical impacts on policy agenda remain uncertain. There is a pressing need to understand Twitter's potential for political participation and what this means for the active exercise of engaged and informed citizenship. Thus our aim in this chapter is to understand what kind of political discourses and demands were prominent during the 2018 elections in order to interpret the different political narratives explored during the campaign.

Based on a qualitative content analysis, we identified the relationship between popular social media content and public opinion formations through the prism of public deliberation.

The systematic examination and classification of the textual data from Twitter helped us to identify relevant patterns of information and prominent themes. We build a coding scheme to conduct a standardised qualitative content analysis (BRACCIALE; MARTELLA, 2017; ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017), verifying the social, political and topical dimensions of the communication style adopted during the elections. By approaching these topics through content analysis, we articulate them based on the social dominance of divergent demands and opinions.

Having collected textual data and outlined the topics approached, we were able to draw a template for the examination of the key populist discourse articulations involved. A growing body of evidence suggests that the perceived counterparts between social media dynamics and populist discourse are related to a shared structural field. In our forth chapter, '*A suitable media for Brazilian populism? Twitter campaign and networked hegemony*', we aim to understand how populist discourse was established and articulated into hegemonic patterns on Twitter. In order to present the theoretical and methodological assumptions that formed the framework for the analysis of the candidate's, we present a selective overview with some of the key concepts articulated by Laclau regarding populist discourse and discourse theoretical analysis. We described and analysed how run-off's candidates connected diverging demands into antagonistic articulations: rival hegemonic projects were struggling to fix the meaning of aggregated social claims. We finalize discussing his campaign's ability to articulate a set of dispersed struggles, diffused values and fragmented demands into the prevalent opinion.

CHAPTER 1

CASE & CONTEXT: AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2018 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN BRAZIL

In this chapter, we will present some key events of the 2018 election, focusing on the political context of the election, the profiles of main candidates, campaigns' characteristics, the election timeline and main episodes, as well as the opinion polls and voting results. Brazilians went to the polls on 2018 to choose a new president, 27 state governors, 54 senators and nearly 1,600 lawmakers. Brazil's electoral system requires a presidential candidate to win a majority of valid votes - 50 % plus one - to secure an outright victory. If no such result is returned in the first round, a second ballot featuring only the top two first-round runners is held a few weeks later.

1.1. ELECTION BACKGROUND AND TIMELINE

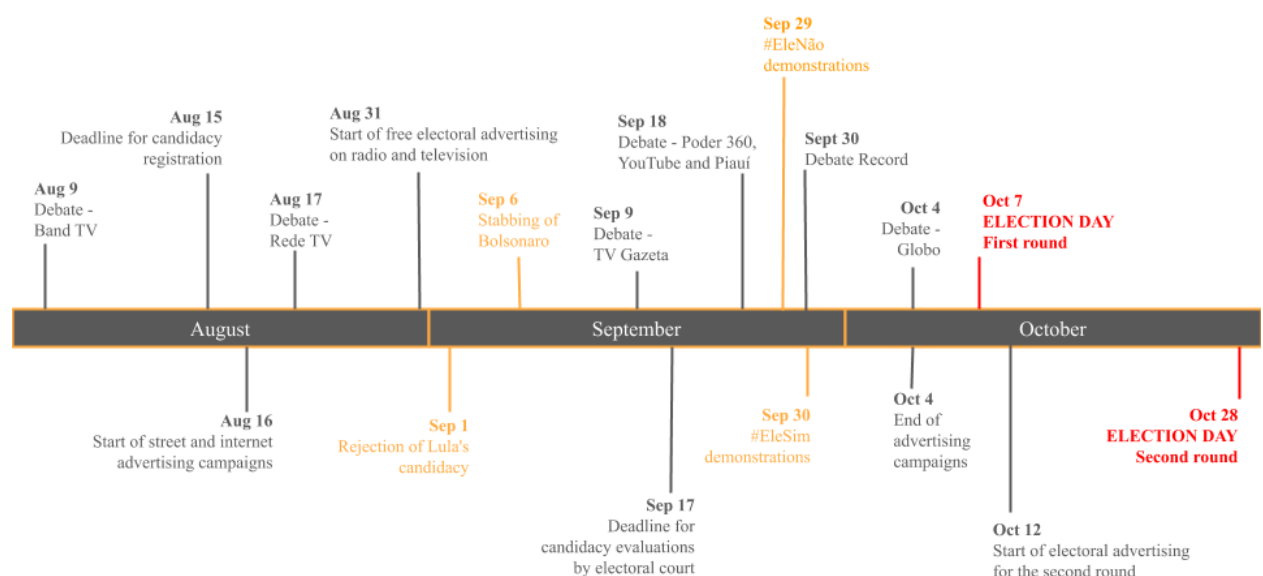
In this section we will provide a brief contextualization and an overview of key moments during the campaign (see Figure 1). Seizing from a global commodities boom, Brazil's economy dramatically rose from 2002 to 2010. When Luis Inácio Lula da Silva left office, millions have been pulled off from poverty and the country had become a prominent player on the world stage. Lula's successor, Dilma Rousseff, became president in 2010 and was re-elected in 2014, making PT Latin America's most consequential leftist party after winning four presidential elections in a row. In 2015, Rousseff began her second administration in a weakened position, with an approval rating of only 9%, amid economic and political crisis (SINGER, 2018).

A more than two-year deep recession has stagnated growth. Soon thereafter, corruption scandals fuelled calls for impeachment. Furthermore, key players from the traditional Brazilian media assumed pro-impeachment editorial stances, attributing corruption scandals

and the economic recession to the figure of the president (VAN DIJK, 2017). On 31 August 2016, Rousseff was removed from office and her vice president, Michel Temer (PMDB), assumed the Presidency of the Republic.

Since 2017, the Brazilian economic crisis increased and the country went through a remarkable political instability amid recurrent corruption scandals. With the economy still struggling and unemployment reaching drastic figures, Michel Temer became the most unpopular president in Brazilian history, turning allied parties into electoral rubble. The operation "Car-Wash" (A QUICK GUIDE TO BRAZIL'S SCANDALS, 2018), a criminal investigation conducted by former federal judge Sergio Moro inspired by Italian "Clean Hands", imprisoned ex-president Lula in April 2018.

Figure 1 - Election timeline



Source: The author.

Lula was barred from running due to a 2010 law, namely Lei da Ficha Limpa (Clean Slate), which prohibits convicted politicians to run for office. From prison, Lula and PT pursued a legal fight against his conviction and the ban that would prevent him to run for office. Whilst waiting for the Court is to rule on it, the party also requested to extend the deadline to register presidential candidates from the 11 September to 17 September. When this appeal was rejected, PT had to face the risk of holding on to Lula's candidacy and be left without a presidential candidate altogether. Haddad was registered as the new candidate for the PT with hours to spare and Lula then published an open letter supporting the new appointed candidate.

Lula's condemnation and arrest prevented him to run in the 2018 presidential election. Sergio Moro, who sentenced Lula, was nominated the Justice Minister of the new Bolsonaro government. In July 2019, the US journalist Glenn Greenwald reported ethical failures on the "Car Wash" operation exposing the content of hacked Telegram conversations between former judge Moro and ex-president Lula's case prosecution team (GREENWALD; POUGY, 2019). The content of the chats revealed that Moro influenced Lula's case prosecutors to indict him.

In the beginning of September, the candidate Jair Bolsonaro was stabbed by a mentally ill man during a demonstration on the streets (MAN WHO STABBED BRAZIL'S LEADER ACQUITTED, 2019). The knife attack made Bolsonaro a new victim and contributed to strengthen his exposure time in major media vehicles in an extremely positive context. Also, the other candidates temporarily halted all criticisms against his. After the incident, Bolsonaro, who was avoiding to appear on the main TV stations, cancelled his participation in all TV debates (AZEVEDO; TRIGUEIRO; MARTINS, 2018), focusing his campaign mostly on social media.

Regarding television debates, the large number of candidacies turned the debates into an inefficient, long, superficial presentation with important actors missing in all occasions. For example, Bolsonaro did attend the first debate, held by Rede Bandeirantes, but no candidate from PT was present, since Lula's request to participate was denied by the Justice. Haddad started to participate as the official candidate in the debate on TV Aparecida. Bolsonaro only participated in the first two debates, claiming his medical condition prevented him from attending.

Acting controversially, he recorded an interview to Record TV, a broadcasting channel owned by a neopentecostal church, to be broadcast simultaneously to the first round's last presidential debate airing time, broadcasted on Globo TV (CERIONI, 2018). When skipping the final television debate of the first round, Bolsonaro was indeed favouring a one-on-one interview, in which he was able to speak freely without his adversaries present. This also made his main opponent Fernando Haddad the target of other candidates present at the debate (BRAZIL ELECTION FRONTRUNNER BOLSONARO SKIPS FINAL DEBATE, [s. d.]).

Bolsonaro's attitudes, tweets and speeches gave rise to a battleground in which progressive citizens were mobilized against a candidate that repeatedly ridiculed and disrespected women, black people, indigenous groups and the LGBT community. The #EleNão demonstrations took ten thousands of protesters to the streets, organized mainly

through online initiatives. As the #EleNão movement grew, it encompassed not only women but also those in defense of democracy and human rights. Nonetheless, the claim ‘not him’ backfired as his supporters articulated a national campaign defending the candidate. The controversial reaction generated also contributed to the reduction of Bolsonaro’s rejection among female voters (KALIL, 2019)

1.2. MAIN CANDIDATES

Before presenting the main candidates, it is important to indicate how campaigns were structured, regarding advertising and expenditure (see Table 1). Electoral campaigns begin after the deadline for candidacy registration can be done in rallies, by displaying posters, by paid spots on the written press and on the internet. Resources and free TV airtime are regulated and distributed by the Electoral Supreme Court (TSE). The quota of each party being proportional to its parliamentary representation: 5% of the total fund is divided equally between all parties registered by TSE and the other 95% is distributed according to the number of votes received in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies.

Regarding the financial aspects, a special fund for financial assistance to elections campaigns (Fundo eleitoral), made up of Union budget allocations, fines, penalties, donations and other financial resources assigned to them by law (TSE, 2018), is used by the parties to sponsor their campaigns. It is estimated that this fund consisted of about R\$1.7 billion in 2018 (CAESAR, 2018). This fund was articulated because political parties claimed that, with the banning of corporate financing, it would be very difficult to afford the costs of the electoral campaigns.

Candidates were also allowed to collect funds through collective financing on the internet. The release of funds, however, was subject to the registration of the candidacy. Individuals can also make donations up to 10% of their gross earnings in the year before the election, with a limit of up to ten minimum wages for each candidate. Donations above this amount are subject to a fine. For the 2018 elections, the total spending limit for the campaign for each candidate was R\$ 70 million. In the campaign for the second round, the spending limit for each candidate will be 50% of the total estimated amount, that is, R\$ 35 million.

In Brazil, the power of social media for influencing voting results is being boosted by recent electoral law reforms. In 2015, the Brazilian Federal Supreme Court decided to prohibit donations from companies and institutions to electoral campaigns (RAMALHO, 2015). Withal, since 2017, the Brazilian Congress has legally authorized the payment for

content promotion in social media by candidates or political parties during their campaigns, and users do not need to follow the pages to receive sponsored posts (VENTURINI, 2018). These two changes combined could turn the internet into the main electoral campaign battlefield. Against this backdrop, Latin America's biggest democracy is becoming more vulnerable to public opinion manipulation, considering the weakness of its democratic tradition and historical relationship with Brazilian media outlets that supported authoritarian regimes in the last century.

Table 1 - Candidates TV air time and campaign expenditure¹

President		Vice-President		Free TV air time	Campaign expenditure
Candidate	Party	Candidate	Party		
Jair Bolsonaro	PSL	Hamilton Mourão	PRTB	0:00:08	R\$2.456.215,03
Fernando Haddad	PT	Manuela D'Ávila	PC do B	0:02:32	R\$37.503.104,50
Ciro Gomes	PDT	Kátia Abreu	PDT	0:00:38	R\$24.359.713,60
Geraldo Alckmin	PSDB	Ana Amélia Lemos	PP	0:05:32	R\$53.350.139,97
João Amoêdo	NOVO	Christian Lohbauer	NOVO	0:00:05	R\$2.884.581,03
Cabo Daciolo	PATRI	Suelene Balduino	PATRI	0:00:08	R\$9.591,37
Henrique Meirelles	MDB	Germano Rigotto	MDB	0:01:55	R\$57.030.000,00
Marina Silva	REDE	Eduardo Jorge	PV	0:00:21	R\$6.740.199,86
Alvaro Dias	PODE	Paulo Rabello	PSC	0:00:40	R\$5.838.391,51
Guilherme Boulos	PSOL	Sônia Guajajara	PSOL	0:00:13	R\$6.441.665,52
Vera Lúcia	PSTU	Hertz Dias	PSTU	0:00:05	R\$548.596,35
José Maria Eymael	DC	Helvio Costa	DC	0:00:08	R\$828.391,87
João Goulart Filho	PPL	Léo Alves	PPL	0:00:05	R\$451.703,49

Source: TSE, 2018.

Campaign time was halved to all candidates and most of them faced a shortage of advertising time on radio and television, as Jair Bolsonaro and João Amoedo. Broadcast advertising is solely permitted within the gratuity time, being expressively forbidden the dissemination of any paid ads on radio or television. Given the plurality of parties and the

¹ Lula's campaign expended R\$19.754.075,53

multi-party system, coalitions are often necessary to guarantee visibility and resources. Among the main candidates, there are several politicians affected by accusations of corruption and internal party disputes, such as Lula and Alckmin. High rejection and lack of popularity were also among the stones in the way of presidential candidates, for example for Fernando Haddad and Cabo Daciolo.

Jair Bolsonaro (1955), PSL - Social Liberal Party

A retired military officer, Jair Bolsonaro served as a member of the Chamber of Deputies for 27 years, with *only two of the 171 bills he submitted becoming law*. His popularity abruptly soared since 2014, as Brazilians lashed out against corruption and the political scenario in the country. Bolsonaro and his family have been using social media ostensibly (three of his five children are also politicians), both as an electoral campaign tool and a routine means of communication with their electorate (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018b). Called by the international press the Trump of the tropics, Bolsonaro has long adopted dubious campaign strategies: aggressive discourse, politically incorrect statements and declarations discrediting mainstream media (BBC, 2018). Both Trump and Bolsonaro were assisted by Steve Bannon and relied deeply on methods of public opinion manipulation on social media.

He ran as a member of the Social Liberal Party (PSL), the ninth political party of his career, which helped PSL to have a 550% expansion from its current representation. Boosted by Bolsonaro's candidacy, 52 candidates from his party were elected. As a far-right fringe politician with no TV airtime, he credited his victory to social media. However his popularity grew after he was stabbed while campaigning, with images of him recovering in a hospital bed inspiring a wave of sympathy nationwide. Bolsonaro's campaign was accused of employing illegal strategies with reports of him benefiting from a powerful disinformation campaign on WhatsApp, illegally financed by business backers (CAMPOS MELO, 2018).

In the 2018 campaign, Bolsonaro pledged to crack down on corruption, blocking the return of PT, which he accuses of being as a corrupt clique of Venezuela-admiring, economically incompetent and morally bankrupt communists commanded by an incarcerated leader (CHILD, 2018). He has rebranded himself during the campaign, as a business-friendly, small-government conservative. Given the economical recession, his pledge of a well-ordered society was intuitively appealing for many Brazilians. Bolsonaro was the leading candidate among Brazil's wealthiest, best-educated voters, promising to violently stamp out crime and corruption.

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (1945), PT - Workers' Party

From humble origins in Pernambuco and with little formal education, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva rose to prominence as a trade union leader in the 1980s, leading major strikes in ABC Paulista and founding the Worker's Party. He began his political career during the redemocratization period, acting as one of the main leaders of Diretas Já movement. Lula won his fourth presidential campaign in 2002, being re-elected in 2006 and serving from 2003 until 2011. During his tenure, the economy boomed and millions of Brazilians rose out of poverty, granting him with an 87 % approval rating by the time he left office.

He has been considered one of the most popular politicians in the world, accumulating several honours and awards. Despite international recognition, Lula was accused of accepting bribes in the Lava Jato corruption scandal, being eventually convicted and imprisoned. He has received steadfast and widespread support against a politically motivated conviction, being the front-runner in opinion polls, regardless of his imprisonment and his candidacy rejection.

His agenda, with proposals to reverse privatizations and the labour reform, institute an emergency program to address the economic crisis and achieve full employment; and reform the tax, banking, education, and judicial systems, was later adopted by Fernando Haddad, initially his running mate and Lula's handpicked replacer. In a letter written in his cell, Lula dropped off the electoral race, stating that he had been "unjustly imprisoned" before asking "all who would vote for me to vote for our friend Fernando Haddad for president" (CORRESPONDENT; PHILLIPS, 2018).

Fernando Haddad (1963), PT – Worker's Party

Pledging an unwavering defence of Lula, Fernando Haddad, was appointed PT's understudy in the presidential race after Lula was officially barred from running (CORRESPONDENT; PHILLIPS, 2018). Haddad, a college professor specialized in Marxist theory, served as education minister for both Lula and Rousseff and as mayor of São Paulo. Haddad's political path focused on expanding access to higher education, fighting homophobia, increasing opportunity and equality in one of the world's largest cities, building bike lanes, and applying harm reduction approaches to addiction (PAGLIARINI, 2018). He defended the continuity and enhancement of the economic and social development achieved during his party's time in power, by reversing the neoliberal economic and social policies implemented under Michel Temer's office.

He stood in for Lula just one month before the first round and, being relatively unknown in the country, based his initial campaign efforts on being Lula's representative, reinforcing the link between them and the former president's achievements. Haddad secured a spot in the runoff after an impressive growth in pre-election opinion polls, mainly due to voters switching allegiances from Lula to Haddad (MONITORING, 2018). However his close links with Lula were simultaneously seen as an asset and as a hindrance: Haddad came in second after not being able to overcome the animosity toward PT, frequently blamed for the recession, high unemployment, deindustrialization and corruption that has gripped the country in recent years (PAGLIARINI, 2018).

Ciro Gomes (1957), PDT - Democratic Labour Party

After having held several political offices, such as finance minister, governor, mayor and congressman, *Ciro Gomes* was not mentioned in corruption investigations, a hot topic during the 2018 campaign, dear to voters in a moment of crisis of representativeness that Brazil is going through. *Ciro Gomes* combined an interventionist economic platform with an uncompromising anti-corruption message, calling himself a "democratic socialist in constant review". His family political power in the northeast region motivates the comparison with an oligarchy, which the candidate counters.

Taking into account the parties to which he has already joined, it is possible to find *Gomes* among the most different ideological lines: from the PDS, on the right, to the PSDB, linked to social democracy, and to the PDT, more associated to the left. In 2018, he had some leftists support, the lowest rejection rate and a electoral base in the northeast region, but his reputation for being prickly and making controversial statements prevented him from rallying more votes (A TRAJETÓRIA DE CIRO GOMES, CANDIDATO DO PDT À PRESIDÊNCIA, [s. d.]).

Geraldo Alckmin (1952), PSDB - Brazilian Social Democracy Party

Alckmin, a three-time governor of São Paulo, had plenty of executive experience and his administrations focused especially on market-friendly economic programs, making him one of the darlings of investors. His lack of charisma made him struggle to peel votes from other candidates, despite his extensive free television ad time. In the largest colligation, *Alckmin* impersonated the leading establishment candidate and he failed to convince citizens

that his gradual attempt to shrink the state, streamline taxes and privatize could scale back political elites and corruption. His voting was surprisingly low and specialists indicated his candidacy was perceived as "more of the same". Some argue that traditional parties were overcame by media personalities, anti-system names and evangelical leaders: linked to the unpopular Temer administration and involved in the complaints of Lava Jato, the PSDB party succumbed to the dominant personalism in these elections (FAGUNDEZ, 2018).

João Amoêdo (1962), NOVO - New Party

Joao Amoêdo, a former investment banker with a life-long career at Itau Unibanco and Citigroup Inc., ran as a classical liberal politician. With plenty supporters among the financial community, the wealthiest candidate in Brazil's presidential race favoured privatizing state-controlled services and companies, reforming labour and pension measures in order to shore up fiscal accounts, and tax code simplification. The New Party founder also defended reducing the number of senators and federal deputies, ending compulsory voting and free political advertising time. Despite proposing a decrease in the role of the State, he promised to keep social programs such as Bolsa Família, as long as they have an "exit door" (INVESTORS LOVE THIS BRAZILIAN CANDIDATE. THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY'LL VOTE FOR HIM, 2018). Backing political renewal, Amoêdo's unexpected fifth place in the presidential race placed him and his party as a new right-wing force (AMOÊDO SURPREENDE E FICA EM QUINTO LUGAR EM SUA ESTREIA, [s. d.]).

Cabo Daciolo (1976), Patriota

Cabo Daciolo, a former fire fighter, presented himself as an ultra-conservative evangelical candidate, exploring eccentricities and fantastical musings. As a fringe name, he spiced up the race with accusations against communist conspiracies and a fasting retreat on a mountain after claiming he had received death threats. Curiously, he started his career in PSOL, a left-wing party, after leading a fire fighters' strike in 2011. After being elected federal deputy in 2014, he was expelled from the party and embraced a religious and conservative posture. Beyond folkloric appearances in the debates, he might have had more of an impact than previous marginal candidates: by running from the extreme right, he could have made Bolsonaro look more moderate and thereby increased the current president's

appeal to undecided voters (A RIGHTWING MAVERICK LIGHTS UP BRAZIL'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, 2018).

Marina Silva (1958), REDE - Sustainability Network

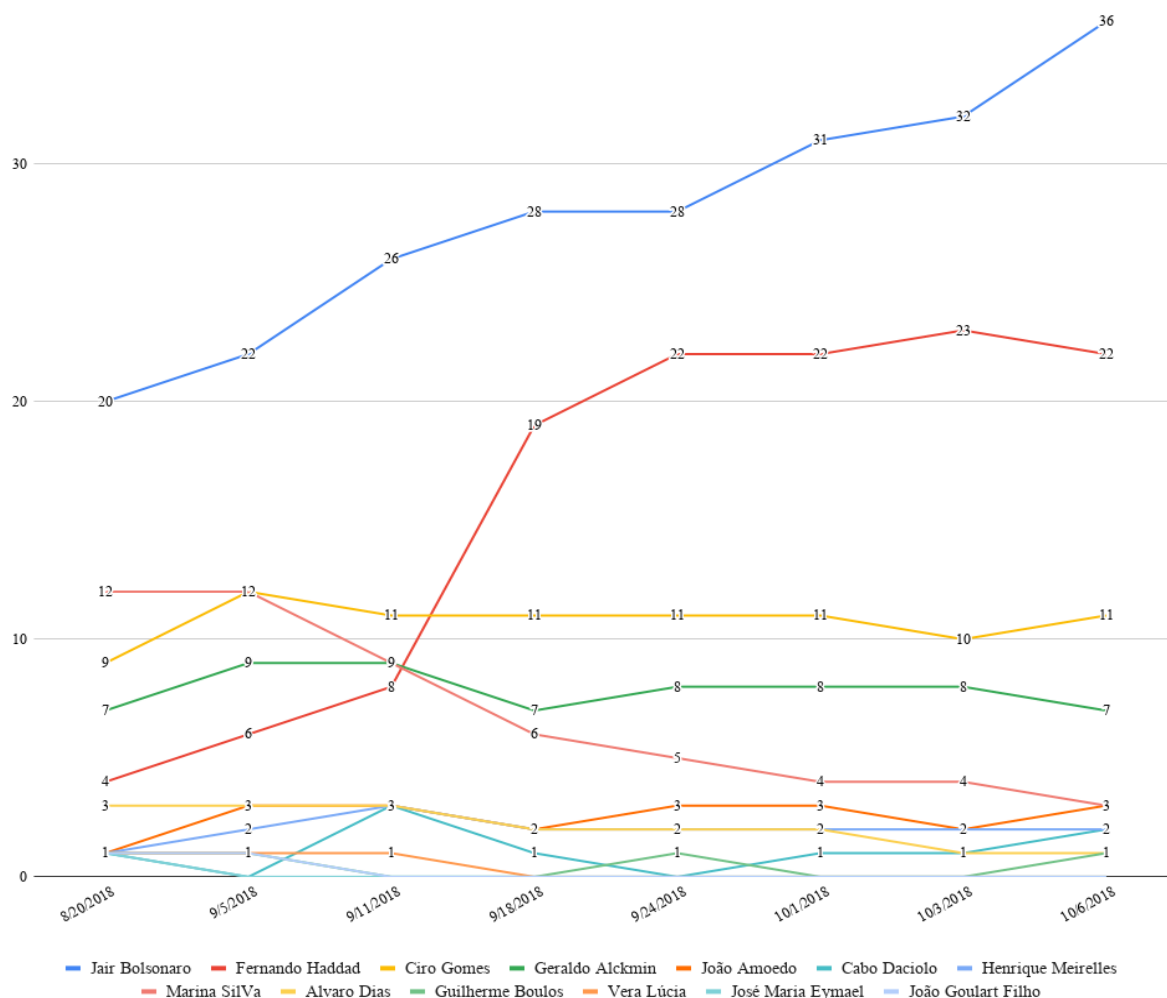
Marina, former environment minister of Lula's administration from 2003 to 2008, ran for president in 2010, 2014 and 2018, missing out on the runoff three times. Seen as a third way between PT and PSDB in the previous elections, when she totalled 19% and 21% of the votes, respectively, Marina bittered an 8th place in 2018. Despite an inspiring life story, religious support, and anti-corruption and anti-establishment message, she struggled to define herself in 2018, beyond her focus on environmental issues. Some have indicated Marina presented herself as an ambiguous candidate, without strong positions, at a time when Brazilians wanted firm positions (URNAS SELAM DERROCADAS HISTÓRICAS DOS TUCANOS E A QUEDA LIVRE DE MARINA SILVA | NOTÍCIAS | EL PAÍS BRASIL, [s. d.]).

1.3. OPINION POLLS AND ELECTION RESULTS

Since the beginning of the electoral campaign on August 16th 2018, more than 300 opinion polls were carried out regarding voting, rejection and political support (ELEIÇÕES 2018: COMO AS PESQUISAS ELEITORAIS INFLUENCIAM A DECISÃO DO VOTO? - BBC NEWS BRASIL, [s. d.])². In this section we will present the polls carried out by Ibope and Datafolha, two of the main research institutes in Brazil³, describing the main candidates performance and final results (see Figure 2 - Opinion polls for the first round (Ibope)

² Entities and companies that carry out public opinion polls related to elections or candidates, for public knowledge, are required, for each poll, to register with the Electoral Justice, up to five days before disclosure.

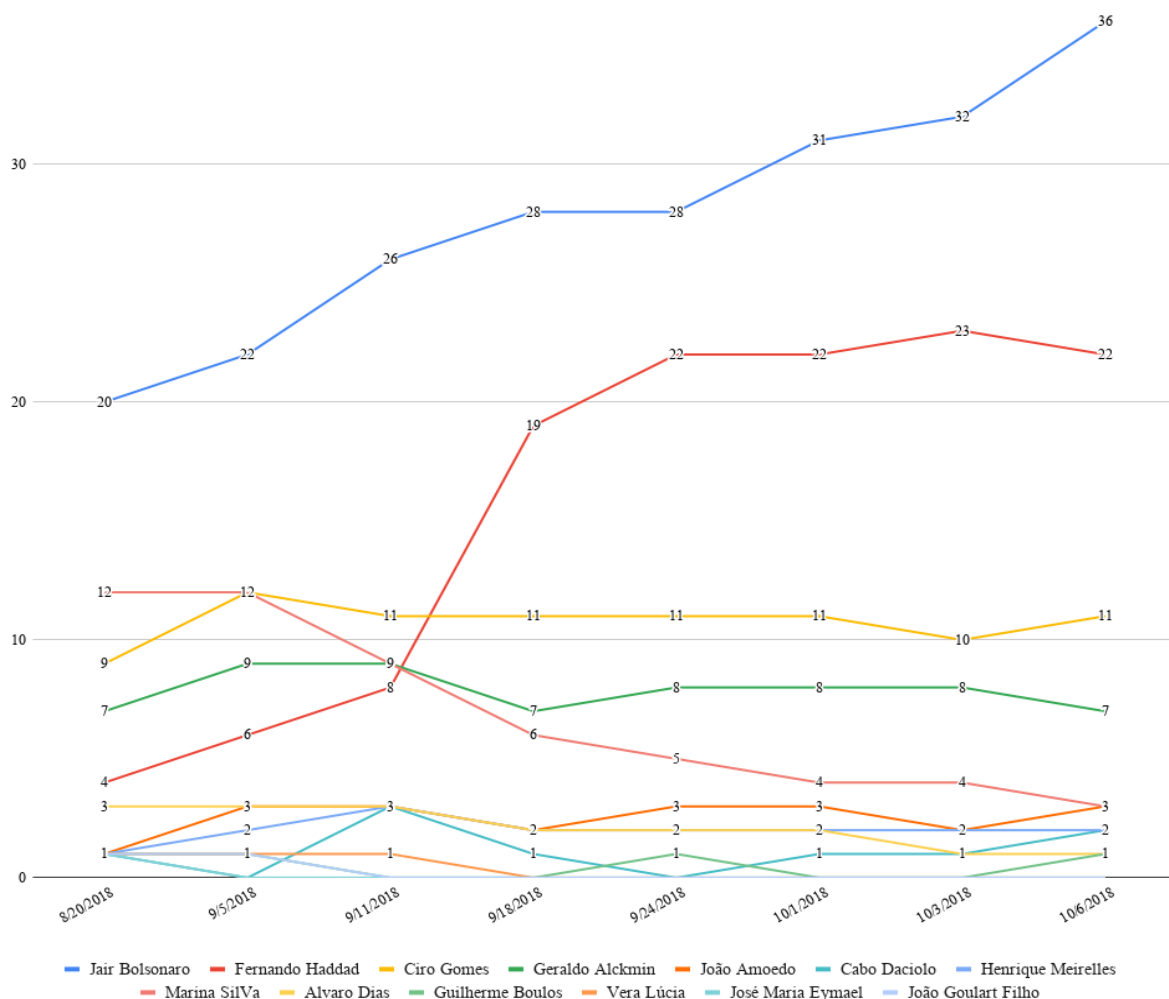
³ Polls carried out still considering Lula as a candidate were not included.



and Figure 3). Jair Bolsonaro was the front-runner since Lula's candidacy rejection. In the early days of the campaign, his rejection increased in the polls, which led him not to participate in debates. After the September 6 attack, his voting intentions began to rise steadily. He managed to maintain the support based on a complete virtual campaign. Without broad partisan articulation, Bolsonaro enjoyed a considerable social media support and spontaneous demonstration from his followers.

After the candidacy registration deadline and the beginning of the campaign, Fernando Haddad had to make up the ground to compete with Jair Bolsonaro, the front-runner. Haddad's main challenge was not only getting a piece of the Lula's voting bloc but also convincing the part of the electorate that was still either undecided or expected to cast a blank or null vote. Blank and void votes are not considered valid by the Electoral Justice System, and therefore discarded for vote counting purposes. His support grew expressively in the following weeks.

Figure 2 - Opinion polls for the first round (Ibope)



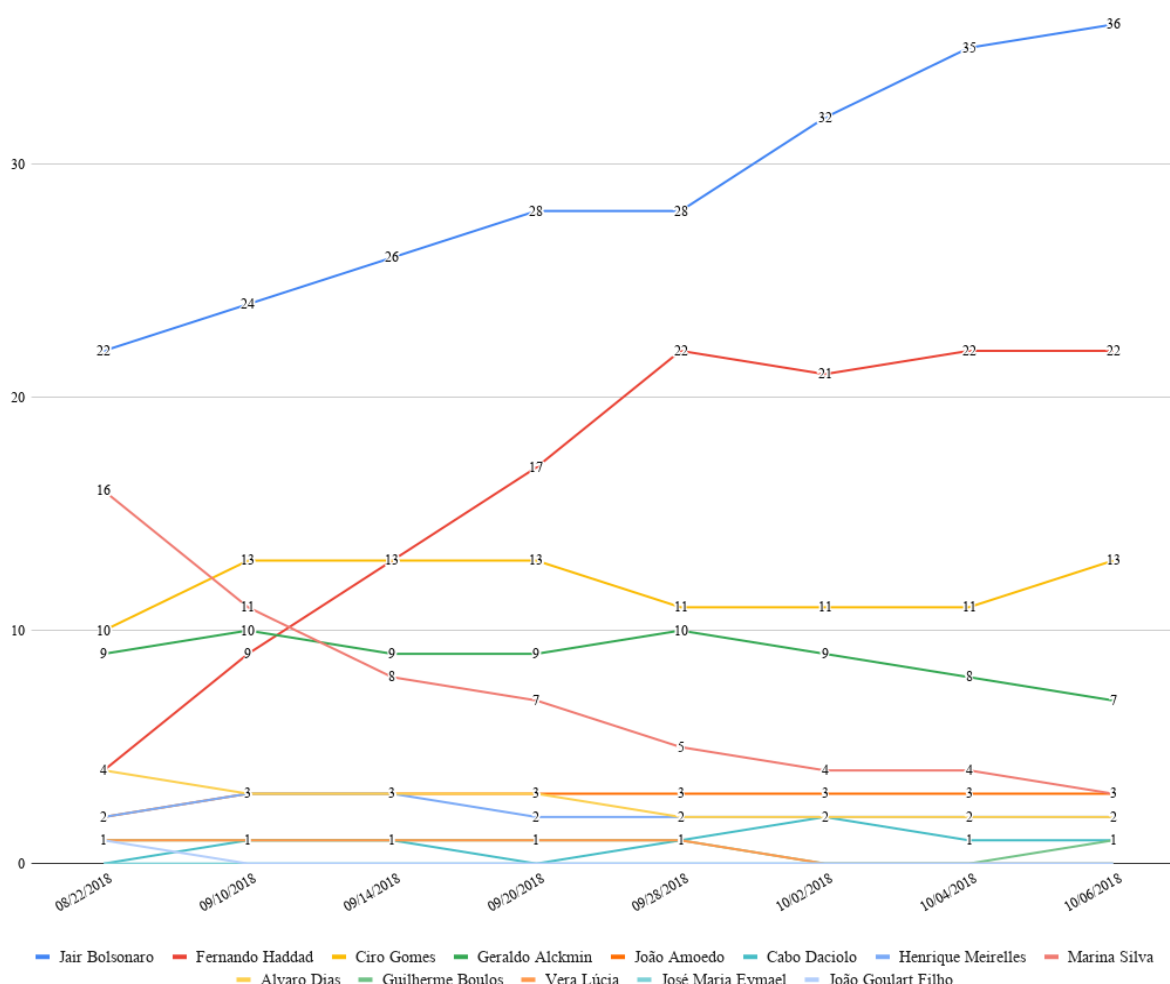
Source: ESTADÃO, 2018.

Ciro Gomes adopted the discourse of being a third way in the electoral race, led by Bolsonaro and Fernando Haddad. In the polls, Gomes was the only candidate who appeared ahead of Bolsonaro in an eventual second round. Regardless of presenting throughout proposals and programs, his fighting chances were hampered not only by reduced party support and television airtime, but also by Lula's political articulation to isolate his candidacy (MOVIMENTO A FAVOR DA UNIÃO DE CENTRO COM CIRO CRESCE NAS REDES, 2018).

Alckmin's candidacy shipwrecked, showing no signs of competitiveness. His campaign was built upon alliances to center parties that guaranteed him almost half the total TV air time, but proximity with Michel Temer's poorly evaluated administration, allegation of involvement in corruption scandals and a weakened party cost him wide-spread public

support. We saw his support stagnate at around 9% since late August, reaching 7% on the Saturday before the election. At the polls, he had 4.76% of the valid votes.

Figure 3 - Opinion polls for the first round (Datafolha)



Source: ESTADÃO, 2018.

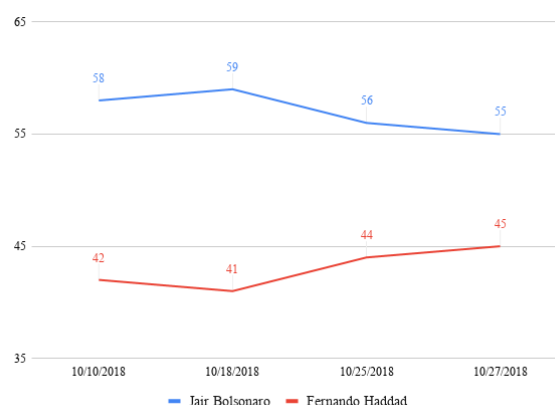
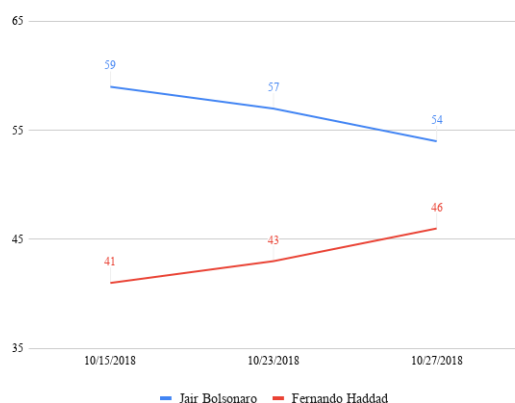
Marina Silva's performance followed an even more dramatic script: she started the campaign as the biggest beneficiary in the case of Lula's absence and second after Bolsonaro, but her support dropped in the polls since the end of August, when it scored 16%. The latest Datafolha poll showed that she had 3% of the electorate's preference. On Sunday, she received 1% of the valid votes. Silva had little resource; both budget and television time, and represented a small party. However her main slip was sitting on the fence: she presented herself as an ambiguous candidate, without strong positions, at a very polarized election.

Despite the negative prognosis, already indicated by Datafolha and Ibope, their performance at the polls was even worse than expected. The figures obtained by Alckmin and Silva might indicate the aching reality of the political centre in these elections. Despite not in the ideological center, both candidates claimed represent “moderate ideologies” squeezed by the polarization between the extreme right of PSL and the left wing of PT, based on the political strength of former President Lula. Other candidates did not have real chances of reaching the second round: Álvaro Dias, Henrique Meirelles, João Amoêdo, Cabo Daciolo, Guilherme Boulos, Vera Lúcia, José Maria Eymael, and João Goulart Filho never exceeded 4% of votes intentions.

Notwithstanding his lead with a great advantage since the beginning of the votes count, in the first-round, Bolsonaro outperformed what polls predicted to win 46% of the votes, almost guaranteeing an outright victory. His defenders were the majority in Brazil's two biggest states, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Haddad earned 29% of votes, with endorsement coming especially from the country's northeast region. Bolsonaro’s party became one of the largest forces in Congress and his sons were elected with outstanding figures.

Figure 4 - Opinion polls for the second round (Ibope)

Figure 5 - Opinion polls for the second round (Datafolha)



Source: ESTADÃO, 2018

In the run-off (see Figure 4 and Figure 5), when the field of thirteen candidates was whittled down to two, defeated politicians had different approaches regarding partisan endorsement for the two remaining candidates. Bolsonaro added to his coalition the PSC and PTB, in addition to competitors to the government of the largest electoral colleges. Most right-wing parties announced they would remain neutral in the dispute, indicating to their

militants' independence to support whomever they wish. Ciro Gomes immediately cited anti-Bolsonaro campaign slogan when talking about the second round, however he refused to publicly declare his vote for Haddad. Marina Silva declared a "critical vote" in Fernando Haddad. On Twitter, Boulos showed his support on Twitter, adding to the explicit endorsement from other left-wing parties. On October 28th, Bolsonaro received 55% of valid votes against PT's candidate Fernando Haddad (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Election results

President		Vice-President		First round		Second round	
Candidate	Party	Candidate	Party	Votes	%	Votes	%
Jair Bolsonaro	PSL	Hamilton Mourão	PRTB	49,276,990	46.03	57,797,847	55.13
Fernando Haddad	PT	Manuela D'Ávila	PC do B	31,342,005	29.28	47,040,906	44.87
Ciro Gomes	PDT	Kátia Abreu	PDT	13,344,366	12.47		
Geraldo Alckmin	PSDB	Ana Amélia Lemos	PP	5,096,349	4.76		
João Amoêdo	NOVO	Christian Lohbauer	NOVO	2,679,744	2.5		
Cabo Daciolo	PATRI	Suelene Balduino	PATRI	1,348,323	1.26		
Henrique Meirelles	MDB	Germano Rigotto	MDB	1,288,948	1.2		
Marina Silva	REDE	Eduardo Jorge	PV	1,069,577	1		
Alvaro Dias	PODE	Paulo Rabello	PSC	859,601	0.8		
Guilherme Boulos	PSOL	Sônia Guajajara	PSOL	617,122	0.58		
Vera Lúcia	PSTU	Hertz Dias	PSTU	55,762	0.05		
José Maria Eymael	DC	Helvio Costa	DC	41,710	0.04		
João Goulart Filho	PPL	Léo Alves	PPL	30,176	0.03		

Source: TSE, 2018

CHAPTER 2

TWEETING THE ELECTIONS: POLITICAL DISCUSSION ON TWITTER DURING THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Political information and informational infrastructure have become an essential asset for success: victories have come from the quality and quantity of data to target voters (HOWARD, 2005). In the political realm, social media have altered who controls information, who consumes information, and how that information is distributed (GAINOUS; WAGNER, 2014). In view of the discussion about platform affordances and their social effects, we should also consider the impact these new networks have on political information availability and access. Launched in 2006, Twitter became known as a platform that facilitates the circulation of information and accelerates critical political discussions, being particularly useful for citizens during elections (ZHENG; SHAHIN, 2018).

However, digital political campaigns should not be seen only as a matter of big data strategies. It takes place as a social practice, as a discursive operation: a rich dynamic among social actors mediates the cultural resonance messages have on social behaviour. Sadler (2017) indicates that citizens produce mental stories as a mechanism for interpreting the meaning of individual tweets in terms of their relationships with other material. For Gainous and Wagner (2014), this is fundamentally related to our understanding of democracy: the idea that people exercise sovereignty through a republican form of governance, “a scheme of representation” that is structured by what people know and how they understand it.

This means that ordinary users make sense of political discussion on Twitter by contextualizing fragmentary tweets within larger narrative configurations and identifying objects of interpretation. This chapter proposes an approach to studying Twitter as a public arena for political communication by characterizing the platform uses in the electoral campaign. In an attempt to sum up the big picture, we will approach digital trace data to

analyze how the technical and social use of the platform has been related to the candidates' campaign discourse during the elections.

Additionally, Twitter plays a key role among social media platforms (ROBISCHON, 2015), specially in the political arena (ISAAC; EMBER, 2017), becoming a pervasive tool in election campaigns (JUNGHERR, 2016). Despite the prevalence of Facebook and Whatsapp, Brazil has the sixth largest Twitter user-base, as of July 2019, with more than 8 million users (STATISTA, 2019). The Brazilian branch of the company reported an increase of 95% compared to the total volume of tweets about elections in 2014, including conversations in the first and second rounds of that year (TWITTER BRASIL, 2018).

According to Twitter, 82% of their Brazilian users relay, in some way, on the platform to learn about politics, and 60% believe that the ideas defended by presidential candidates in their official profiles on the platform can contribute to their decision on who to vote for (TWITTER BRASIL, 2018). By describing and analysing a dataset of 26,013,051 tweets, we will discuss user's activities, visibility indicators, as well as temporal tendencies related to the Brazilian presidential elections. This panoramic overview will allow us to investigate how candidates took advantage of the mass networking capabilities of Twitter and how Bolsonaro successfully employed the platform as a channel for populist appeals.

2.1. DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE OF TWITTER AND PLATFORM AFFORDANCES

Despite a common sense understanding of what is social media, broad scholar attention has been given to conceptualizing these digital mediated platforms (RAINS; BRUNNER, 2015). A widespread classification is of Social Network Sites (SNS), defined as networked communication platforms in which participants "1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-level data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site" (ELLISON; BOYD, 2013, p. 9).

However, this definition is limited, since SNS are only one sub-genre of a larger umbrella of social media platforms (BEER, 2008). We understand that social media are online tools that help bridge the interpersonal-mass media divide (STOYCHEFF *et al.*, 2017) and therefore include other genres, such as microblogs, videosharing websites, virtual forums and social bookmarking websites. In this scenario it is important to draw attention to the inherent double-sidedness in user participation, since users become simultaneously empowered,

productive agents, and a target for companies to exploit.

Thus, we adopt in this investigation a more comprehensive definition, based on Bechman and Lomborg (2013): social media presuppose de-institutionalized, interactive and networked communication, with users regarded as producers. However, de-institutionalization is only partial, since ownership of the main internet access points is still concentrated within a few international media players. These companies have the power to structure the possibilities and patterns of communication in specific ways, creating different degrees of asymmetric power structures between users and companies.

Overall numbers about political engagement on online platforms hide huge disparities between each social media site, candidates, and campaigns (VACCARI; NIELSEN, 2013). Thus, it is crucial to take into account the structural design of these platforms, since they intimately affect human behaviour, impacting on how users interact with, and within, online spaces. We build upon Bossetta's (2018) argument that political communication on social media is mediated by the technical protocols that enable, constrain, and shape user behaviour, that the author designates as a platform's digital architecture. A platform's digital architecture, defined by a written code and programmed algorithms, underpins its affordances and is key to maintain market competitiveness (BEER, 2009; BOSSETTA, 2018; DIJCK; POELL, 2013).

We aim at describing the perceptions of what Twitter enables, along with the actual practices that emerge as people interact with it (KREISS; LAWRENCE; MCGREGOR, 2018), to help us understand the platforms affordances for political and, consequently, user behaviour. To present a conceptual framework of Twitter's digital architecture, we adopt four categories that affect either the political content issued by politicians or the citizens' access to political messages (BOSSETTA, 2018): network structure, functionality, algorithmic filtering, and datafication.

Network structure encompasses searchability, connectivity and privacy to understand how users identify and connect with political accounts. Searchability refers to how users can identify new accounts and subscribe to their content, which is limited on Twitter because a query for a politician's name returns multiple results, including parody accounts, and political or fake accounts share the same layout as the average user. Twitter's connectivity, that defines how connections between accounts are initiated and established, is unidirectional and does not require a user to confirm a requested connection. This feature encourages users to establish ties not necessarily based on no real-life connection. Privacy, which pertains to the ability of users to influence who can identify them through searches as well as how connections interact, is open by default on Twitter (BOSSETTA, 2018).

Functionality is related to the rules of content production, mediation, access and diffusion across a platform and includes hardware, graphical user interface, broadcast feed, supported media and cross-platform integration. Twitter is accessible from multiple types of hardware: desktop computers, tablets, smartphones, and smart watches. The graphical user interface (GUI) defines the layout of a platform's home page, navigation, social buttons available and processes of content diffusion, directly impacting on the broadcast feed, which aggregates, ranks, and displays content on a platform in a streamlined manner. Bossetta (2018) argues Twitter's GUI shows a medium complexity that can be broadened with dashboards: it constrains text to 280 characters, images, links and videos up to 30 seconds, limiting substantial content from debates or media appearances. Regarding cross-platform integration, Twitter does not allow posting to different platforms, but Instagram allows users to share posts across Facebook and Twitter simultaneously.

Algorithmic filtering defines what content users are exposed to, being related to the reach of a post across a broadcast feed or set of networks (BOSSETTA, 2018). Twitter broadcast feed algorithms place more emphasis on the chronological order of posts than on calculated relevance, presenting users with chronologically ordered posts based on their subscriptions. It also offers a Highlights feed on mobile devices, which presents users with more algorithmically filtered content based on relevance. Hashtags are an effective means to index posts outside of one's immediate follower network. The chronologic favouring on feeds grant campaigns a more direct line to subscribers, but also makes reach sensitive to the overall activity on the platform. Social media platforms allow users and campaigns to override algorithmic filtering and to extend reach by offering paid services that boost content to a wider audience based on demographics or interests. Twitter also enables users to diffuse messages across their own networks via sharing and retweeting.

Datafication provides the means for politicians to target voters outside of their existing subscribers, enabling strategists to model audiences who are predicted to be favourable to a particular candidate or persuadable along a certain policy issue. Audiences of individuals are built by combining various forms of data, matching citizens to their social media profiles and then targeting them via the advertising services offered by the platform (BOSSETTA, 2018). Twitter offers a service called "Tailored Audiences", that offers few ad formats outside of promoted tweets, accounts, and trends, being less sophisticated than Facebook's targeting options.

Being crucial to the relationship people have with technology, affordances influence the exact process by which we use these technologies (OZ; ZHENG; CHEN, 2018). Initially,

the recommendation and filtering algorithms defined the advertising that would be offered to us online (PARISER, 2011). With the increase of information flows in the network, these platforms have created algorithms that examine our tastes, interests and habits, as well as how we use the tools available and how we relate to other people. When compiling this information, these filters make custom predictions and assure the consumption of online information occurs in an individualized and exclusive universe

Online platforms, such as Google, Facebook and Twitter, have attained an increasingly prominent position in the overall information environment (NEWMAN, 2019). These companies are commonly seen as neutral and open platforms instead of private for-profit companies despite their ability to shape the overall media environment has granted these a monopolist power (KLEIS NIELSEN; GANTER, 2018) and a central role of intermediating ordinary users and a wide variety of other parties (LUO, 2019). By commenting, retweeting, liking and sharing in massive proportions, social media users can gather into an 'online crowd' of partisan supporters, political communities produced by the neoliberal hyper individualism (GERBAUDO, 2018). There is an aggregation logic embedded in social media algorithms that favors the coalescence of otherwise dispersed social networks, creating new mediation possibilities.

According to David Harvey (1992), significant changes have taken place in the political economy of the twentieth century and have shaped a production paradigm based on information, communication and innovation, where technology plays a central role. These changes affected work processes, consumption habits, geopolitical configurations, state practices, space-time experiences, and cultural and media production. The internet and the advent of the information society, based on networked relationships and experiences, have modified the way people communicate, relate, inform themselves, store data and perform simple everyday tasks. Likewise, contemporary political campaigns depend increasingly on digital and social media, on which we will focus on the next section.

2.2. POLITICAL USES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS ON TWITTER

Since the media became the most important source of political information and politicians must negotiate with media's rules, timing, formats, aims, production logics, and constraints (STRÖMBÄCK, 2008), we can argue politics and political participation have become mediated. A mediatiized public sphere is constructed by the media activity: acting as gatekeepers that select what and who is newsworthy and deciding in what frame to construct

the political images. Media outlets act on two different fronts: framing the public sphere and setting the agenda, both public and political (MAZZOLENI; SCHULZ, 1999).

Strömbäck (2008) argues that mediated politics is not a new phenomenon, inasmuch as politics experienced through interpersonal communication or directly by the people has been deeply influenced by broadcasting and press activity. The novelty lies in the intensity of mediated political experiences. The process of political mediatization consists of the increasing dependency of political institutions on mass media. The media has exerted expanding influence over people's perceptions and over political institutions (MAZZOLENI; SCHULZ, 1999), which involves the question of whether the media complex endangers the functioning of the democratic process

This mediatization process was deeply affected by the rise of the Internet, inspiring conflicting visions of its possibilities and risks. While some authors have seen the new media as a deliberative space that could inspire an “electronic democracy” (STREET, 1997), some have questioned whether the Internet could change the political dependency on the media (STRÖMBÄCK, 2008), while others maintained that new technologies would stimulate citizen activity by promoting spaces for personal expression (KLING, 1996). These new technologies provided tools that broadened the role of the public in the social and political arena and its effects have been questioned from a broad range of perspectives.

The promises surrounding the Internet and the revival of the public sphere faced initial curtails regarding information access, but soon these issues proved to be a minor limitation since access did not ensure increased political activity or enlightened political discourse (PAPACHARISSI, 2002). Democratic advances and practical impacts on the policy agenda remain utopic, especially because users feedback and participation do not guarantee a fair, representative, and egalitarian public sphere (DAHLBERG, 2007; WOJCIESZAK; MUTZ, 2009). As Garrett (2006) indicates, new technologies changed the ways in which activists communicate, collaborate and demonstrate, as they facilitate the adoption of decentralized, non-hierarchical organizational forms, and make movement-entrepreneur-led activism more feasible.

The internet has been constituted as a forum for deliberation, but had failed to promote a democratic exchange of ideas and opinions, producing two divergent perspectives regarding the power distribution among political players online flourished (GIBSON; MCALLISTER, 2015). Whereas some scholars argue that social media could give voice to smaller parties and marginal politicians, defending a position known as the equalization hypothesis (GIBSON; WARD, 1998), other researches indicate the internet reinforces incumbents advantages,

supporting the normalization thesis (MARGOLIS; RESNICK, 2000). Still, evidences about the power balance replication or democratization online are not generalizable and results have been mixed (BOULIANNE, 2009).

Digital media did reduce the cost of information dissemination and lowered barriers to organizing political campaigns, providing less resourceful or otherwise unknown politicians new communication opportunities (YANG; KIM, 2017). This means that those who were marginalized by mainstream and broadcast media, could use new media as a potential game-changer in politics (LARSSON; MOE, 2014). Nonetheless, campaign resources, incumbency advantage, mainstream media attention and campaign professionalism still have great impact on candidates' popularity (VACCARI; NIELSEN, 2013), indicating that the enduring equalization belief in research on digital politics might be overstated (YANG; KIM, 2017).

In the 2010's, new phenomena refuelled the academic interest in how social media affects citizens' participation in civic and political life. As Boulianne (2015) argues, the Arab Spring in 2011 revitalized the discussions about the effects of social media on society's engagement in political events. Simultaneously, the Obama 2008 and 2012 campaigns explored new strategies in the political arena and changed the logics of propaganda by providing possibilities for information production and dissemination, as well as data analysis and targeting efforts. Social media studies comprise discussions about citizens' engagement, dealing with the intensity and forms of adoption of social media by ordinary users and how this affects political knowledge and participation. Researches, such as Nielsen (2011), Dimitrova, Shehata, Strömbäck and Nord (2014), and Neyazi, Kumar and Semetko (2016), are interested in the internet's potential for political mobilization and what this means for the active exercise of engaged citizenship.

As social media use became pervasive, the ways consumers relate and interact with legacy media have also shifted, presenting both challenges and opportunities for media elites, not yet accustomed to sharing the role of content producer and knowledge broker (NEE; DOZIER, 2017). Recent research have been concerned with new directions for organizing and categorizing the actors who compete for visibility and virality on social media: we are witnessing a process in which traditional media elites adapt and protect some of their previous centrality, but are challenged by emerging and disruptive actors (ALVES DOS SANTOS JUNIOR; ALBUQUERQUE, 2019).

As Giglietto and Selva (2014) indicate the relationship between Twitter and traditional media is symbiotic, with an increasing number of studies dealing with the practice of using the platform as a real-time backchannel for broadcasting comments while watching a TV

program. Relations between mainstream broadcast and social media focus primarily on agenda setting and framing issues. In a different perspective, Zhang, Wells, Wang and Rohe (2018) develop the concept of amplification to investigate how Trump's followers contributed to his success at attracting media attention, including the mainstream press. They also discuss how journalists draw on social media metrics in their determinations of news value and worthiness, and how the process of amplification relates to possibilities of citizen action through digital communication.

Campaigns can be scrutinized by paying attention to the messages spread online, either of its format or its content. A common issue is related to style of speech, with investigations focusing on degree of persuasion, informality and viral potential of candidates' posts. Other researchers focus on messages sent by citizens, questioning how users participate in positive and negative campaigns online (HOSCH-DAYICAN *et al.*, 2016). Campaign strategy and marketing can also be investigated by questioning what are the functions of each online platform in overall campaigning, such as broadcast messages, mobilize partisans, manage the candidate's or party's image, or complement other campaign material.

A wide range of articles take political parties as an analytical variable, for example, when comparing the type of online behaviour each organization has during the elections and the parties' political and historical profiles (LÓPEZ-GARCÍA, 2016). The researches also discuss the impact social media has on the parties structural organization, discussing for instance, how a new grassroots-based mode of citizen-initiated campaigning' is being introduced by digital media. These campaigns challenge dominant professionalized model of campaign management by devolving power over core tasks to the grassroots (GIBSON, 2015).

Recent studies have advocated for the predictive power of Twitter data, due to the ability of social media data to monitor and record social trends (METAXAS; MUSTAFARAJ; GAYO-AVELLO, 2011). However, Gayo-Avello (2013) indicate that, although a growing body of literature suggest that Twitter data offer remarkable predictive power, some doubts should be cast on the feasibility of forecasting elections with social media material. The author indicates that this predictive possibility has been overstated, since several studies made immoderate claims based on troublesome evidence, naïve methods and arbitrary research decisions. Additionally, the scientific community has often taken positive results out of context and overestimating their replicability.

Social media platforms have been exploited to spread anger, polarization, and fear, leading us to a hostile atmosphere for democratic and progressive values. Some recent studies

deal with different forms of manipulative actions online, ranging from fake news, disinformation, contagion and moral panics and trolling (ABRIL, 2016; CARLSON, 2018; DEL VALLE *et al.*, 2018). The articles focus on the spread of false and disruptive messages on social media, as well as the consequences of these types of orchestrated actions for political process and the trust in democratic institutions.

As we have showed, the growing pervasiveness of social media use for political purposes has always kept this topic in a cornerstone position. Currently, the relations between media and politics activate more complexity, multiplicity, variety and crosscurrents, locating Twitter as a central tool in disseminating and gathering campaign information. Thus, we adopt the theoretical framework of hybrid media systems by Chadwick (2013), assuming that the contemporary media landscape is composed of an intricate interlacing between traditional and emerging logics.

Hybridity here stands for the simultaneous adaptation of traditional media and political actors to the digital environment alongside the emergence of new actors, describing a multifaceted communicational scenario. In the hybrid media system, traditional and digital native vehicles coexist and compete for space, redefining previously established power logics (CHADWICK, 2013). Traditional media outlets are now dealing with power relationships in which they don't have the same leverage they once did (VOS; RUSSELL, 2019). In the current scenario of political communication, hybridization involves intermixing and blending on all its levels: communication structure, modes of actor involvement, media logics, production processes, message contents and citizens' communication diets (BLUMLER, 2016).

In an environment of communication abundance, ubiquity, reach and celerity, the media has been making politics more palatable and acceptable to the audience, mixing information and entertainment based on spectacularization and personalisation dynamics. Politicians exploit mediatization through a communication style based on popular idiom and on intimisation. As Bracciale and Martella (2017) indicate, a kind of soft populism arises, anchored on a direct and simple communication framing that paradoxically creates identification between political leaders and the people and underscores the distance between them. Scholars have been attempting to explore the implications of new media on the political landscape, but given the broadness, novelty and complexity of these consequences, results are often mixed, ungeneralizable and conflicting. Inasmuch, understanding how these platforms influence the political landscape still remains relevant and necessary.

2.3. ACQUISITION OF TWITTER TRACE DATA

In the present chapter, our aim is to investigate how the candidates structured and implemented campaign strategies online and how this affected the overall political discussion on Twitter during the 2018 presidential election. We resorted to a mixed-methods approach based on digital trace data so we could describe and discuss the posts' volume, frequency and main characteristics. In order to provide more depth to the analysis about the uses of Twitter affordances during the elections, both by the candidates and the whole Twittersphere, the descriptive analysis will be supplemented by qualitative examples.

Table 3 - Search terms for Twitter data collection

Coalition number	Candidate's name	Twitter search terms
17	Jair Bolsonaro	bolsonaro, @jaibolsonaro
	Hamilton Mourão	hamilton mourao, gen mourao, general mourao
50	Guilherme Boulos	boulos, @GuilhermeBoulos
	Sônia Guajajara	Sonia Guajajara, @GuajajaraSonia
15	Henrique Meirelles	henrique meirelles, @meirelles
	Germano Rigotto	germano rigotto, @rigotto
18	Marina Silva	marina silva, @MarinaSilva
	Eduardo Jorge	eduardo jorge, @EduardoJorge43
45	Geraldo Alckmin	alckmin, @geraldoalckmin
	Ana Amélia	ana amelia -anaameliamello5, @anaamelialemos
51	Cabo Daciolo	daciolo, @CaboDaciolo
	Suelene Balduino Nascimento	
30	João Amoêdo	amoedo, @joaoamoedonovo
	Christian Lohbauer	christian lohbauer
13	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva	lula, @LulaOficial
	Fernando Haddad	haddad, @Haddad_Fernando
	Manuela D'Ávila	manuela davila, @ManuelaDavila
16	Vera Lúcia	@verapstu
	Hertz Dias	"Hertz Dias"
12	Ciro Gomes	ciro gomes, @cirogomes
	Kátia Abreu	katia abreu, @KatiaAbreu

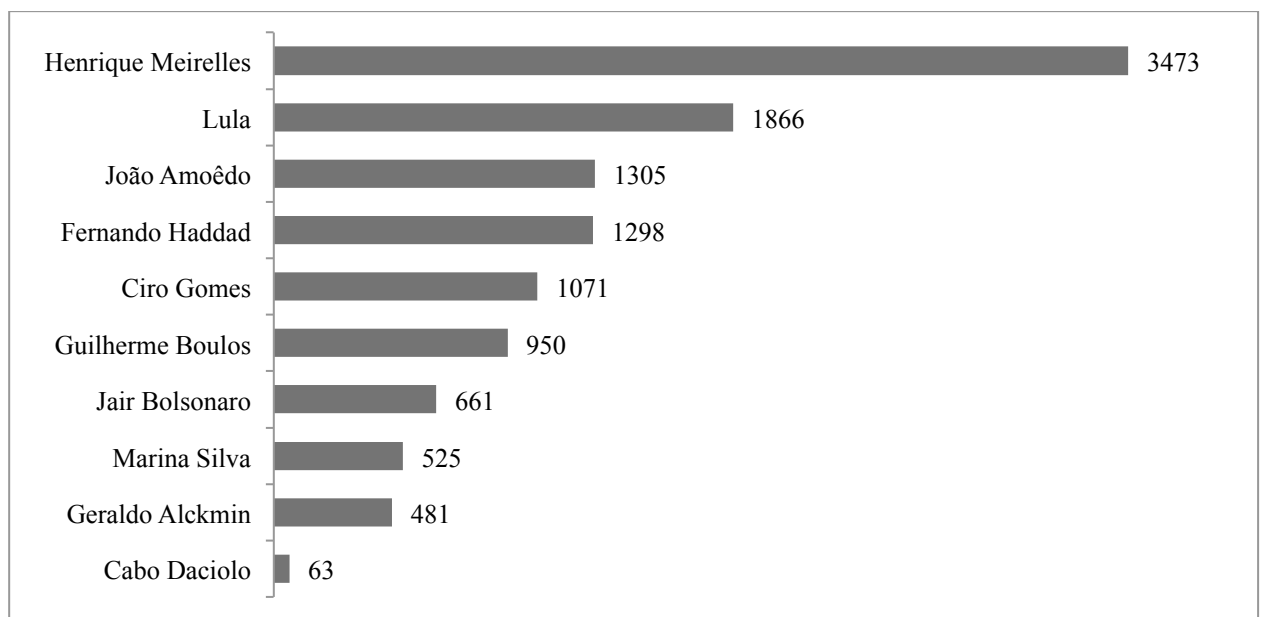
Source: TWIST Systems.

Data acquisition for the present investigation was based on the electoral campaign period, encompassing both election rounds. Based on keywords focusing on the main candidates (see Table 3), our searches were carried out between August 13th, 2018 and

November 4th, 2018. The continuous collection allowed us to build a dataset of 26,013,051 tweets posted by 2.194.471 users. By scraping candidates' feeds, we also collected their twittering activity during the same period (see Figure 6).

According to Twitter (2018), between October 8th and 26th 2018, 77 million tweets related to the elections were recorded on the platform. Twitter's public streaming API allows access to a random sample of approximately 1% of public content published, and, although the company states the sample collected by the free API solution is statistically representative, data auditing is unfeasible (MORSTATTER *et al.*, 2013). Thus we do not claim that our study comprises a representative sample of the Twitterspehere, but rather a robust and critic description of the electoral discussion, based on the allusions to and posts from the presidential candidates.

Figure 6 - Candidates' twittering activity, consolidated

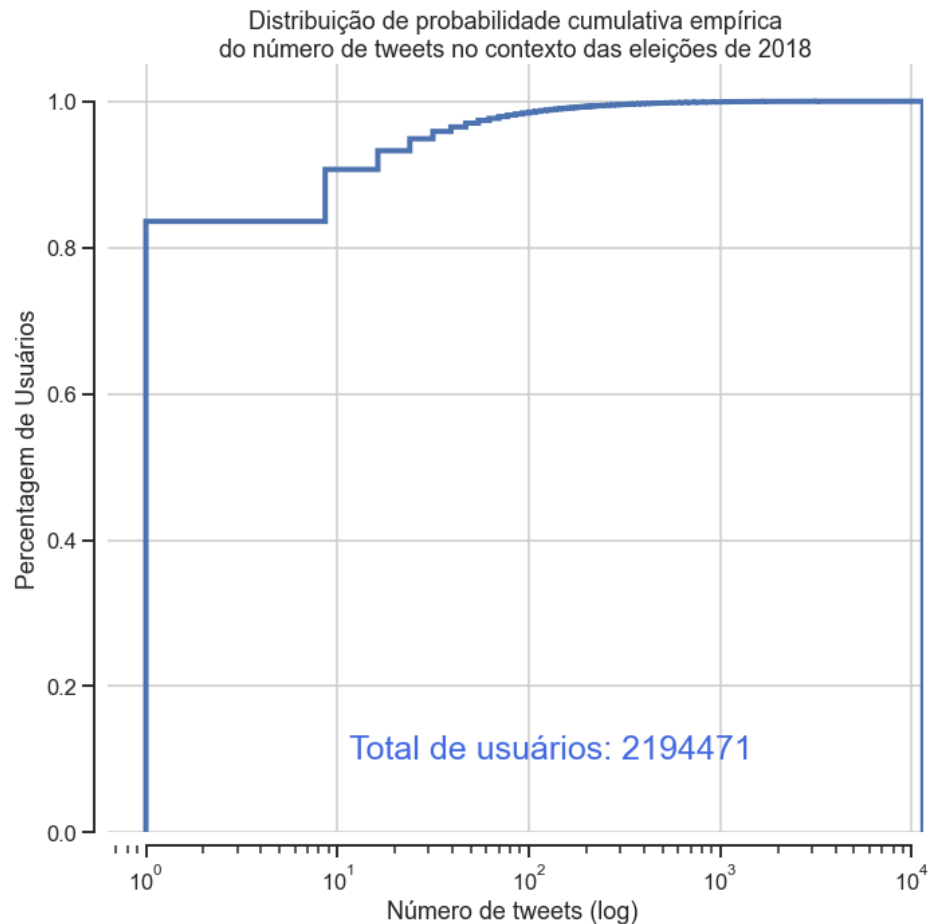


Source: The author.

shows the distribution of the number of tweets sent by each user. In order to alleviate the logarithmic scale, we plotted the cumulative volume rather than individual volumes (KILKKI, 2007). This visualization enabled us to see that our dataset exemplifies a very long tail, in which nearly 80% of users active in our dataset more only posted one tweet each. As the striking minority of users posted more than 100 tweets, we can say that, regarding the political discussion during the elections, content production was concentrated in a vocal

majority. Our findings indicate that, despite a large base of users, few social actors were indeed influencing the public agenda on Twitter.

Figure 7 - Cumulative distribution function of number of tweets for every user



Source: TWIST Systems.

As we have argued, data collected from social media in general, and from Twitter more specifically, have been used in different political and communication studies, because they provide an image of political reality useful and central to the performance, coverage, and analysis of politics (CHADWICK, 2013). Notwithstanding, we acknowledge some limitations on choosing Twitter as our empirical data source, such as its lower penetration and user numbers, when compared to Facebook (MOLINA, 2017), what can compromise the representativeness of the data in relation to social media audience in general. The Twittersphere is said to be comprised by a vocal minority and a voyeur silent majority (MUSTAFARAJ *et al.*, 2011).

2.4. THE BRAZILIAN TWITTERSPHERE DURING THE 2018 ELECTIONS

In this section, we will provide an overview of the 26,013,051 tweets we collected during the election campaign. To guarantee the study was both manageable and meaningful, we consolidated our analysis in weeks (see week counting and main events in Table 4). As Figure 8 indicates, there is a clear peak with more than three millions tweets posted during week 40, that ranged from October 1, 2018 to October 7, 2018. This activity corresponds with several important events of the elections, such as the final two televised presidential debates, Jair Bolsonaro's interview to Rede Record and the first round of elections. There seems to be a close relationship between offline events, the media coverage and the Brazilian political Twittersphere. This interplay between Twitter and traditional mass media regarding election talk is in line several previous studies (GRAHAM *et al.*, 2013; LARSSON; MOE, 2012).

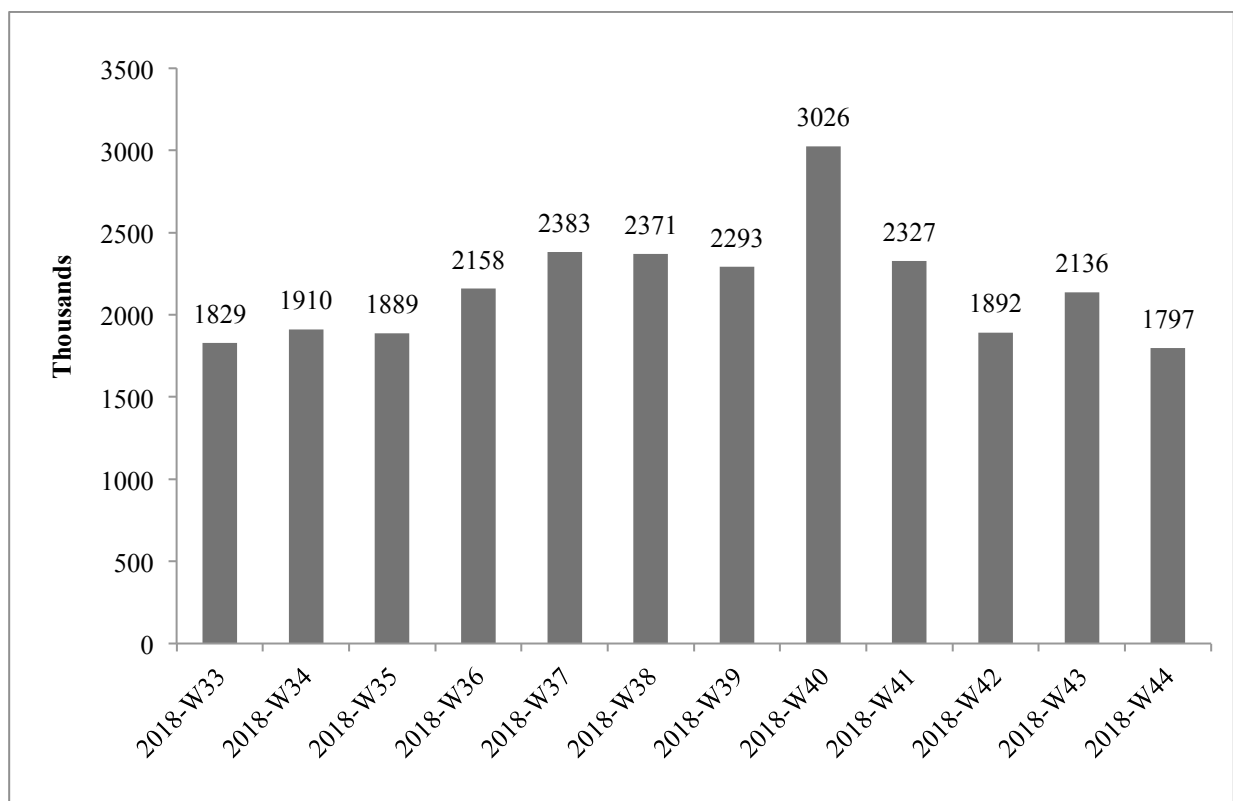
Table 4 - Election Timeline in weeks

Week 33	August 13, 2018	August 19, 2018	Debate- Rede TV
Week 34	August 20, 2018	August 26, 2018	Paulo Guedes interview on Globonews
Week 35	August 27, 2018	September 2, 2018	Jair Bolsonaro on Jornal Nacional
Week 36	September 3, 2018	September 9, 2018	Knife attack against Bolsonaro
Week 37	September 10, 2018	September 16, 2018	
Week 38	September 17, 2018	September 23, 2018	Debate – TV Aparecida
Week 39	September 24, 2018	September 30, 2018	Debate – SBT #Elenão #Elesim
Week 40	October 1, 2018	October 7, 2018	Debate – Record Debate – TV Globo Jair Bolsonaro interview on Record First round
Week 41	October 8, 2018	October 14, 2018	
Week 42	October 15, 2018	October 21, 2018	Whatsappgate
Week 43	October 22, 2018	October 28, 2018	Second round
Week 44	October 29, 2018	November 4, 2018	

Source: The author.

When we further examine the tweet count per week, we find that, during the first round (W33-W40), the average of tweets per week was 10% higher than during the second round (W41-W44). This could be explained by the general decrease of candidates' twittering activity after the polling. As seen in Figure 9, during the run-off, politicians such as Henrique Meirelles, Geraldo Alckmin, Ciro Gomes and Maria Silva, practically stopped their posting activity. Fernando Haddad activity grew steadily during the campaign, being intensified during the second round. Guilherme Boulos and Lula, whose averages remained stable throughout the campaign, directly supported Haddad and together the three politicians accounted for 70% of candidates' twittering activities during the second round. Bolsonaro's posts also escalated in the run-off, doubling his average after the first stage of voting.

Figure 8 - Collected tweets per week



Source: The author.

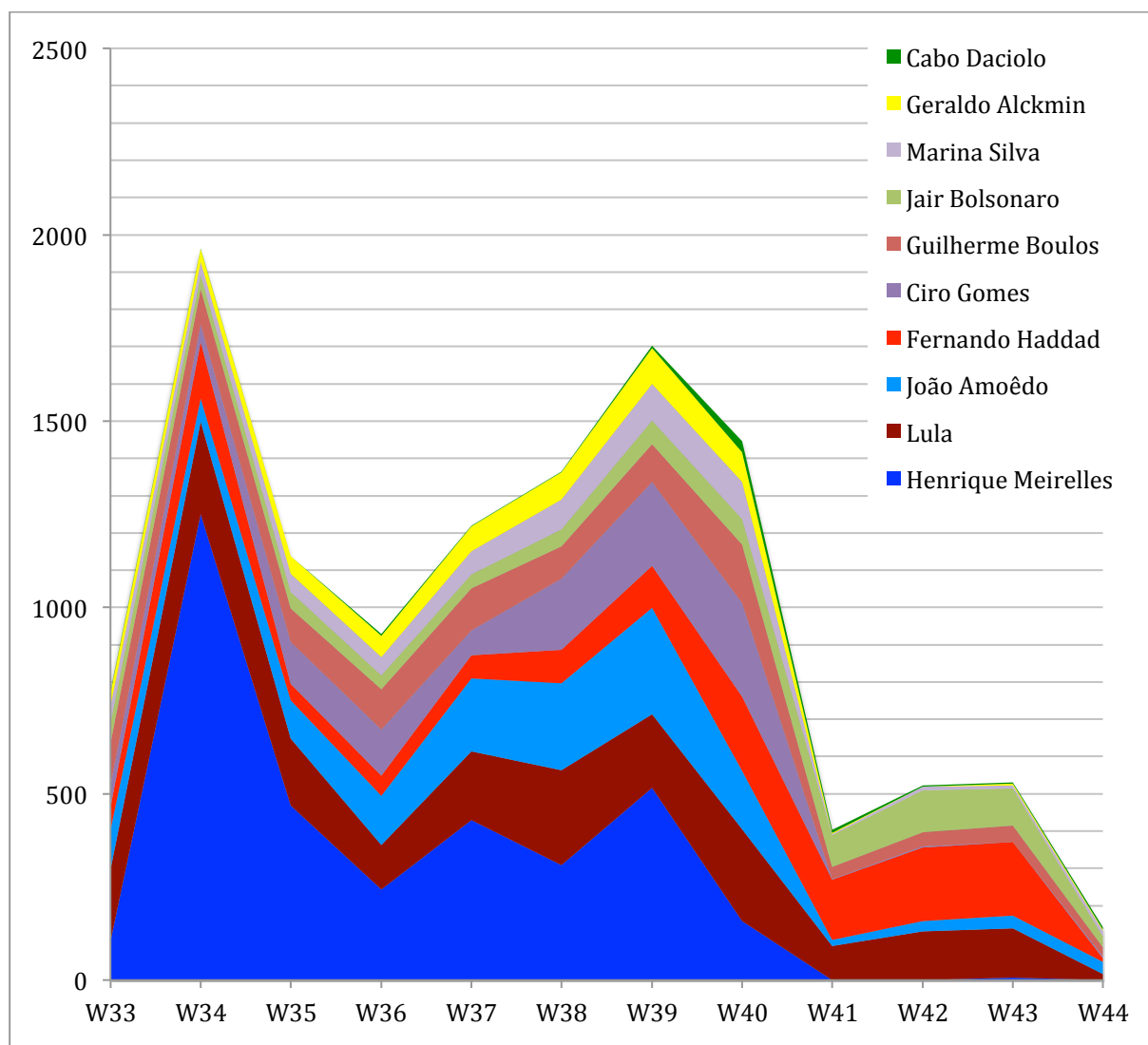
Meirelles was responsible for nearly half of candidates' posts, averaging 434 weekly actions during the first round. In contrast, Daciolo averaged 6 weekly posts during the same period. João Amoedo and Ciro Gomes concentrated their efforts in the fifteen days prior to the first ballot, reaching during this period a maximum of 286 and 252 weekly posts, respectively. Regarding ideological biases, no significant difference can be noted between

candidates' posting volume and frequency, substantiating Gerbaudos's (2018) claim that social media savyness is a shared trait of candidates, both on the right and on the left.

In order to capture a more nuanced understanding of how candidates were using Twitter, we also plotted their twittering activity on a daily basis (see

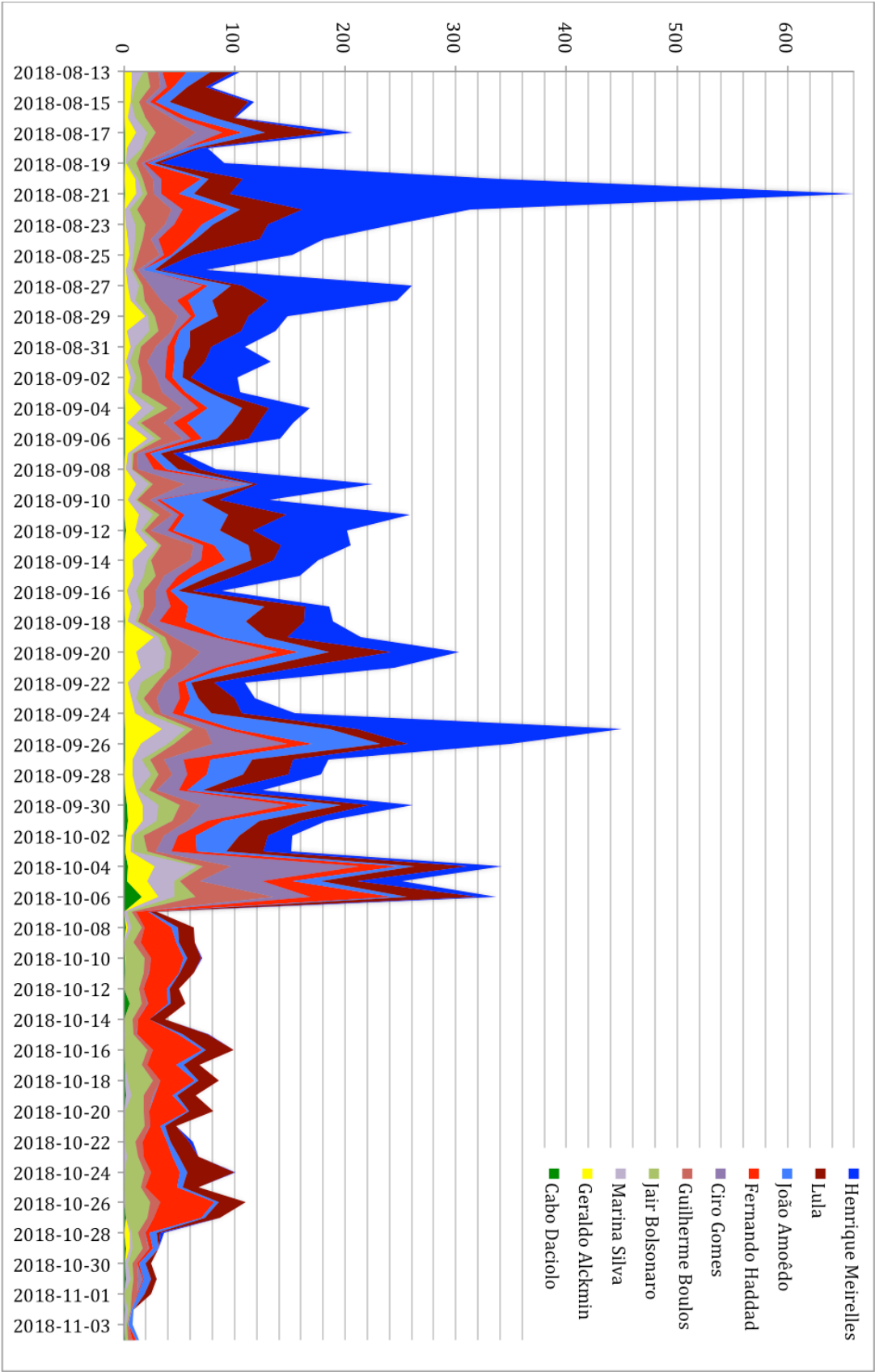
). We can identify a pattern among candidates with a high posting rate, such as Meirelles and Lula: there is a fluctuation between weekdays and weekends, indicating a professionalization of the campaign. During the first round, for example, João Amoêdo's had a weekday average of 28 daily posts and a weekend average of 9.8 posts. Recurrently, weekends can be spotted as low-activity days.

Figure 9 – Candidates' weekly twittering activity



Source: The author

Figure 10 - Candidates daily twittering activity



Source: The author

This could mean that candidates were not themselves closer to citizens, but rather employing marketing and communication teams to use social media. In the last two decades, we witnessed an apparent professionalization of political campaigning, based on operational changes that reoriented parties' and candidates' towards the electorate in a more personalized and targeted, as well as more costly, manner (GIBSON; RÖMMELE, 2009). Nonetheless, professionalization should ensure an authentic communication flow between candidates and citizens; otherwise it could eventually backfire, by de-personalizing and institutionalizing a direct and genuine channel.

There is still a lively debate on whether online campaigning replicates the patterns of offline politics or contributes to a change in the democratic discourse (VERGEER; HERMANS; SAMS, 2013), since Twitter is said to offer a more direct relationship between voters and politicians (GRAHAM *et al.*, 2013). For example, Meirelles' campaign was attempting to establish close and direct connections, by targeting voters that were talking about his main platform, namely economic recovery. On August 21st, the increase in the dollar exchange rate had become a trending topic on Twitter (UOL, 2018a) and, as shown in, the candidate's profile replied to tweets addressing the economic low point.

In Figure 11, Meirelles' team, identified with the #EquipeHM, was automatically activating replies to users posting about economical issues. The strategy of automating personalized connections gives a negative clue of campaign professionalization. Instead of taking advantage of unmediated connections provided by Twitter (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017), the high activity of Meirelles' campaign display a failed tactic of directly targeting citizens in an impersonalized fashion and identifying the campaign team. Meirelles' profile was significantly more active than other candidates, but the strategy failed as it was easily identified as impersonal and automated. Rather than approximating the electorate, this strategy ended up hindering authentic connections with the candidate himself.

Figure 11 – Henrique Meirelles' team reply example

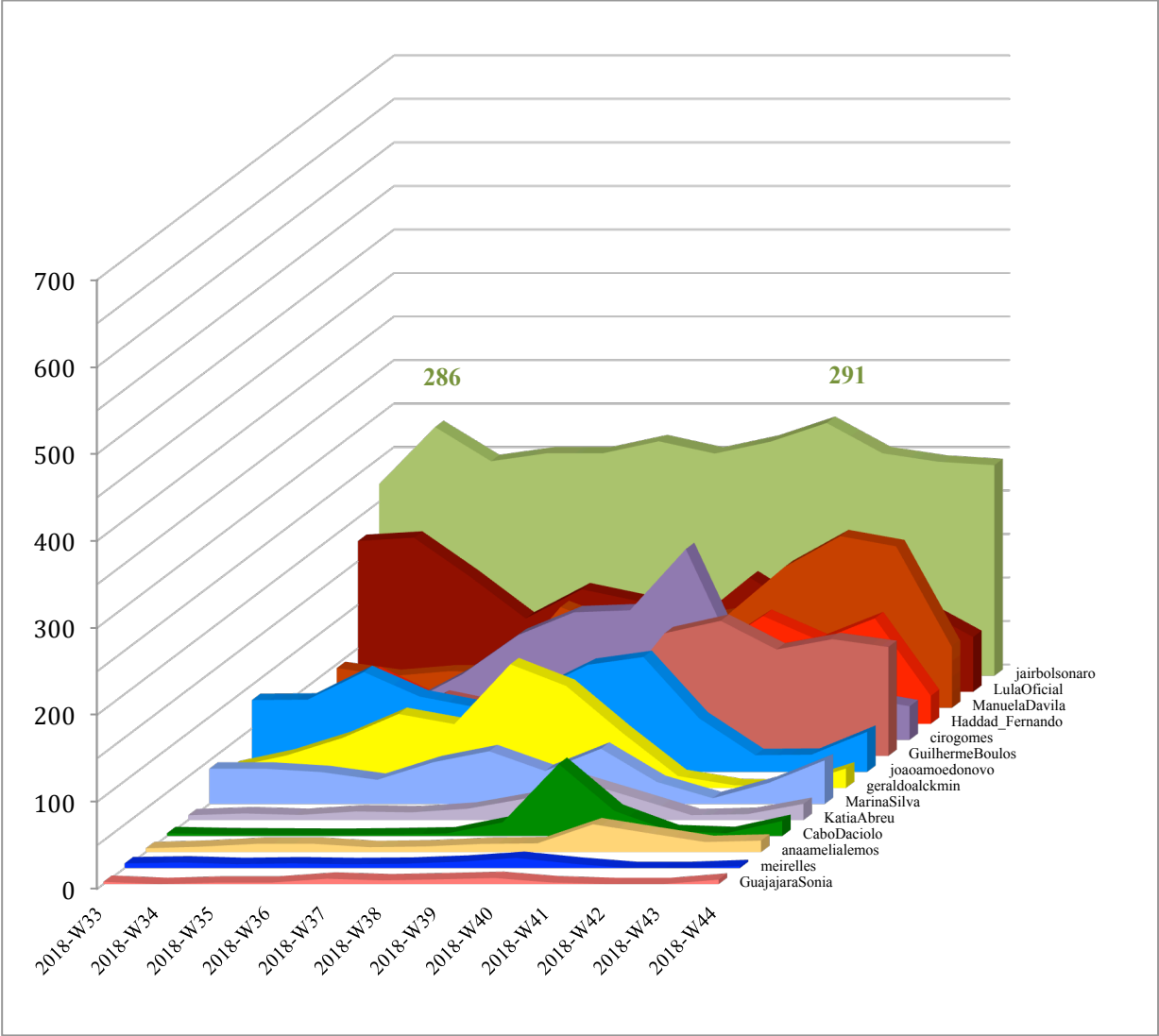


Source: Twitter Screenshot Aug 21, 2018

In Figure 12 we plotted all mentions to candidates, including both president and vice-president contenders. Here, @mentioning accounts includes all hyperlinked allusions to a profile, such as unsolicited mentions, replies to and retweets of the accounts' previous tweets. Lula was mentioned and eluded to throughout the campaign, totaling 1,376,384 mentions, but his prominence began to steadily decline after the rejection of his candidacy. PT's campaign had to make space for Fernando Haddad, a relatively unknown candidate and Twitter user. This seems to have influenced left-wing candidates, such as Manuela D'Avila and Guilherme

Boulos, to become more central to the electoral discussion. Together, these politicians guaranteed visibility to the left-wing coalition, but it did not represent real competition to Bolsonaro’s dominance: his profile received 3,092,364 mentions.

Figure 12 - Weekly mentions to candidates (in thousands tweets)



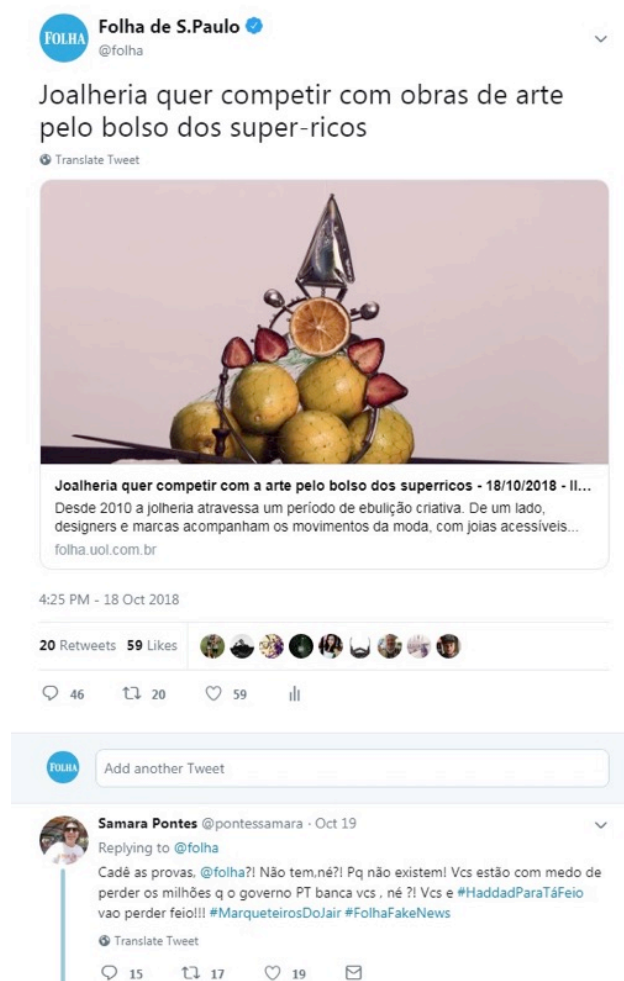
Source: The author

Bolsonaro’s constant allusions can indicate artificial engagement: differently from the other candidates, his popularity is sustained throughout the weeks, despite unpredicted events and contentious moments. The creation and dissemination of propaganda through computational features reinforces the manipulation means of these messages, since covering it with a technical layer creates the impression that it is impartial, inevitable and unbiased (BOLSOVER; HOWARD, 2017). These orchestrated online actions are attributed to social bots, computer software that mimic human behavior on social media (FERRARA *et al.*,

2016). They are cheap tools to make content more popular than they actually are, catalyzing online discussions and stirring outrage and artificial trends (KELLER; KLINGER, 2019). They are not easily discernible from real profiles, either by other users nor by platform algorithms (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018a).

On the 20th October 2018, the Brazilian newspaper Folha de São Paulo published a nostalgic gastronomic review about a classic pub appetizer: the Scotch egg. Called “Bolovo” in Brazil, the dish is apparently making a comeback in some bars and is becoming a hype food (MENEGUETTI, 2018). The newspaper later published the link to this trivial article in its Twitter profile, as it is common for media sources online. Rapidly, Folha’s Twitter profile witnessed a backlash of replies defending the presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro: various accounts posted hashtags supporting the politician and attacking the newspaper (see Figure 13). Regardless of the article’s content, the word “bolovo” triggered an orchestrated wave of responses that accused the newspaper of defaming the right-wing candidate.

Figure 13 - Accounts attack Folha on Twitter



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 20, 2018

Apparently, these accounts were programmed to act whenever posts with words similar to Bolsonaro and its common nicknames were posted online (CAMILLO, 2018). Several media sources claimed this was clear evidence that Bolsonaro's supporters, a provocative and aroused online group, consisted mainly of automated accounts, that is, social bots (CAMILLO, 2018). Furthermore, this Twitter attack happened just after Folha de São Paulo was filed a complaint about the candidate's activities online (CAMPOS MELO, 2018). We suggest automated accounts might have been used to intentionally disseminate misleading information and to produce content automatically, creating a kind of artificial public opinion on social media (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018b). Our findings support the argument that propaganda played a troubling role in boosting Jair Bolsonaro into the Brazilian presidency in 2018 (HUNTER; POWER, 2019).

Figure 14 - Tweet from Ciro Gomes during the first round



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 2, 2018

Since 2016, the Bolsonaro Family was testing campaign targets, segmentation and narratives, in addition to cultivating bots accounts and botnets and using the municipal elections campaign to prepare the discursive ground for the presidential dispute (SANTINI; SALLES; TUCCI, 2021). The three Bolsonaro sons have been working side by side with their father on social media, using the family name to gather support for legislative positions. Carlos Bolsonaro (190.195 mentions), Eduardo Bolsonaro (218.853 mentions) and Flavio Bolsonaro (169.919 mentions) were among the top 20 most mentioned profiles, indication that Jair Bolsonaro's sons have been exerting undue political influence and are consolidating a new political dynasty in Brazil.

Ciro Gomes, an active and popular profile throughout the campaign, was mentioned 1,010,317 times. During the first round, that concentrated 80% of the references to the candidate, he attempted to present himself as a third-way. More specifically, his campaign tried to resonate among those rejecting Bolsonaro, as seen in Figure 14: according to the opinion polls, he would win and Haddad would lose against the right-wing candidate. After the first round, he reduced his public political activities, both offline and online, what can be perceived, as he is less and less mentioned in our dataset (Figure 12).

Figure 15 - Tweet from Michel Temer mentioning Geraldo Alckmin



Source: Twitter Screenshot Sep 6, 2018

Geraldo Alckmin hit the Twitter spotlight after Michel Temer, posted a video questioning Alckmin's platform in which the PSDB candidate criticized the government (see Figure 15). The video, in which Temer addressed Alckmin "for the falsehoods that you have placed in your electoral program and I cannot be silent in honor of the Brazilian people, viralized on Twitter. Temer gave rise to memes for being visibly annoyed with Alckmin's attempt to distance himself from the unpopular administration (UOL, 2018b). Ana Amelia Lemos, who ran as vice-president alongside Alckmin, got attention on Twitter after the first round, when she openly declared her support for Bolsonaro (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). During the run-off, she accentuated her claims against PT and argued Bolsonaro was the only option against the corruption perpetrated by the left.

Figure 16 - Tweet from Ana Amelia Lemos mentioning Jair Bolsonaro



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 8, 2018

During the elections, Danili Gentili, a 'politically-incorrect' comedian and political commentator, proclaimed himself to be an advocate of the truth against social indoctrination that dominates legacy media in Brazil. After Whatsappgate (CAMPOS MELO, 2018), he directed his attacks against Folha de São Paulo's ideological interests. Besides openly supporting Bolsonaro's candidacy, he was the author of constant misogyny against female candidates and political figures (

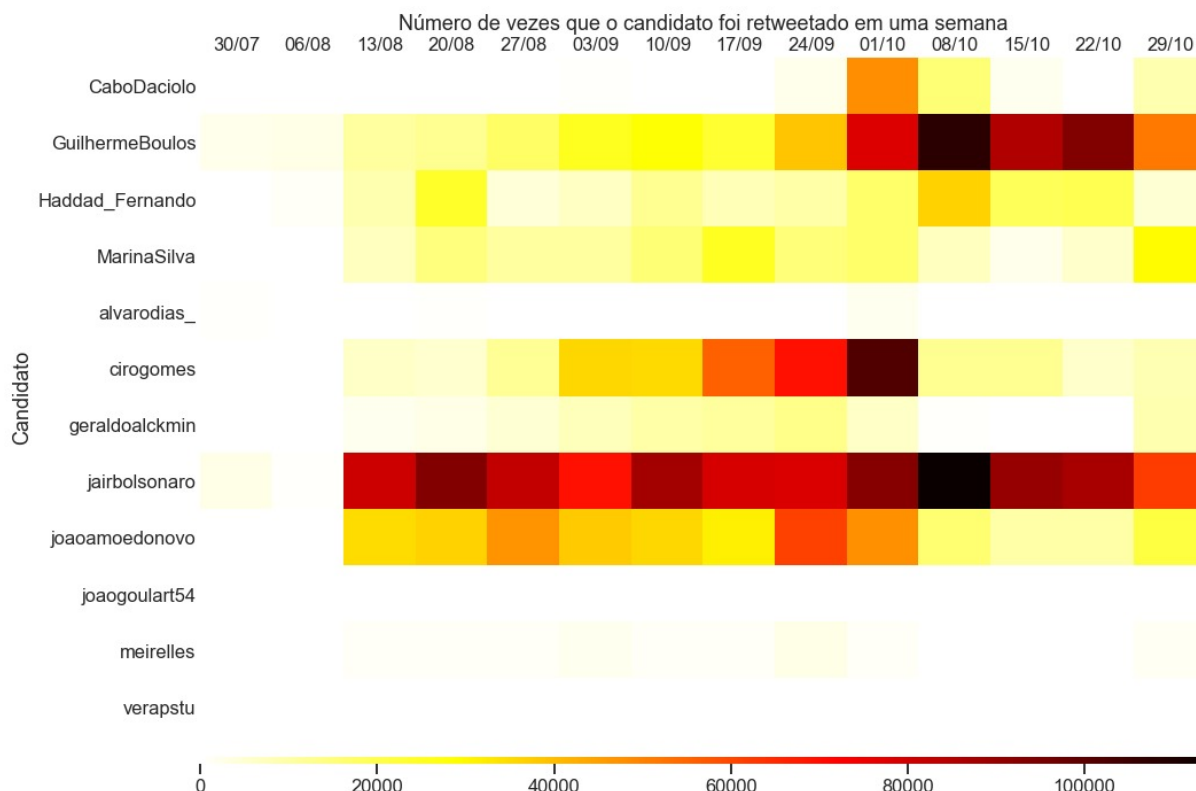
Figure 17). The blogger built upon disgust, contempt or hatred against women to present himself as the ultimate mouthpiece of the people. His targets, which ranged from Manuela D'Avila and Dilma Rousseff to feminists in general, were subject of violent and outrageous content.

Figure 17 - Tweets with misogynist content produced by Danilo Gentili



Source: Twitter Screenshots from Sep 10 to Sep 15, 2018.

Figure 18 - Weekly retweets to each candidate



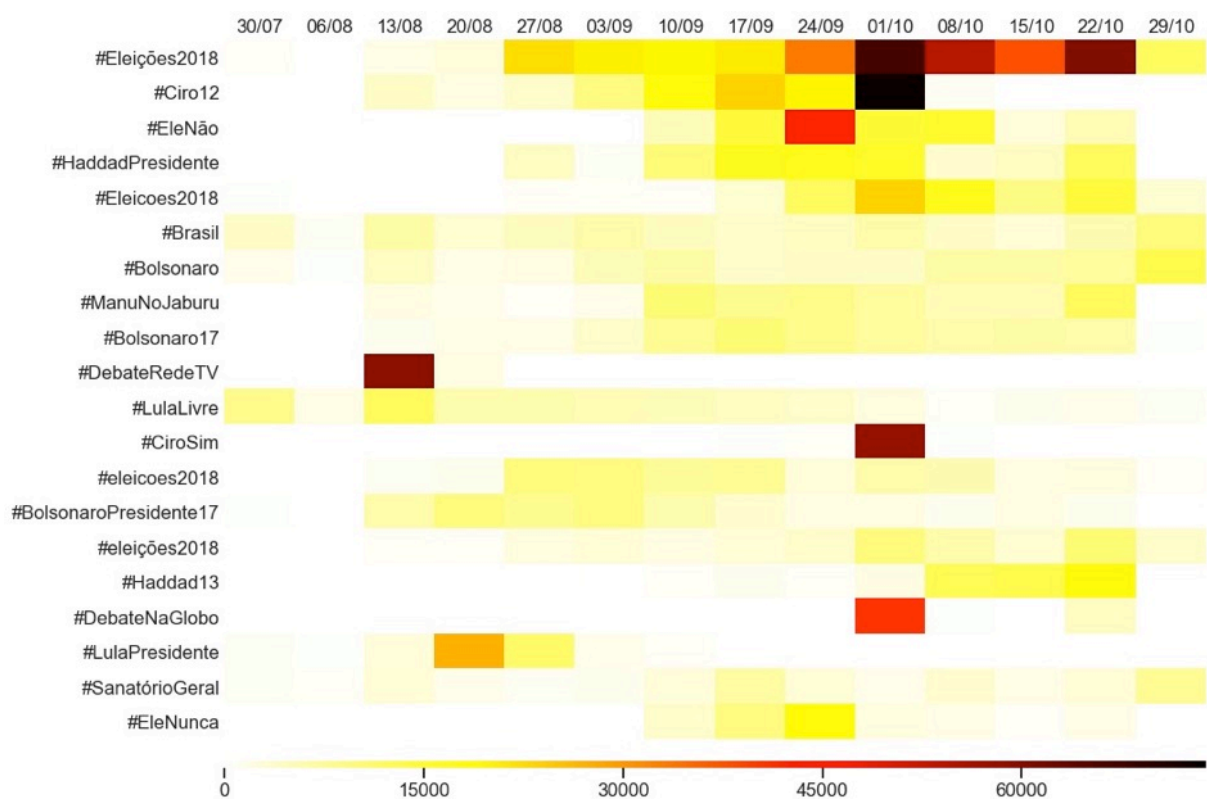
Source: TWIST Systems.

Retweets count is embedded in the mention ranking just presented, but we also organized how many retweets each candidate received on a weekly basis (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). As expected, it presents several similarities to the mention ranking: Jair Bolsonaro was the most retweeted profile in our dataset (845 thousand retweets). Moreover, Boulos appears as the second most retweeted profile (536 thousand retweets), followed by other left-wing candidates. Nonetheless, some nuances should be pointed out: partisan media such Renova Mídia (94 thousand retweets) and O Antagonista (82 thousand tweets) are among the most retweeted but were not among the top mentioned, what could supplement the hypotheses that they were important information sources during the elections. Another important finding relates to the prominence of Bolsonaro's sons during the campaign. Acting as informal advisors, the family has been using social media ostensibly, both as an electoral campaign tool and a routine means of communication with their electorate (SANTINI; SALLES; TUCCI, 2021).

We ranked the 20 hashtags with the highest count in our dataset (Figure 19). According to this result, #Eleições2018, #Ciro12, #EleNão and #HaddadPresidente were the most popular hashtags during the 2018 presidential elections. Regarding the weekly

distribution, we can identify some interesting outliers. For example, #Ciro12 and #CiroSim peaked during the final weeks of the first round, strengthening the overall perception that Ciro Gomes surpassed Haddad on Twitter, despite coming in third in the actual polls. After the official rejection of Lula's candidacy, tags related to the former president reduced in volume and throughout the campaign Lula lost his central and prominent status as an electoral topic. #EleNão and #EleNunca peaked simultaneous to the demonstrations in repudiation of Bolsonaro, remained popular until the first round, but lost prominence during the run-off period.

Figure 19 - Ranking of most used hashtags, by week



Source: TWIST Systems.

There are some indicators of second screening activity, with #DebateRedeTV and #DebateNaGlobo being highly shared during the televised events. Embodying the connectedness and ubiquity of social media, second screening represents an important aspect of the contemporary hybrid media system (CHADWICK, 2013). This phenomenon relates to the use of Twitter to communicate, obtain and share information and opinions about broadcast programming while watching it, unifying traditional media and online networks. This media use can increase attention and engagement to TV programs as well as promote discussion

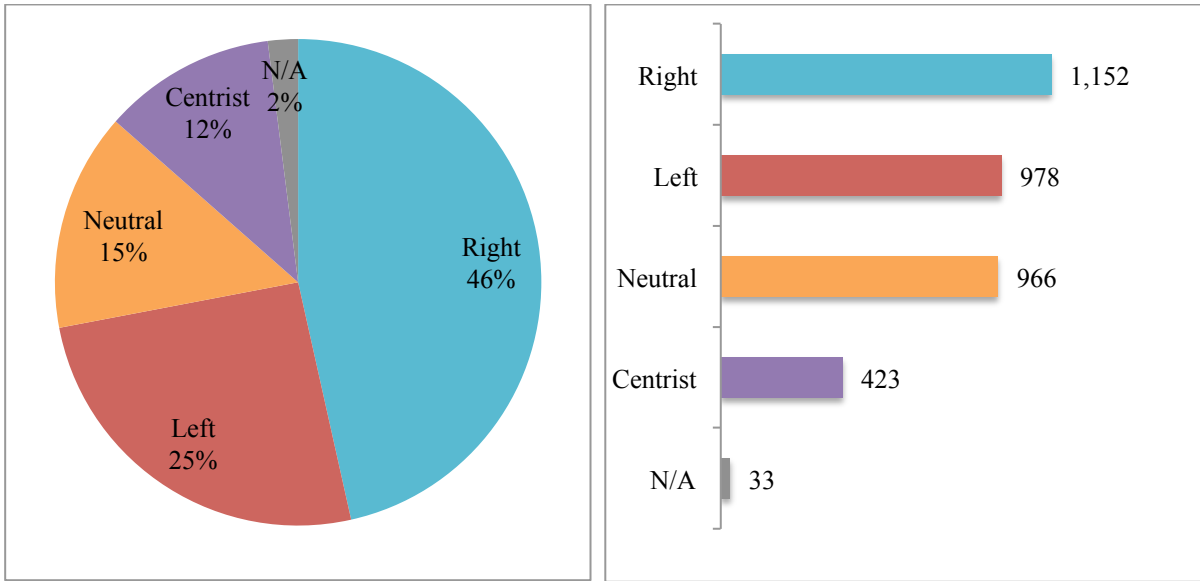
among users, creating a social media buzz that often generates more viewers, and vice versa (GIL DE ZÚÑIGA; GARCIA-PERDOMO; MCGREGOR, 2015).

Regarding the political inclination of popular hashtags, we categorized the 200 most shared hashtags as right wing, left wing, centrist, neutral, or non-applicable (see Figure 20). This represented more than 98% of the hashtag use in our dataset. The neutral category included general election hashtags, such as #Eleições2018 and #Brasil, as well as debate-related tags. Non-applicable are the hashtags that do not address the elections or political discussion in Brazil. Hashtags supporting Ciro and Marina were considered centrist. Support for Bolsonaro, Amoedo, Mereilles,

We can notice that right-wing tweets were more diversely tagged: 93 out the 200 most shared hashtags demonstrate right-wing support, whilst left-wing tweets were tagged by 51 different popular hashtags. The volume of hashtag use was also plotted (see Figure 20) and right-wing hashtags were indeed more popular as a whole, appearing in 1.15 million tweets, whereas left-wing tags were shared 978 thousand times. From this finding, we can suggest that right-wing campaigns in general, and Bolsonaro’s campaign in particular, were coordinating a more dispersed range of topics and users (see examples in Figure 22). In comparison, left-wing annotations were more concentrated into fewer popular tags.

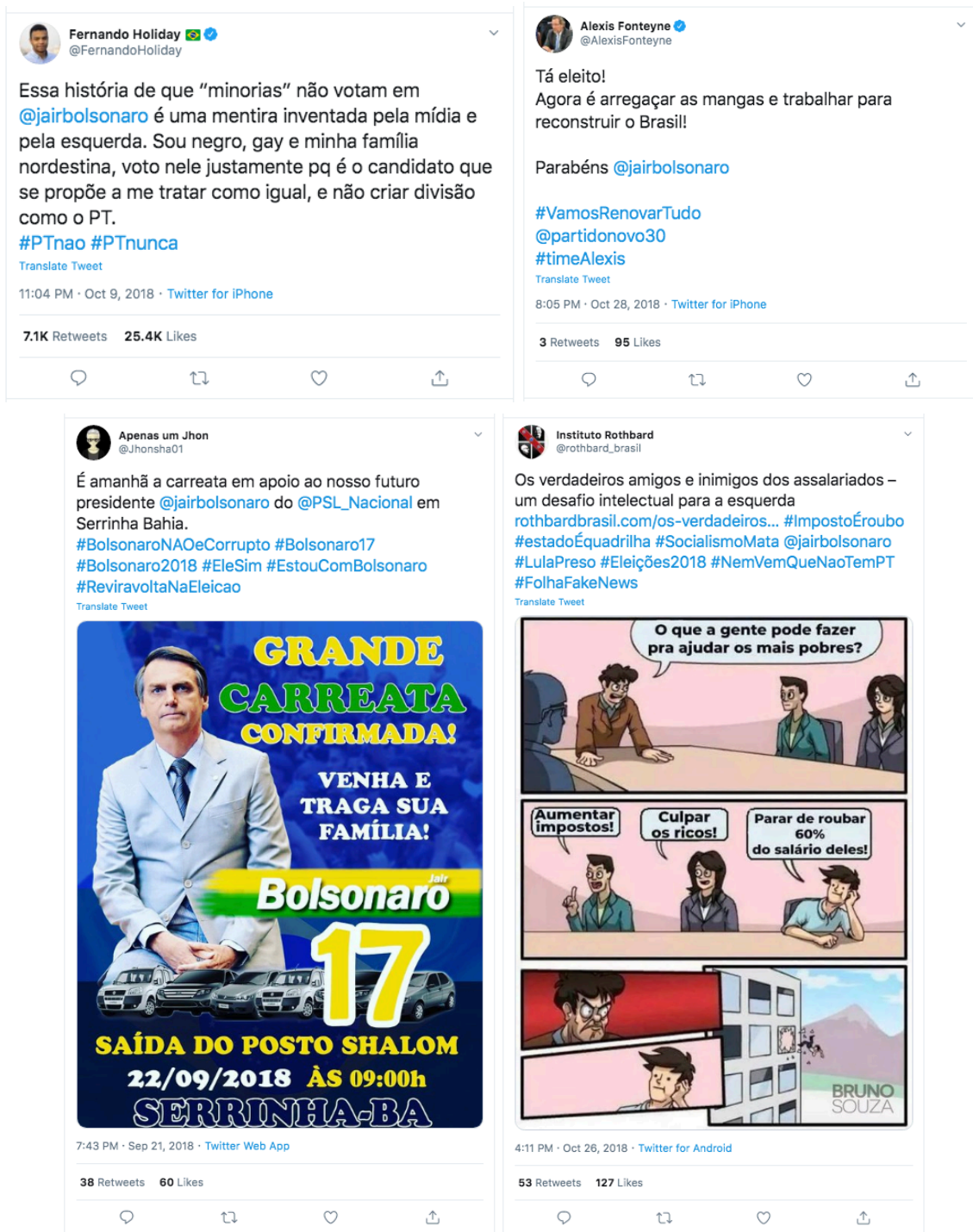
Figure 20 - Most used hashtags' political bias distribution

Figure 21 – Volume of hashtag use, according to political bias (in thousands tweets)



Source: The author.

Figure 22 - Example of tweets supporting Jair Bolsonaro with right-wing hashtags



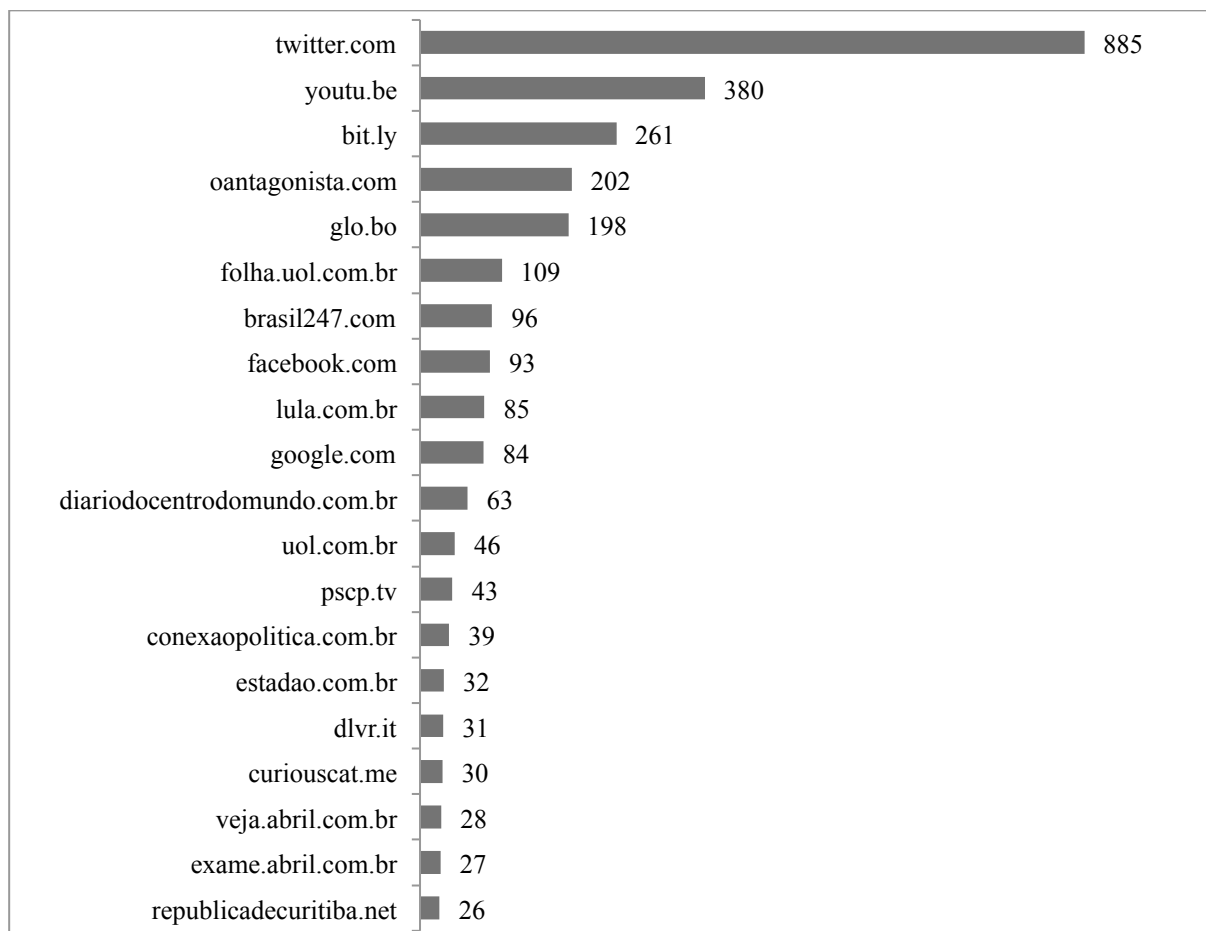
Source: Twitter Screenshot from Sep 21 to Oct 28, 2018

We also analyzed the top shared domains during our data collection period and found, among the 20 most popular sites, social media, traditional media, hyper partisan media and automation platforms (see Figure 23). Our results indicate that the same platforms are used to communicate, obtain and share information and opinions, lumping traditional media,

alternative media and user-generated content together. As social media use became pervasive, the ways consumers relate and interact with legacy media have also shifted, presenting both challenges and opportunities for media elites, not yet accustomed to sharing the role of content producer and knowledge broker (NEE; DOZIER, 2017).

Sites such as bit.ly and Dlv.r.it are used to manage posting activity, by allowing the partial or total automation of a social media account. They can be programmed to share content, queue tweets, and recycle content (DEMERS, 2014). The frequency of posting automation has used as a threshold in social bot detection and researches have argued that fake and automated accounts can impose threats to contemporary Brazilian democracy (SANTINI; SALLES; TUCCI, 2021). The presence of Twitter automation services among the top shared domain indicates the high automation rate in which political campaigns and social media activity are built nowadays.

Figure 23 - Ranking of most shared domains (in thousands tweets)



Source: The author

Like in many other Latin American countries, Brazilians' preferred access to news is often social-first (NEWMAN *et al.*, 2019), with links shared massively on social media platforms regardless of the credibility of the source. In attempting to connect with and inform voters, news media is critical for political campaigns. Given the media agenda is a de facto institution for democracy, with their coverage representing one of the main fields in which political campaigns play out, the presence of legacy media outlets, such as O Globo, Folha de São Paulo, Uol, Estadão, Veja and Exame, among the most shared links reinforces the assumption that the connectedness and ubiquity of social media represent an important aspect of the contemporary hybrid media system (CHADWICK, 2013).

Effective campaigns use news media to spread a candidate's message, convince citizens, attack competitors and motivate supporters (MORRIS, 2018). Legacy media coverage is also key in establishing legitimacy for a candidate by publishing news stories and discussing the candidate's ideas, policies, and actions (STROMER-GALLEY, 2014). However, the increasing dissatisfaction and disengagement with mainstream news media have further challenged public awareness of candidates' attempts to 'build the agenda' and occupy the media system. The exploitation of anger, polarization, and fear in disinformation campaigns has led to an information environment deliberately manipulated that reduces trust in institutions and the media, undermining democracy (TUCKER *et al.*, 2018). It makes it increasingly difficult for users to distinguish between high and low-credibility sources, as well as to recognize junk news as propaganda.

The Brazilian media marketplace has been characterized by ownership and audience concentration, with a low circulation of newspapers, agenda orientation toward the elite, late development of the press, and a huge influence of television as a source of news (DE ALBUQUERQUE, 2013). Diversity of information and perspectives in Brazilian media is also weakened by religious, political and economic interference and lack of transparency (REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS; INTERVOZES, 2019). The local media market still features strong broadcasters, however, the internet has been increasingly used for media consumption, with alternative and hyper-partisan media flourishing on social media.

The elections were the heyday for a long-standing galvanization of legacy media: the political polarization surrounding the poll set the stage for multiple controversies involving the way the media covered the elections (CARRO, 2019). Candidates and, especially Jair Bolsonaro, concentrated visible communication efforts on online platforms, forcing news outlets to keep a constant watch over his and his allies' social media accounts. Fuelled by a fractious and contentious relationship between Bolsonaro and the press, partisan media

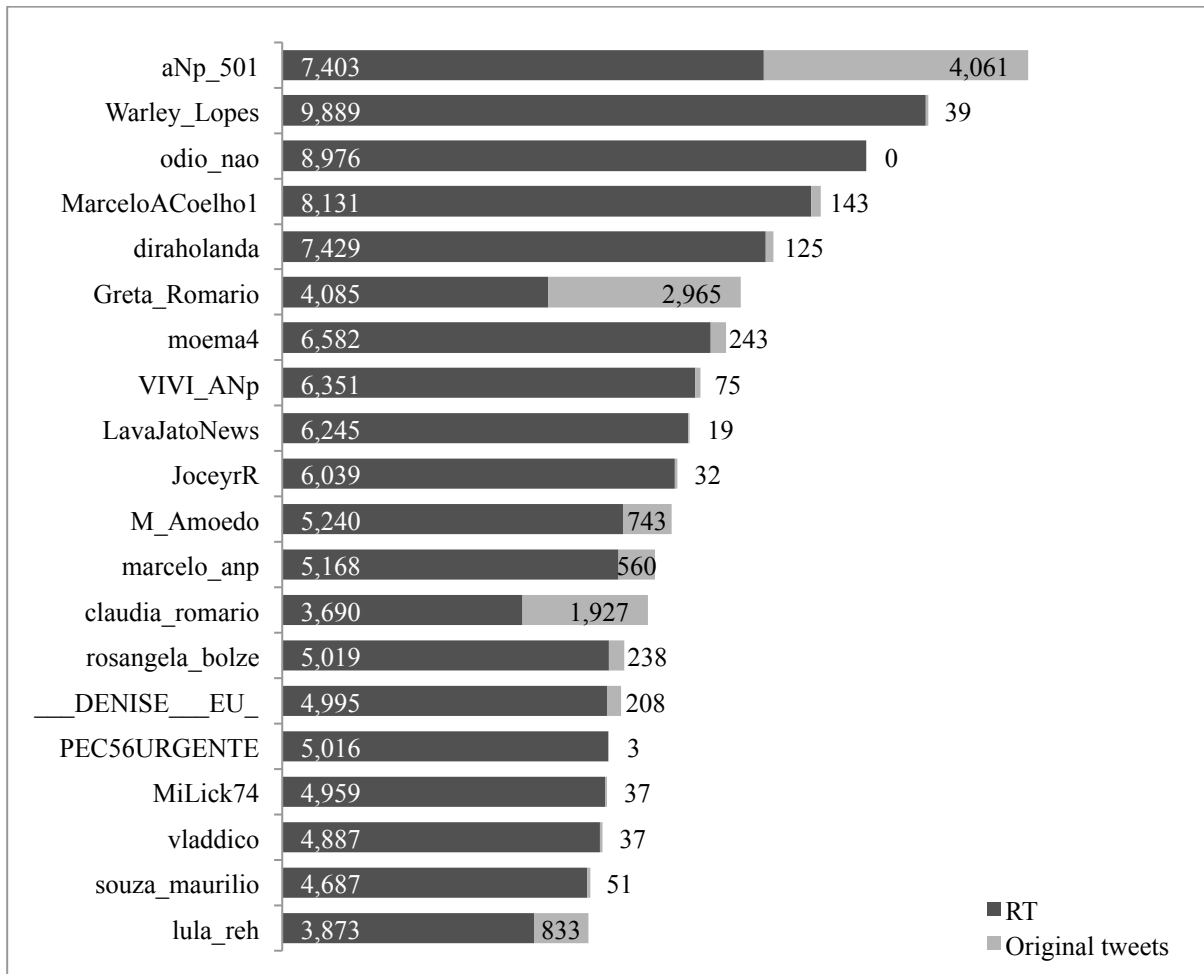
profited from the constant political confrontation that gained widespread attention from the population (CARRO, 2019). Sources such as O Antagonista, Conexão Política and República de Curitiba gained national prominence by being used by right-wing candidates and supporters. Our findings also show that the spread of partisan biased content was not only restrained to right-wing sources: sites, like Diário do Centro do Mundo and Brasil 247, also gained attention during the election.

As Gerbaudo (2018) argues, attacks against mainstream media, pledging these legacy outlets 'does not want you to know the truth', are a feature shared by different ideological movements: whilst the right targets political correctness and the authority of experts, the left attacks the 'neoliberal doctrine'. Populist movements are especially keen on establishing alternative news channels, as the authority of legacy media is questioned and the space of news and opinion-making opens for new actors (GERBAUDO, 2018). Our results indicate that partisan media outlets took advantage of mainstream media legitimacy crisis to position themselves as key actors in the digital development of the campaign.

Regarding the 20 most active users in our dataset (see Figure 24), their behavior on Twitter indicates the existence of computational routines combined with human curation. The massive amount of tweets were taken into account as a key automation indicators. We have considered as indicators of human curation: posting original content, including personal comments and opinions on posts, using natural language, having other social media profiles, and sharing personal pictures and information on Twitter feeds. In our dataset, all highly active users present human curation features. This result points to the complexity of identifying political bots on Twitter automatically.

These automated accounts are considered a new form of online grassroots simulation. Grassroots organizations are, in general terms, collective political movements that operate voluntarily and seek to influence specific causes of social and/or political nature (GUNDELACH, 1979). These organizations traditionally focused on “hosting house meetings, putting up posters, setting up websites, talking with people on the street, gathering signatures for petitions, raising money from small donors to support political campaigns, and other activities” (CHO *et al.*, 2011, p. 573). The ICTs have had a huge impact on social movements, their dynamics and struggles, since they give wide access to political information as well as offer possibilities for learning and acting (CARTY, 2010; KLOTZ, 2007).

Figure 24 - Ranking of most active users



Source: The author

Political campaigns started investing its huge budgets on manufacturing mobilization and participation (MCNUTT; BOLAND, 2007). Astroturfing as fake grassroots' activism, is sponsored by groups or corporations to support discourses in their favor or to criticize adversaries (CHO *et al.*, 2011; MCNUTT; BOLAND, 2007). It is not a new phenomenon (LEE, 2010), but the creation of artificial grassroots for political manipulation assumes a new dimension given the pervasiveness of the Internet and social media (SISSON, 2017). Despite being increasingly sophisticated, automated routines still struggle to adapt and create original and personal content, still depending on human supervision and management (VAROL *et al.*, 2017).

The new online astroturfing techniques are embedded in larger computational propaganda strategies extensively used by governments, candidates and political figures (BRADSHAW; HOWARD, 2017). In Brazil, computational propaganda evidences have been

found on social media during major political events since 2010 (ARNAUDO, 2017), and empirically investigated during the political campaigns for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro municipal election (ALBURQUEQUE, 2016; SANTINI *et al.*, 2018b). Added to that, research suggest that, since 2016, Bolsonaro was preparing the ground for his presidential campaign online, considering Twitter bots were disseminating Bolsonaro's 2018 campaign slogan (SANTINI *et al.*, 2018b).

In the last two decades, the increase of online political activity has involved all campaign actors: candidates and their campaigns, political parties, interest groups, the press, bloggers, and most notably, citizens (TOWNER; DULIO, 2012). Nonetheless, we observed a concentrated, polarized and professionalized arena in which different strategies were applied in order to gain social dominance. In this descriptive overview, we aimed at providing a panoramic understanding of how the political discussion unfolded on Twitter during the elections, taking into account different campaign and social actors.

2.5. SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES AND POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

Personalized connections have been regarded as a constitutive element of social media, as well as a key element for populist communication logic online (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). Then, it is important to consider how campaigns have mastered marketing strategies to thrive online, using Twitter as a suitable channel to invoke the support of ordinary people (GERBAUDO, 2018). Although noteworthy efforts have been made to synthesize these impacts, several questions remain unanswered, especially in a broad-reaching approach that covers political information, election campaigns, public agenda and civic engagement on social media (BENKLER; FARIS; ROBERTS, 2018).

In the present chapter we have mapped and discussed the main events, features and trends of the 2018 presidential elections Twitter. We have shown that few users produce relevant content: automated accounts, candidates, online personalities, mainstream media outlets and hyper-partisan media. These different social actors are articulated in a more or less professional manner and have symbiotic relations among each other. We can argue that Twitter, as well as other North-American social media companies, have become *de facto* institutions for democracy and their algorithms have turned into the structure in which democracy plays out (TUCKER *et al.*, 2018).

Civil participation and political discussion online can also be scrutinized based on an intermediation perspective, making grassroots intermediaries, media non professionals co-

producing a political brand by voluntarily spreading its promotional messages to peers, a part of the marketplace logic. These amateur intermediaries both assist and challenge institutional campaign agendas through their networked media-spreading and content sharing activities (JENKINS; FORD; GREEN, 2013). Unofficial parties have the potential to shape the flow of messages through their social networks, since peer-to-peer media spreading can in fact be politically persuasive, at least for a portion of the social media users (PENNEY, 2017a).

Penney (2017a) indicates that this networked circulation of ideas may grant citizens with an additional set of tools with which to invigorate their political agendas and interests, while also opening a space for political equalization since it helps to bring new entrants to the political debate. The presence of political issue in everyday spaces of popular culture could then have democratization potential by elevating the voices and perspectives of marginalized groups. Although acknowledging the marketing stimuli might be colonizing social network spaces, the risks embedded in the hybrid media ecosystem strategies deserve further attention.

Nonetheless, we have seen an appropriation of social media by professional political campaigns in which successful interactions still seem direct and personal. Social media, bypassing professional political norms and news values of mass media, supports a direct link between politics and citizens not bound to the mediation of traditional gatekeepers (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). Scholars have highlighted the suitability of social media platforms for the communication purposes of populist politicians. Due to its structurally disintermediated communication, social media is well fitted for the fragmented propagation of populist ideologies (BRACCIALE; MARTELLA, 2017).

These segmented communications has been central to political campaigns, based on algorithmic profiling of whom and how to influence. As Papakyriakopoulos et al. (2018) indicate, contemporary campaigns rely heavily on micro targeting; a strategic process intended to influence voters through the dissemination of stimuli based on their personal preferences and characteristics. Following algorithmic data analysis, campaigns can then produce messages or plan actions aimed at influencing each specific sub-group. This was particularly important to Bolsonaro's communication strategy that was based on segmenting information for different profiles of potential voters. Gerbaudo (2018) argues, social platforms have offered a suitable channel for the populist yearning to 'represent the unrepresented', providing a voice to a voiceless and unifying a divided people.

We have tried to explore the affinity between social media and populist campaigns, based on the networking and mass outreach capabilities of social media and ideological factors. Whereas in this chapter, we did not dive into the content and narratives disseminated

during the campaign, we have shown that presidential candidates and specially Bolsonaro were taking advantage of the role acquired by social media as the people's voice and as the people's rally. By connecting criticisms against mainstream media, automated self-publishing and the algorithmic opportunities of the platform, Bolsonaro successfully employed social media as a means to establish direct connections with voters.

CHAPTER 3

DELIBERATING OPPOSING AGENDAS: THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN POLITICAL DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC OPINION FORMATION THROUGH TWITTER

Although political discussions have flourished online and political content is more available, democratic advances and practical impacts on policy agenda remain uncertain. Simultaneously, political campaigns are exploring new online strategies, enabled by new possibilities for information production and dissemination, as well as data analysis and targeting efforts. Whereas users feedback and participation do not guarantee a fair, representative, and egalitarian public deliberation, there is a pressing need to understand Twitter's potential for political participation and what this means for the active exercise of engaged and informed citizenship.

An examination of how Twitter contributes to public deliberation, and to what extent it serves as another arena for already established political discourses requires a focus on what kind of content is shared and exchanged in the platform. By focusing our analysis on popular content, we provide a framework for interpretation of the different political narratives explored during the campaign. This will allow for careful scrutiny of who the most popular users are, and how they approach the capabilities of Twitter to influence the general climate of opinion in an election.

Based on a qualitative content analysis, this chapter investigates the main political topics discussed on Twitter, identifying the relationship between popular social media content and public opinion through the prism of public deliberation. We opted for a qualitative approach given the exploratory nature of our purpose. Despite not offering a representation of the entire discussion on Twitter, our analysis enables a focus on social interaction and conversation rather than simple preferences, and introduces a narrative dimension to public deliberation.

3.1. A DELIBERATIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC OPINION

An important theoretical tradition regards public deliberation as a cornerstone of a responsible, responsive and representative democracy (HABERMAS, 1989). Building on the assumption that citizens could make rational decisions on public issues once they are well informed, a deliberative turn has taken place in political science in the last decades (CHAMBERS, 2003). The rise of a talk-centric theory placed the communicative processes of opinion and will formation that precede voting as the conceptual core of democratic legitimacy (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004).

In a comprehensive sense, deliberation refers to practices of back-and-forth communication among citizens on matters of public importance (PERRIN; MCFARLAND, 2011), indicating a wide range of definitions of its concept. Ideally, it should involve critical listening, careful argumentation, balanced consideration and earnest decision-making, also including consistent examination of the discussed issue through the indication of solutions and the specification of evaluation criteria (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004).

Deliberation legitimacy lies on the rationalizing potential of human communication in which the best argument should be publicly articulated, explained, and justified (FRIESS; EILDERS, 2015). Yet it faces empirical constraints: there is rarely a single fair and rational way of reaching a social decision based on the amalgamation of citizens' preferences (PERRIN; MCFARLAND, 2011). Provided public deliberation is infrequent, unrepresentative, subject to manipulation and bias, and disconnected from actual decision-making (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004), the production of well-informed opinions through deliberation is an idealization within discursive participation.

According to Carpini, Cook and Jacobs (2004), discursive participation can occur through a variety of media and is characterized by the discourse with other citizens that include the formal institutions and processes of civic and political life, focusing on local, national, or international issues of public concern. Its positive impacts encompass citizens being more enlightened about society's needs and experiences, as well as engaged in politics, perceiving their political system as legitimate and civic life as healthier. These observable interpersonal processes of conversation draw on different types of resources, such as media discourse, experiential knowledge, and popular wisdom.

Building on the idea of discursive participation, we gain from Gabriel Tarde's (1983) approach that focuses on the dynamism of social interactions as the foundation of social structures and changes. Taking conversation as the unit of analysis to social research, one

should address who talked to whom about what and how often, as well as the social features of individuals embedded in these conversation, their context and their results. His observation privileges the understanding of microscopic details to the detriment of collective representations. This means that, for him, social understanding is based on infinitesimal relationships, small interpersonal interactions, diversity and uniqueness. Thus, Tarde builds a hypothesis that three main laws govern social phenomena: imitation, innovation and opposition.

Anticipating the two-step flow communication model (KATZ; LAZARFELD, 2017), Tarde was interested in the aggregation of opinion, a manufacturing process that included the press, conversation, opinion, and action: the press sets the agenda for the conversations that crystalize opinions, which are translated into actions (KATZ, 2006). Ostensibly purposeless conversations that are not necessarily political, despite politics being one of their major latent functions, can result in more considered and reasonable opinions (TARDE, 1983). This means that public spaces are only incidentally occupied with problem solving, even though this is one of their consequences.

Public opinion arises from an interaction of individuals with their social environments (NOELLE-NEUMANN, 1974). This allows public opinion to be understood as an on-going product of conversation, embedded in social relationships, instead that the sum of discrete individual preferences (ANSTEAD; O'LOUGHLIN, 2015). The media plays a key role in this system, providing information about the social environment, emphasizing certain images about social reality and supplying the general climate of opinion beyond personal spheres.

Differently, for a orthodox tradition, public opinion could be clearly expressed by surveying individual preferences (GALLUP, 1939), assuming that information exchange exists underneath public opinion as a laboratory in which individual beliefs are developed (PERRIN; MCFARLAND, 2011). That is, public opinion is understood as something that exists and which pollsters aim to discover through a transparent and representative method (ANSTEAD; O'LOUGHLIN, 2015). Perrin and McFarland (2011) indicate several issues of this perspective: the public, besides from being a collectivity and not just a collection of atomized individuals, does not necessarily have genuine opinions about the researched issues.

This approach is intended to report the true, unfiltered, and simplified voice of citizens that are understood as a coherent and thoughtful group. The development of public opinion research is simultaneous to the evolution of probability techniques and an increasing faith in scientific and statistical approaches. By aggregating the responses of a relatively small sample of individuals, the political behavior of a population could be accurately predicted (PERRIN;

MCFARLAND, 2011). Hence, polls could represent the preexisting and authentic views that are formed and carried by individuals.

The illusion of an opinionated public is conveyed by the assumption that citizens who do not give opinions are either residue or missing data (PERRIN; MCFARLAND, 2011). This indicates a general belief that everyone can have an opinion and that all opinions have equal value. Bourdieu (1987) refutes these two premises by asserting that public opinion does not exist, since most citizens do not have political competence to issue political attitudes. When people without the necessary skills are obliged to express an opinion they map others' opinions to identify people with the same "class habitus" (BOURDIEU, 1984) reproducing the most convenient available idea.

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) argues there is a direct relationship between social and demographic characteristics and the social competence to participate in political debate. By relying on second-hand opinions, citizens adopt a socially available opinion, according to their 'elective affinities'. Thus opinion polling reproduce and make use of a logic of social dominance, in which certain groups have more competence and authority to issue opinions, and thus attempt to guide and manipulate the circulation of beliefs.

Another important critique of public opinion research is the reactive nature of public opinion: citizens consume the same research they are supposed to talk through (PERRIN; MCFARLAND, 2011). Thus, polling data also becomes a reference by which individuals formulate their own opinions and identify social cohesion. Since individuals do not wish to be alone in their attitudes, they either join the majority or withdraw into silence and conformity, influencing collective opinion to move in the direction of the preexisting views of the majority (NOELLE-NEUMANN, 1974). In order to achieve social integration, Noelle-Neumann (1974) indicates that resisting isolation can be more important for an individual than his own judgment. She argues that the concepts of public opinion, sanction, and punishment are closely linked with one another.

Exposing opinions is, therefore, influenced by the assessment of the frequency distribution and the trend of opinions in a given social environment: the probability of sharing one's view is positively correlated to the belief that this view is or will be widespread or dominating. The actual distribution and the perception of this distribution are divergent, because the opinion whose strength is overestimated is displayed more in public (NOELLE-NEUMANN, 1974). Citizens form mental pictures of their social environment and the distribution of opinion in this scenario, identifying attitudes that are gaining strength or losing preponderance (LIPPMANN, 1997).

Lippmann (1997) argues that the adjustment of an individual to his environment takes place through the medium of fictions, a representation of the social context, which is in lesser or greater degree made by the individual himself. Inasmuch the environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance, we have to reconstruct reality into a simpler model before we can manage with it. Thus, what each individual does is based not on direct and certain knowledge but on a counterfeit of reality, that is, on pictures made or given to him. We should not think of these representations as a communication tool, but as valuable symbols of the existing social order. In this perspective, propaganda is the effort to alter the picture to which citizens respond to, aiming at substituting one social pattern for another (LIPPMANN, 1997).

By ascertaining shared mental representations about public matters, polling is not able to reveal the content or the quality of political information being exchanged and acquired. On that account, polling methods constitute publics by evoking surveyed opinions as an ideal mode of citizenship. We assume otherwise: engagement in political talk, perhaps not meeting the expectations of a deliberative democratic process, can enlighten more about the social environment and the opinion climate in a given context.

There has been a considerably optimistic view that the Internet has the potential to strengthen democratic processes by providing new arenas for political deliberation (PAPACHARISSI, 2002), by blending the advantages of face-to-face discussion with the scale and convenience of modern communication technology (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004) and by increasing the overall volume of discourse around political issues (HAMPTON; SHIN; LU, 2017). As Friess and Eilders (2015) indicate, deliberative democracy has become an influential concept in the increasing academic debate on the relationship between democracy and information and communication technologies.

Likewise the press, public meeting, citizen associations and elections, social media can be understood as an arena where public opinion would become manifest (ANSTEAD; O'LOUGHLIN, 2015). Citizens enter into social platforms and choose to participate according to their personal inclinations, rather than being selected as part of a sample. By understanding social media political discussion as a public opinion arena, we can take into consideration emotions and social interactions often neglected in polling. Provided public opinion is inherently group-based and pluralist, political manifestation on social media may also indicate the mobilization capabilities of organizations. In other words, potential dominance and directed support is considered a note-worthy political phenomenon (ANSTEAD; O'LOUGHLIN, 2015).

Carpini, Cook and Jacobs (2004) indicate that participating in deliberative forums can raise participants' political activity and interest, change their opinions, increase their sense of community identity, and widen their communication networks. Online deliberation has a similar potential to personal interactions when it comes to produce political change and improve practices of information seeking. As Hampton, Shin and Lu (2017) indicate, social media may directly impact citizens' willingness to join political conversations, when used as a source of news or information.

Social media political discussion can also produce greater awareness of reasons behind opposing views, but can also produce polarization (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004). By increasing awareness of others' opinions, specially through content posted by friends and family members, online deliberation may foster a spiral of silence (NOELLE-NEUMANN, 1974). That is, if opinions are not in agreement with one's own, citizens may choose to withdraw from discussion due to social pressures of reference groups. Nonetheless, social media create context collapse where social ties from diverse settings coexist in a single forum. Being aware of diverse opinions may lower perceived homophile and increase complexity, dissonance and ambivalence toward political discussions (HAMPTON; SHIN; LU, 2017).

However, social media platforms are built from algorithmic structures that condition access to information, being updated and adapted according to personal digital footprints based on users' interaction with the page (GILLESPIE, 2014). This model generates a spiral of mediations: effects of actions on other actions that define how and what we will access. This numerical control imposes a specific form of access to online content, prepares the meaning that this content can acquire and formats the individual who accesses it. As Gilles Deleuze (1992) has critically argued, it controls users by transforming them into samples, databases, markets that can generate profit.

As Loader and Mercea (2011) argue, democratic governance could be significantly improved through the open and equal deliberation between citizens, representatives and policy-makers, afforded by the new information and communication technologies. Nonetheless, the new media is more likely to be shaped by the existing social and economic interests of a given society. The ubiquity of social media in the everyday communication practices intensify their potential to shape social and power relations. The purpose of the present analysis is to articulate the core deliberative framings disseminated and confronted during the 2018 elections on Twitter, given the contingent feature of democratic deliberation.

3.2. CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis was adopted as the primary methodological approach for the examination of main actors and the political topics discussed on Twitter during the elections. Based on keywords, our searches were carried out focusing on the main candidates (see Table 3). We collected 26,013,051 tweets posted by 26,013,051 users. In order to analyse the most popular tweets, we selected the 300 original messages that appeared the most in our data acquisition process. That is, we selected the tweets that were included more frequently in our query results. Taking into account that we did several searches, we considered that a tweet that appears more in our results is not only popular but also more adherent to our purpose. This selection approach prevented us from considering popular retweets that did not necessarily match the elections discussion.

Twelve coders conducted a qualitatively content analysis of the 300 most shared tweets during the campaign. They were trained over a data-sprint and assigned to code approximately a sixth of the sample each. All tweets were examined by at least two coders. The coding reliability was guaranteed by a manual validation of all analysis by the author. The coding scheme focused on two main aspects: authorship & interactions, and content & intentions.

The author of the tweet was identified and coded according to their profile. Posts were also coded for with whom they were interacting or mentioning. We considered here direct, indirect and properly tagged mentions. In order to classify profiles, coders consulted the contextual cues in the user's Twitter account; then, if needed, the hyperlink provided in a user's description or search results. Second, we analysed tweets' content and intentions, that relates to topic, tone, sentiment and function. Coders categorized the primary topics of each tweet, the dominant tone of each tweet, sentiment and function. Categories are consolidated on Table 5.

Table 5 - Content analysis categories

Types of author	Topics	Tone	Function
Candidates	Anti-left	Admiration	To advise
Ordinary citizens	Anti-petism	Aggressiveness	To argue
Media outlet	Anti-politics	Bigotry,	To ask for votes
Politicians	Anti-right	Conversation	To attack other(s)
Celebrity	Campaign affairs	Criticism	To clarify rumours
Political party	Civil rights	Denunciation	To criticize
Specialist, academic or researcher	Candidate's behaviour and history	Persuasion/ campaigning	To share campaign updates and results
Suspicious account such as troll, bot or cyborg	Knife attack against Bolsonaro	Humour	To request participation or interaction from other users
Authority such as campaign regulators, judges etc.	Media agenda and coverage	Hyper-partisan	To disseminate false information, rumours and conspiracy theories
Journalist, commentator or blogger	Science and technology	Irony	To inform or share news
	Culture	Journalistic	To make a joke
	Democracy	Emotional	To give an opinion
	Denounce	Prejudice	To self-promote
	Dictatorship	Provocation	To endorse
	Economy	Satire	To share gossip
	Education	Other	To troll
	Environment		Other
	Feminism		
	Health		
	Judicial system		
	Conspiracy theories		
	Moral issues		
	Party affairs		
	Religion		
	Corruption		
	Violence and security		
	Whatsappgate		

Source: The author.

3.3. TWEETS CONTENT AND AUTHORSHIP

In order to provide an overview of the dataset, Figure 25 is a timeline illustrating the distribution of the most shared tweets' publication dates throughout the election campaign. Two tweets were not considered in the timeline because they were originally posted before the electoral period. The popularity of both tweets' was probably related to a decontextualization process, in which a message is reproduced in a context other than the one in which it first appeared (KRAFFT; DONOVAN, 2020). A tweet posted by Lula on April 27th 2017 stated: "They have to know that we are going to regulate the media [*Eles têm que saber que nós vamos regular os meios de comunicação*]". The sentence was part of Lula's speech during an act, in which he criticized the Social Security and Labour reform projects (SPERB, 2017).

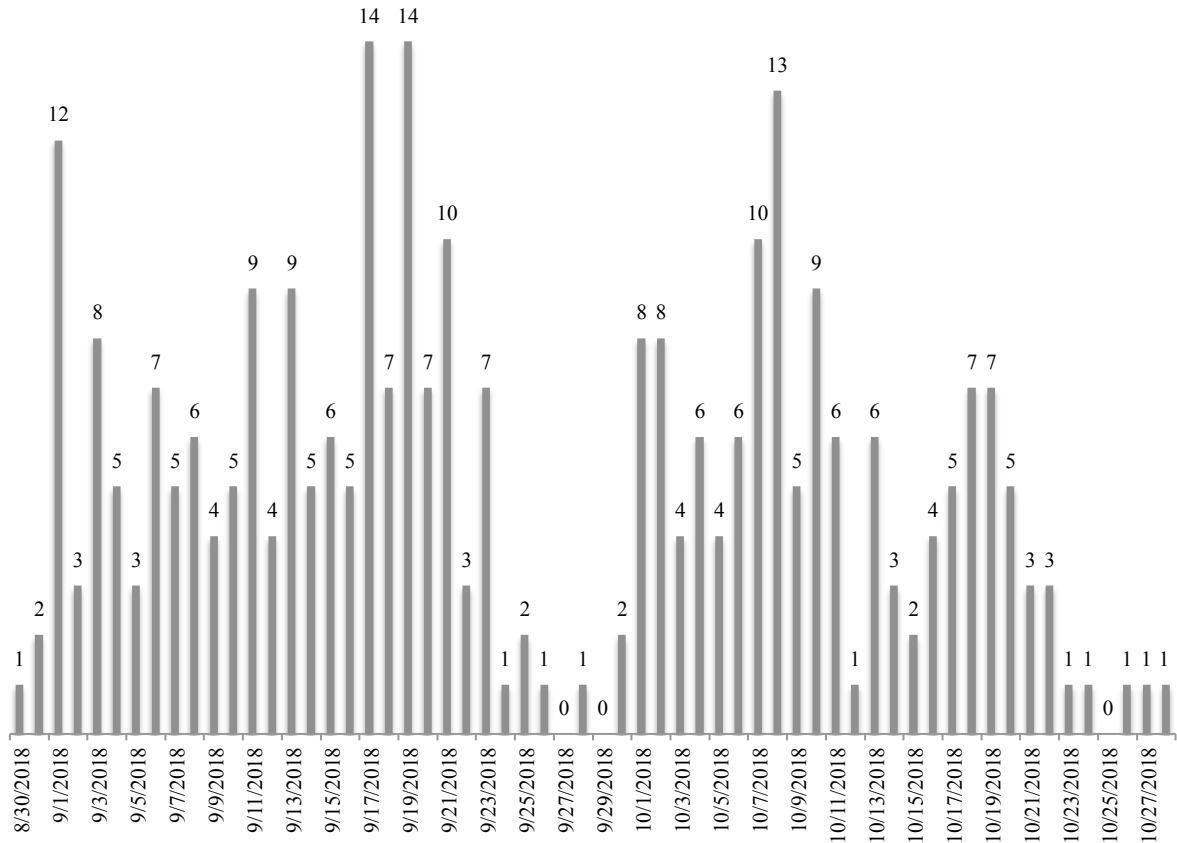
Katia Abreu posted on April 17th 2016 a tweet with a small typo: "Tomorrow is an important day for our country. Let's ask God for violence to happen. Wish everyone can participate peacefully [*Amanhã um dia importante p/ nosso país. Vamos pedir a Deus que ocorra violência. Que todos possam participar em paz*]". By massively sharing these tweets in a new temporal context, twitter publics removed these posts from their original contexts, either for humour or for malicious purposes. Although this process could be embedded in disinformation practices, these dissemination strategies could not be deeper scrutinized, since both posts were deleted by the time of this research.

When we examine the tweet count per day (see Figure 25), it is interesting to note that, despite data collection beginning on August 16th, the distribution of the most shared tweets starts only on August 30th. With an average of almost 5 popular tweets per day, we find four peak days of posting activity, with 17 per cent of the most popular tweets posted during these days. On September 1st, many of the tweets were in direct response to the rejection of Lula's candidacy, particularly among right-wing actors. Although September 17th 2018 was the deadline for parties to replace candidates, we did not find the indication of Fernando Haddad as Lula's stand-in as a driver for the activity peaks on September 17th and 19th.

The high activity corresponds with two other events: Hamilton Mourão pejorative speech about single mothers and the campaign around the hashtag #meubolsominionsecreto. The vice-president candidate, reserve general Hamilton Mourão, said that Brazil was experiencing a crisis of values and that unstructured families lead to the emergence of "misfits", who "tend to join narco-gangs" (OSAKABE; AMENDOLA, 2018). September 17

also marked the beginning of a string of online protests against the candidacy of Jair Bolsonaro. Inspired by the hashtag #meuamigosecreto, that gained social media relevance in 2015, the hashtag #meubolsominionsecreto was widely used by left-wing actors, such as Guilherme Boulos and Manuela D’Avila, to denounce sexism and speak out against Bolsonaro (DOMINGOS DE LIMA, 2018). On October 8th, the day after the first round, posts announcing party alliances and support for the second round caused the peak.

Figure 25 - Timeline of most shared tweets' publication dates

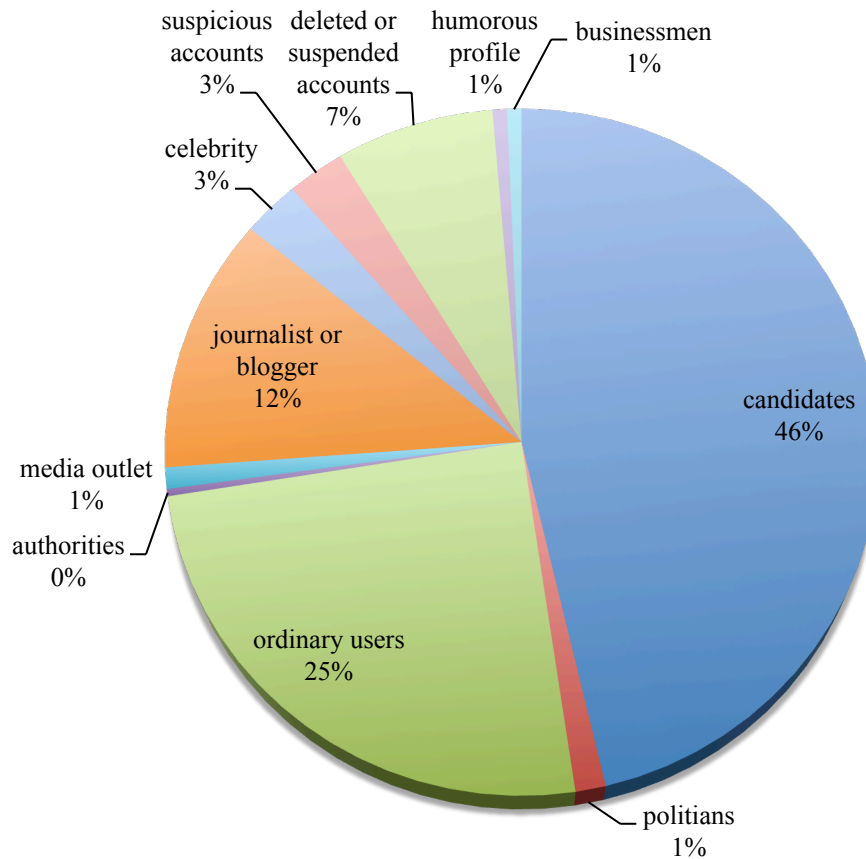


Source: The author.

The community of contributors to the popular messages is wide-ranging including politicians, bloggers, media organizations, journalists and interest groups. Regarding the twittering profiles, 147 different accounts were responsible for the 300 most popular tweets during the elections. As Figure 26 indicates, candidates accounted for nearly half of most shared tweets. Despite our data collection being based on candidates’ relates-terms (see Table

3), the prevalence of their messages among the most popular posts might suggest politicians were using Twitter professionally, with the intent of broadcasting their campaigns with less controlled norms that in broadcast media.

Figure 26 - Authors of most shared tweets



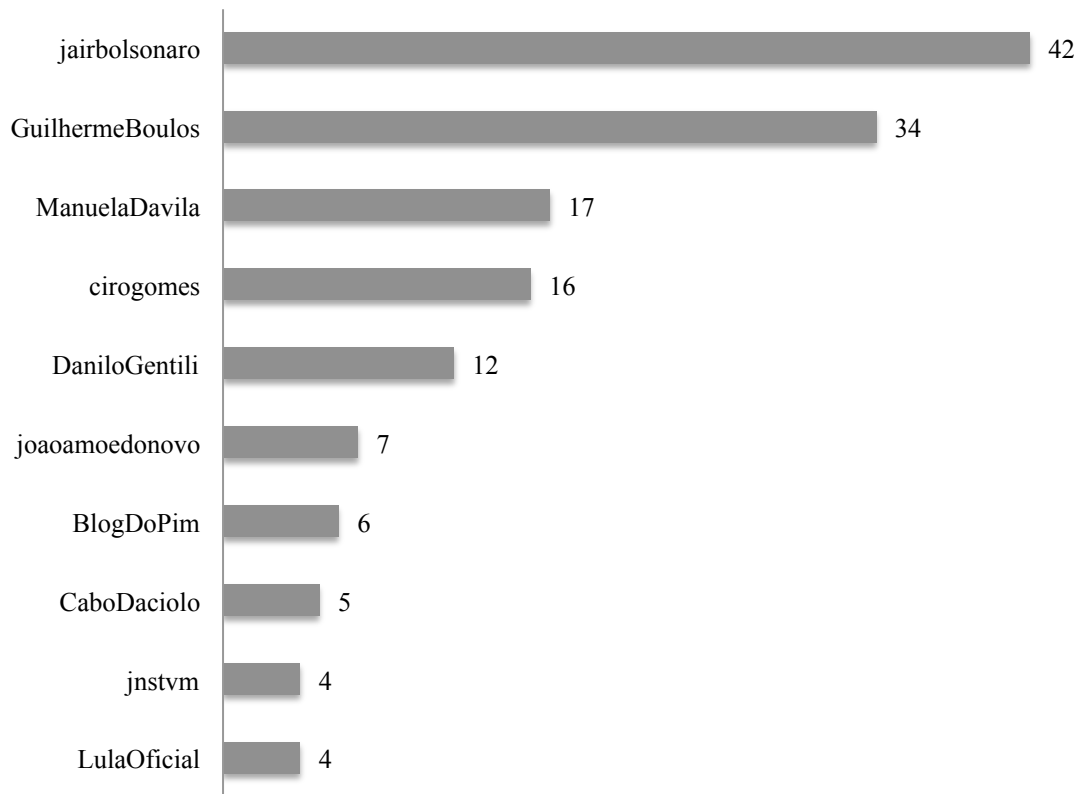
Source: The author.

However, the amount of tweets are slightly misleading given the divergence in posting rates among types of accounts. Fourteen candidates' posted 138 of the most shared tweets, with an average of 9.86 tweets per account. While 71 ordinary users were responsible for 25% of popular tweets, they achieved an average of 1.04 tweet per account. Other categories such as institutional authorities, humorous profiles, media outlets and businessmen averaged 1 tweet per account in comparison to 2 tweets per profile for politicians and journalists.

Candidates were, in general, the most active type, but as is shown in Figure 27 the distribution was far from egalitarian. Jair Bolsonaro was the most shared profile, being responsible for 14% of the 300 most popular posts. Guilherme Boulos and Manuela D'Avila together were responsible for other 17%. Other expressive candidates were Ciro Gomes, João

Amoêdo, Cabo Daciolo and Lula. Danili Gentili and Felipe Moura (Blog do Pim), both online journalists and commenters, also figured among the top authors.

Figure 27 - Authors' ranking



Source: The author.

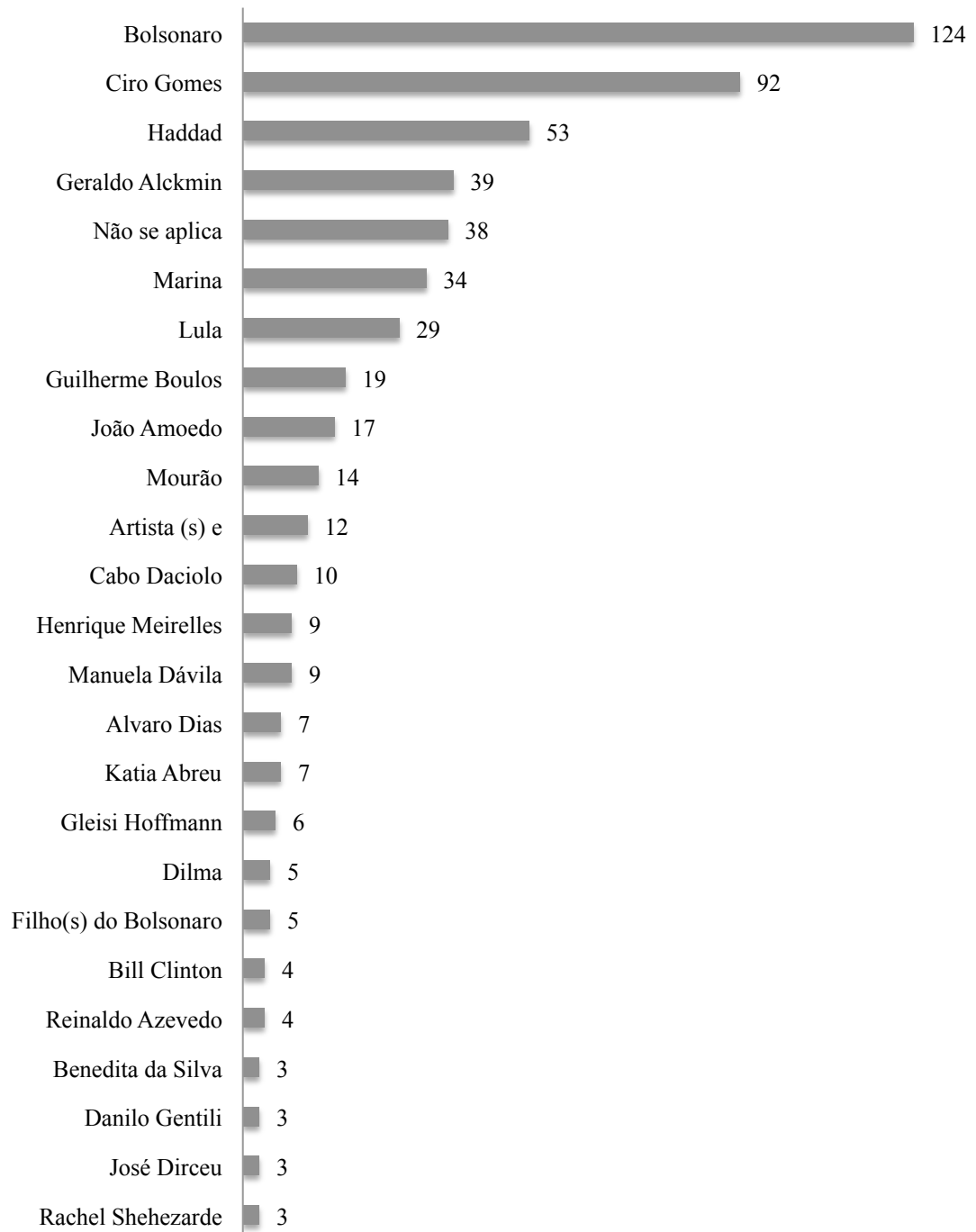
Only 27 messages encompassed the use of @-references, with links to 15 different profiles. Ciro Gomes was the most mentioned profile (6 mentions), followed by Fernando Haddad and Jair Bolsonaro, with 3 mentions each. Since less than 10% of our sample contained hyperlinked mentions, we identified other types of allusions, including direct citation and indirect references. As

shows, the top 20 most cited personas show a different distribution: Bolsonaro stands out, being referred to in 41% of the most popular messages on Twitter. Ciro Gomes is brought up in almost 30% of the tweets, while Haddad is alluded to in only 17% of posts.

Despite being the most cited politician, Bolsonaro was the candidate that mentioned others the least: 25 out of the 52 tweets analysed, did not allude to anyone. Boulos and D'Avila together cited Bolsonaro in 40 messages, granting him visibility among left-wing supporters. Ciro Gomes alluded to himself quite often, also being referred to by Haddad

during the second round as a possible ally. Haddad did not appear often among the popular tweets, with Boulos being the most frequent source of mentions about the PT candidate.

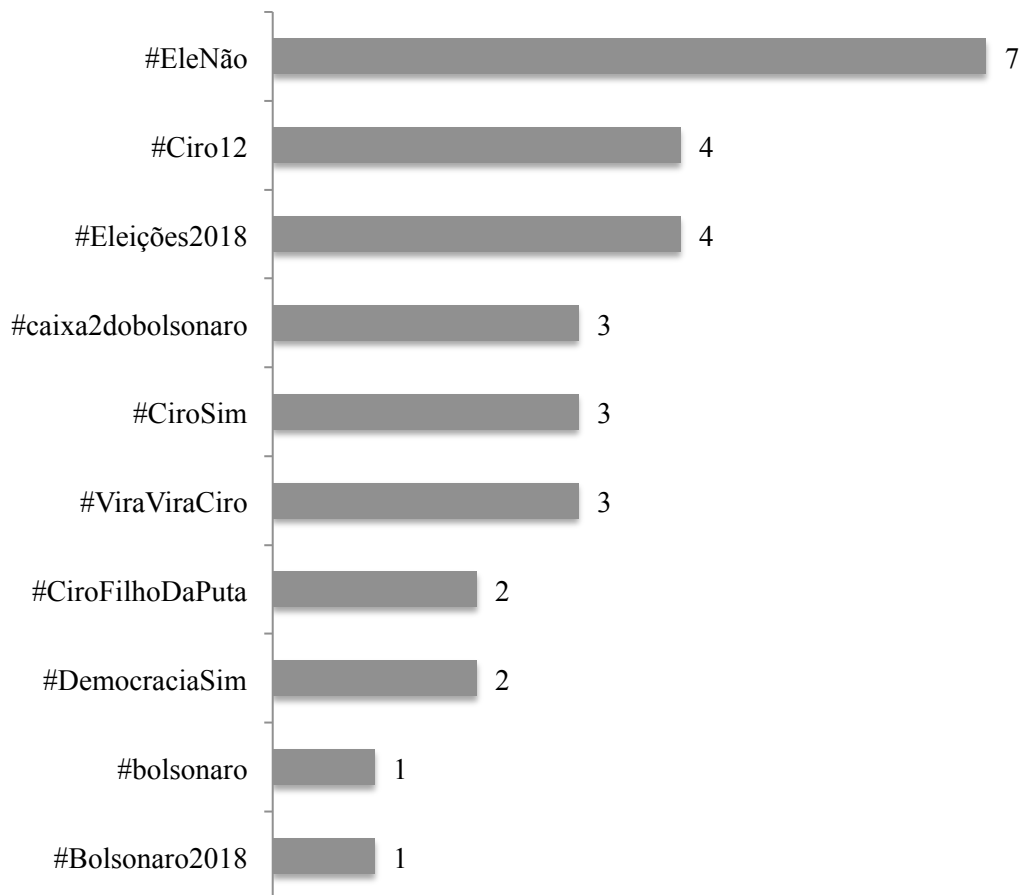
Figure 28 - Top 20 most cited personas



Source: The author.

We noticed that mainly professional and official profiles, such as candidates, journalists and bloggers, compose their tweets by using hashtags, links, and mentions. However hashtags were not frequent among our sample, being used in only 13% of tweets (see Figure 29). Candidates go great lengths to broaden the impact and reach of tweets and to create the impression that they and their opinions are the majority (MUSTAFARAJ *et al.*, 2011). This is achieved through the use of platforms' interactivity affordances, such as hashtags and mentions. From the 40 different hashtags used, #EleNão was the most cited one. Ciro Gomes was the most referenced candidate in the tags and the main author to use them. Bolsonaro did not any hashtags, but was subject of references in both supportive and critic tags.

Figure 29 - Top hashtags' ranking

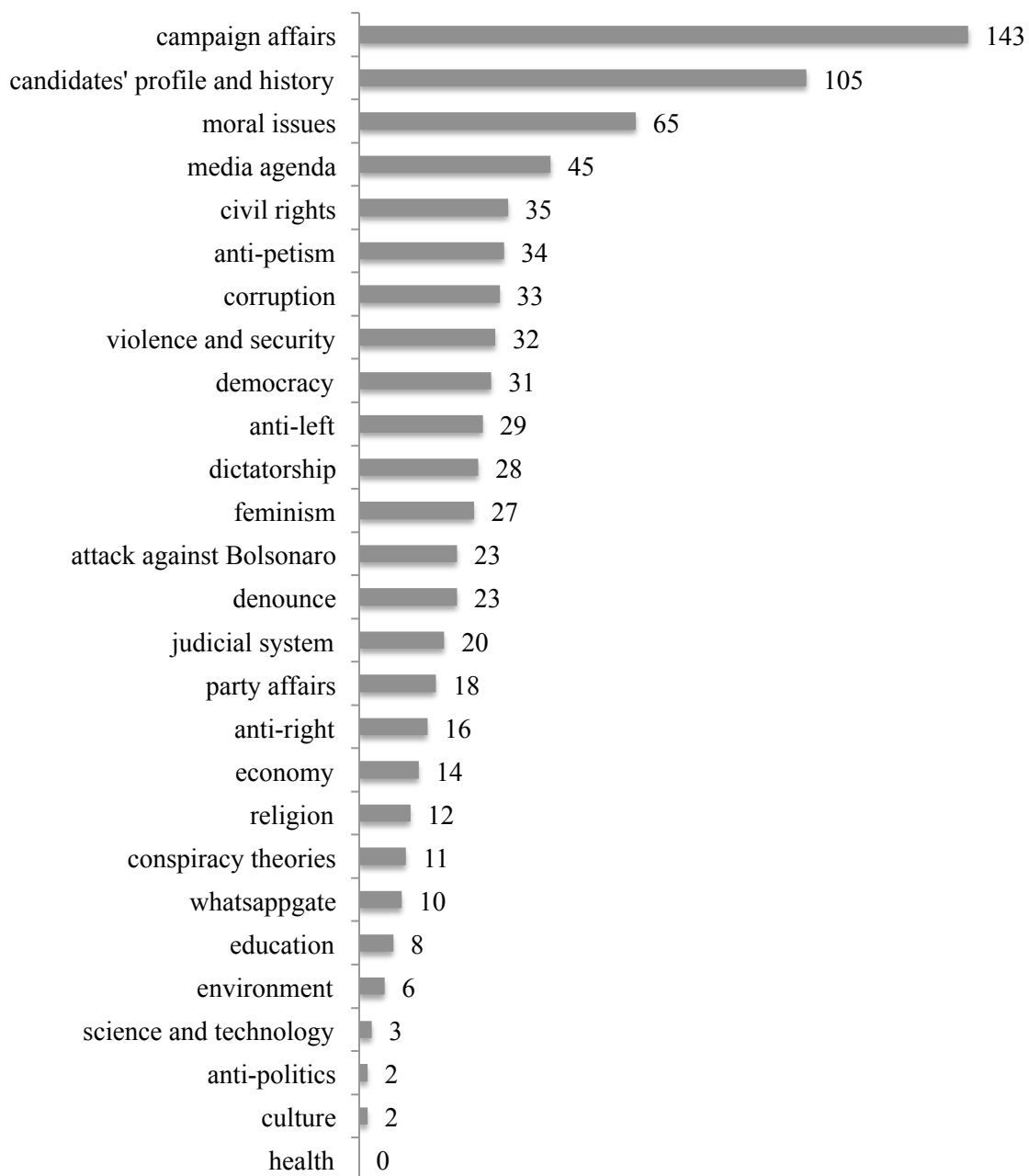


Source: The author.

In order to briefly summarize the content of most popular tweets, we coded the posts according to their topic, tone, sentiment, function and media attachments. Messages content lies more strongly on political candidates and campaign strategy than on policies (see Figure

30). Almost fifty per cent of popular tweets were about campaign affairs, which included campaigning activities, events, strategies and promotion. The level of policy talk was minimal and superficial: when addressed, these issues did not cover concrete proposals or specific programmes. Health, for example, was not even cited, while other important public administration issues, such as education, science and technology, environment and culture, did not figure among the top themes.

Figure 30 - Tweets' topics



Source: The author

The next most common topic related to the candidates' profile and history: personal and private issues, such as previous romantic relationships, individual character and physical features of the main political actors of the campaign, account for almost one third of the most shared tweets. For example, Marina, as the only woman among the main candidates, is often subject to sexism based on her personal history, behaviour and appearance. Ciro Gomes was often quoted in a personal frame, generally in a positive and/or funny approach, with many messages complementing his physical features.

The topics also related to different patterns of citations: for example, Bolsonaro was often cited in relation to violence and security, civil rights, feminism, moral issues, democracy, dictatorship and media coverage. Daciolo was responsible for many of religious references, while Alckmin was cited in anti-right content. Lula and Bolsonaro are especially cited regarding corruption, but while Lula is often accused, Bolsonaro is the main claimant. Lula, Haddad and Boulos figure as the main characters of the anti-left messages, with the first two being referred to in anti-petist posts.

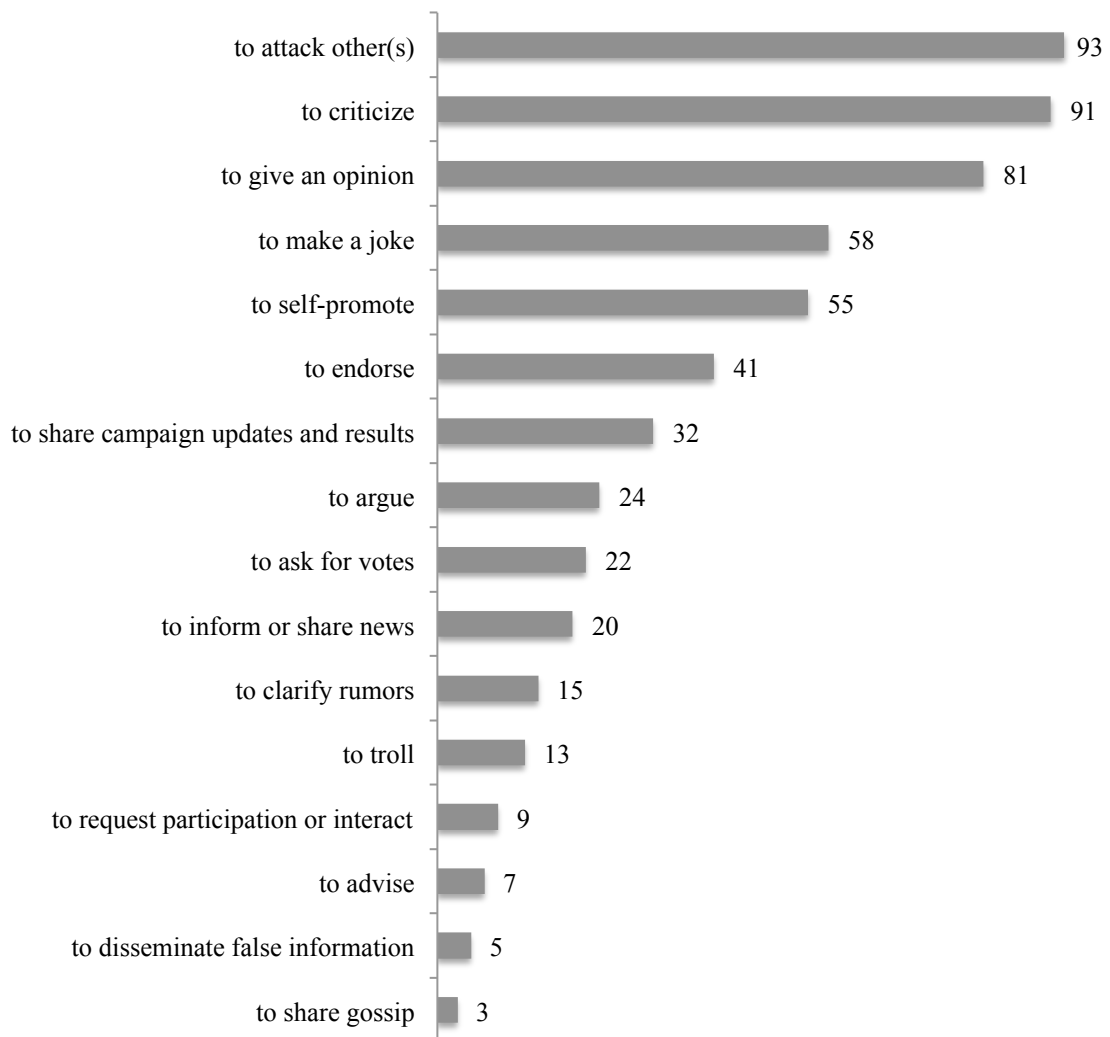
Considerable differences emerge regarding the topics approached by each type of author. Ordinary users and deleted accounts are the main responsible for the prominence of the personal-related messages. The general public also concentrated on civil rights, feminism, moral issues and anti-right content. Candidates brought our attention to more ideological discussions, involving democratic and dictatorship matters. These politicians also approached specific campaign situations, such as the attack against Bolsonaro and the Whatsappgate scandal. Media professionals produced the majority of anti-left posts and also focused on moral issues and anti-petism.

Tweets were coded according to the main communication purpose of message, what we called the "function" dimension (see Figure 31). We have found that almost two thirds of the messages were meant to either attack and to criticize others. Despite not being based on false information per se, these critics and provocations were not supported by evidences nor facts. We can infer that Twitter is used as a medium for propagating negative and emotional claims that could not have been disseminated on other channels, that respect more strict rules from the electoral court.

Other common functions include giving opinions and position taking, self-promotion and reasoning political assumptions. Humoristic content, mainly produced by heavy users of the general public, also accounted for an important percentage of the tweets. Despite all the claims about disinformation, we did not find this issue to be relevant among popular tweets. Trolling and disinforming were not as prominent, as well as initiatives to clarify rumours or

false content. Interacting with other users were not as relevant as one might expect from a participatory medium: requesting participation accounted for 3% of the messages while asking for votes represented 7%.

Figure 31 – Tweets' functions



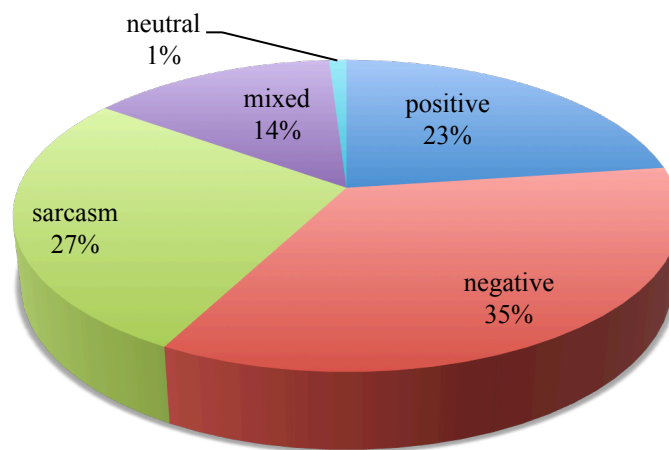
Source: The author

Businessmen were focused on attacking left-wing candidates, while ordinary users were responsible for the humorous content disseminated. Common users were also endorsing candidates and political positions, as well as asking for votes to supported candidates. The only tweet by an authority was meant to clarify how one should assess whether pieces of information are false or true. Candidates were the accounts clarifying rumours, self-promoting and informing. Several politicians, such as Daciolo, Gomes and Bolsonaro, also used tweets to self-promotion. Boulos and D'Avila's posts criticized Bolsonaro and demonstrated their

positions regarding sexist, racist and intolerant positions of the elected candidate. D'Avila was a frequent target of fake news and hoaxes during the election, leading the candidate to elucidate disinformation efforts related to moral attacks from the opposition.

We encoded the messages regarding sentiment, since it is seen as a key driver of information dissemination (DANG-XUAN *et al.*, 2013). As indicated in Figure 32, negative messages accounted for more than one third of the Tweets, followed by sarcastic content. The general public and journalists used sarcasm, while negative sentiment were predominant among candidates and politicians, as well as suspended accounts. Positive messages came both from candidates and common users.

Figure 32 - Tweets sentiment analysis



Source: The author

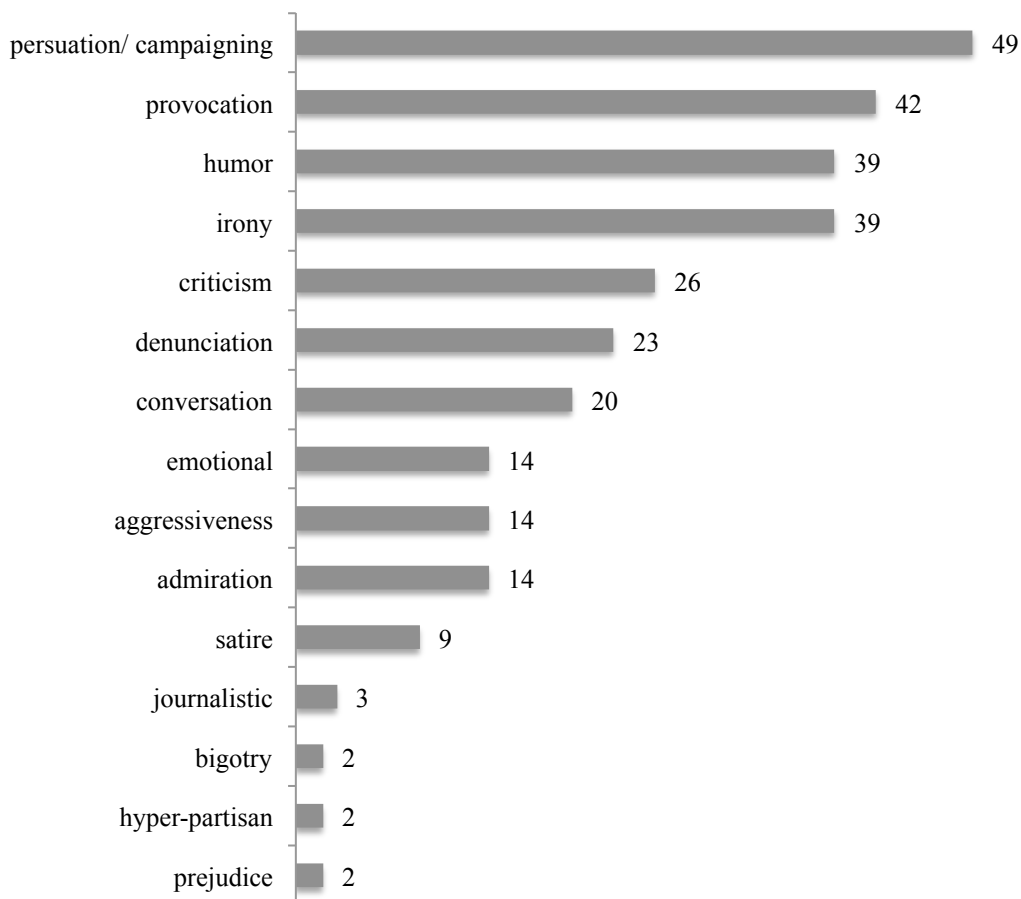
Bolsonaro's, Ciro's and Haddad's posts were mainly positive, while Boulos and D'avila were mainly negative. Bolsonaro is often negatively quoted, but he is also subject of sarcasm. Mourão is practically only referred to in negative posts. Alckmin was quoted in several negative and sarcastic comments. Ciro Gomes is cited in many positive and sarcastic quotes, while Haddad and Marina are targeted by sarcasm. Lula's references are balanced between positive and negative.

Political communication on social media exhibits a high level of opinions, appraisals, and emotions, associating sentiments with political identities and views (CONOVER *et al.*, 2011). Our analysis reinforces previous results (JUNGHERR, 2016) and indicates that Twitter communication dynamics are less based on the exchange and debate of political arguments

but rather on phatic statements in reaction to political events (PAPACHARISSI; DE FATIMA OLIVEIRA, 2012).

Besides sentiment analysis, we coded the messages regarding the communication style, referred here as tone (see Figure 33). Our findings indicate that a persuasive style was the most common, followed closely by provocation, humour and irony. These types of register strengthen the assumption that while campaigns on Twitter are becoming more professional, popular messages on the platform often are structured around emotional, negative or humorous tones. Despite the aggressiveness of some of these funny or provocative messages, hate speech was not common among the most popular tweets.

Figure 33 - Tweets register, coded according to communication tone



Source: The author

As Twitter becomes a pervasive communication tool and medium, the devotion of candidates to social media in a campaign context has unmistakable impact on the general public debate. Provided that the electorate is turning to online platforms for political purposes, politicians are aiming to explore the medium to interact with supporters in innovative ways.

Campaigns were structured around the classic vision of unidirectional communication and broadcasting (RAMOS-SERRANO; FERNANDEZ GOMEZ; PINEDA, 2018): the use and popularity of professional messages is deeply asymmetrical, indicating that horizontality and interactivity did not substantiate political discussion on Twitter.

Twitter is well suited for short statements, concise affirmations, critiques and one-liners, with occasional links to content on the web (JUNGHERR; SCHOEN; JUERGENS, 2016). Due to their design and uses, Twitter campaigns do not set the stage for extended analyses, commentary, or deliberative exchanges. This mediation, alongside with algorithmic filtering of content, still posit questions around the idea that Twitter may serve as a proxy for general public opinion (BODE; DALRYMPLE, 2016).

While the descriptive data presented provide a starting point for our analysis, they do not reveal much about the relationships between the different candidates and disseminated content. We adopt the definition of discursive participation (CARPINI; COOK; JACOBS, 2004) that accepts the incompleteness of deliberation, thus including talks, discussion and informal conversation that extrapolate formal and so-called rational structures of political debate (HAMPTON; SHIN; LU, 2017). Instead of focussing on sharing dynamic, we will dwell on how tweets can indicate the process of public opinions manufacturing that arises from the “conversation” online (KATZ, 2006).

3.4. OPPOSING AGENDAS

Given the centrality of candidates among the popular Twitter users identified in the previous section, we understand that the messages produced by these politicians have great potential to provide insights into public opinion and conversation during the campaign. Table 6 and Table 7 show a few representative tweets that briefly exemplifies two main issue agendas, leaded and disseminated by opposing candidates. Left-wing candidates were gravitating around the dichotomy between democracy and dictatorship, also focusing on minority identities, feminism and prejudice. Right-wing politicians were otherwise relating economic issues, corruption and anti-petism.

Tweet #3, from Marina Silva, demonstrates how leftists framed authoritarian actions within a moral register, putting collective identities and civil rights as a central issue in the public debate. Tweet #4 shows a common trait for the approach of feminism: employment of hashtags related to the demonstrations against Bolsonaro. Manuela D’Avila makes an argument supported by empirical and logical evidence for those claims. She included a video

with several images of Jair Bolsonaro belittling minorities' rights and being aggressive towards women, black people and the LGBTI community.

On the opposite side of the spectrum, right wing candidates, and more prominently Bolsonaro, based campaign strategies on a kaleidoscopic discursive mobilization so as to capture different social aspirations and political frustrations. The candidate argued that, in order to clean Brazil from corruption he would reduce the number of ministries, extinguish and privatize state-owned companies, combat fraud in social programs and decentralize power.

Table 6 - Representative tweets from left-wing candidates

1	<p>@cirogomes:</p> <p>I have been warning about the growth of fascism in Brazil for a long time. While some were omitting, I was already fighting this danger to Brazil. This fight will continue even stronger! #DEMOCRACIASIM https://t.co/3h43MSIsuy</p> <p><i>[Venho alertando sobre o crescimento do fascismo no Brasil há muito tempo. Enquanto alguns se omitiam, eu já lutava contra esse perigo para o Brasil. Essa luta seguirá ainda mais forte!]</i></p>
2	<p>@GuilhermeBoulos</p> <p>President of the STF said that he prefers to call the military coup "1964 movement". The next step will be to call torture "physical and psychological pressure" and political killings "casualties". Democracy calls for help when even the Supreme Court relativizes a dictatorship.</p> <p><i>[Presidente do STF disse que prefere chamar o golpe militar de "movimento de 1964". O próximo passo vai ser chamar as torturas de "pressão física e psicológica" e os assassinatos políticos de "baixas". A democracia pede socorro quando até a suprema corte relativiza uma ditadura.]</i></p>
3	<p>@MarinaSilva:</p> <p>The cyber attack against the group #MulheresContraOBolsonaro is a demonstration of how dictatorships work. Any authoritarian act is unacceptable, wherever it comes from, against anyone. All my solidarity with the group. Let this cowardice be investigated and punished.</p> <p><i>[O ciberataque contra o grupo #MulheresContraOBolsonaro é uma demonstração de como ditaduras operam. Qualquer ato autoritário é inaceitável, venha de onde vier, seja contra quem for. Toda minha solidariedade ao grupo. Que essa covardia seja investigada e punida.]</i></p>
4	<p>@ManuelaDavila</p> <p>On the 29th we will meet in acts across the country to show that we are together against sexism, homophobia, intolerance and racism. #EleNão #EleNunca https://t.co/AjIN86jUZs</p> <p><i>[Dia 29 iremos nos reunir em atos por todo o país para mostrar que estamos juntas contra o machismo, a homofobia, a intolerância e o racismo.]</i></p>

Source: The author

Tweet #3, from Marina Silva, demonstrates how leftists framed authoritarian actions within a moral register, putting collective identities and civil rights as a central issue in the

public debate. Tweet #4 shows a common trait for the approach of feminism: employment of hashtags related to the demonstrations against Bolsonaro. Manuela D’Avila makes an argument supported by empirical and logical evidence for those claims. She included a video with several images of Jair Bolsonaro belittling minorities’ rights and being aggressive towards women, black people and the LGBTI community.

Table 7 - Representative tweets from right-wing candidates

5	@jairbolsonaro:	<p>The Workers' Party financed dictatorships via BNDES; annulled the legislature in the monthly allowance; has treasurers, marketers and former president in jail for corruption; wants to end Lava Jato, in addition to controlling the media and internet. If someone threatens democracy, it is the PT!</p> <p><i>[O Partido dos Trabalhadores financiou ditaduras via BNDES; anulou o legislativo no mensalão; tem tesoureiros, marketeiros e ex-presidente na cadeia por corrupção; quer acabar com a Lava Jato, além de controlar a mídia e internet. Se alguém ameaça a democracia, esse alguém é o PT!]</i></p>
6	@jairbolsonaro:	<p>Accommodated by the old dirty politics, many doubted our seriousness in a presidential dispute. Today we have a respectable and growing team, whose center of ideas unites conservatives, liberals, Christians, atheists and many others, aiming for a common good: Brazil and our freedom!</p> <p><i>[Acomodados com a velha política suja, muitos duvidaram de nossa seriedade numa disputa presidencial. Hoje temos um respeitável e crescente time, cujo centro das ideias une conservadores, liberais, cristãos, ateus e outros muitos, visando um bem comum: o Brasil e nossa liberdade!]</i></p>
7	@jairbolsonaro:	<p>ECONOMY and GOVERNABILITY: With the decentralization of power, we resolve the suspicious promiscuous relations between Federation, State and Municipality; combating the peculiar problems of each region, making it easier for citizens to inspect the applicability of public resources.</p> <p><i>[ECONOMIA e GOVERNABILIDADE: Com a descentralização do poder dirimimos as suspeitas relações promíscuas entre Federação, Estado e Município; combatendo os problemas peculiares de cada região, facilitando ao cidadão a fiscalização na aplicabilidade dos recursos públicos.]</i></p>
8	@jairbolsonaro:	<p>Our economic team works to reduce the tax burden, reduce bureaucracy and deregulation. No more taxes is our motto! We are and will do it differently. This is the Brazil we want!</p> <p><i>[Nossa equipe econômica trabalha para redução de carga tributária, desburocratização e desregulamentações. Chega de impostos é o nosso lema! Somos e faremos diferente. Esse é o Brasil que queremos!]</i></p>

Source: The author

On the opposite side of the spectrum, right wing candidates, and more prominently

Bolsonaro, based campaign strategies on a kaleidoscopic discursive mobilization so as to capture different social aspirations and political frustrations. The candidate argued that, in order to clean Brazil from corruption he would reduce the number of ministries, extinguish and privatize state-owned companies and combat fraud in social programs.

Tweet #5 exemplifies how right-wing candidates articulated anti-communism accusations with PT political leaders and policies and criticized corruption in financial terms. In tweet #6, Bolsonaro explored anti-systemic tendencies to pitch himself as a legitimate advocate of the country's sovereignty and of the people's sovereignty. Nonetheless, his popular tweets gave voice to a more policy-centered approach, relating economical reforms to the end of corruption, as displayed in tweet #7. Distancing himself from previous polemic statements, Bolsonaro adopts a more rational and less abstract tone, such as in tweet #8.

By analyzing the content of popular tweets, we could synthesize the two main political views set by public debate. As Lipmann (1997) argues, given the political world we have to deal with is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind, people take as facts not what actually is, but what they perceive to be facts. While the left offered an image of a democracy jeopardized by intolerance, elitism and conservatism, Bolsonaro led the right towards a legitimate economical solution anchored on a fight against corruption in financial, moral and religious terms.

3.5. MANUFACTURING PREVALENT AND DISRUPTIVE OPINIONS ON TWITTER

As Anstead and O'Loughlin (2015) indicate, by analyzing social media political discussion, we are able to understand how different opinions of various publics intersect and collide. Our results and analysis suggest that Bolsonaro was able to influence contributions from left- and right-wing candidates, taking advantage from public deliberation dynamics. The candidate profited from the general political climate (SINGER, 2018), the mainstream media coverage and the oppositions' attacks.

The perceptions of majority and minority opinions influence how an individual enters a deliberative situation. Carpini, Cook and Jacobs (2004) indicate that the ones who anticipated being part of the majority are likely to ignore opposing views. In comparison, those who perceive to be part of the minority appear to be more likely to seek out information that supports their views, to actively listen to opposing views during the discussion itself and to be more prepared for discussions. Using techniques of "attention hacking" (BOYD, 2017), Bolsonaro was able to place himself as the most prominent and urgent topic on Twitter,

monopolizing the issues and frames approached in public deliberation.

Despite gaining popularity in an atmosphere of anger and panic predominantly organized around the combined accusation of communism and gender ideology (Kalil 2019), his controversial quotes and intolerant behavior were more intensely articulated by the left. By placing the emphasis on the extreme-right, progressive candidates bet on mobilizing voters against a fascist threat, embodied by Bolsonaro, and articulated a “politically correct” front centered around ideological arguments. However, these disruptive initiatives backfired at progressive leaders, turning their visibility and speech directly correlated to Bolsonaro’s. Social media employ algorithms that show users a prioritized subset of generated content, favoring exposure to congruent information, since awareness of disagreement can create a spiral of silence that may reduce deliberation, interaction and, consequently, advertising revenue (HAMPTON; SHIN; LU, 2017).

Our findings indicate that left-wing candidates were not only guaranteeing spontaneous polemics around moral issues brought about by Bolsonaro, but were also unable to address their own topics and perspective. Regarding their own propositions, leftist proposals, policies or even self-promotion did not resonate into a prominent topic, creating a spiral of silence (NOELLE-NEUMANN, 1974). The dichotomy between autocracy and democracy gained visibility and some organizational depth through the #EleNão campaign. The progressive agenda faced the uphill struggle to reframe moral issues and was pushed to a more assertive tone coupled with radicalizing content.

The bulk of public questions deal with matters that are out of sight of most citizens, therefore citizens are always selective and usually creative in imagining the political landscape (LIPPMANN, 1997). Bolsonaro’s campaign strategy was able to articulate neoliberal narratives, regarding economical terms, to a neoconservative rationality, in respect to moral and social values. Corruption was framed as an ideological issue and paired most often with economical policies. On top of pushing people against PT and left-wing administrations, this framing imposed a reference point of democracy as economic neoliberalism.

This was particularly important to Bolsonaro’s communication strategy, based on segmenting information for different profiles of potential voters. Micro targeting has been central to political campaigns, based on algorithmic profiling of whom and how to influence, campaigns can then produce messages or plan actions aimed at each specific sub-group (PAPAKYRIAKOPOULOS *et al.*, 2018). Citizens produce mental images and stories as a mechanism for interpreting the meaning of political opinions in terms of their relationships to

other material. This means that ordinary users make sense of political discussion on Twitter by contextualizing fragmentary tweets within larger narrative configurations and identifying objects of interpretation. The strategic process of disseminating stimuli based on voters' personal preferences and characteristics is related to discursive strategies. In the following section, we will investigate his campaign's ability to articulate a set of dispersed struggles, diffused values and fragmented demands into the prevalent opinion.

CHAPTER 4

A SUITABLE MEDIA FOR BRAZILIAN POPULISM? TWITTER CAMPAIGN AND NETWORKED HEGEMONY

As we have seen, Jair Bolsonaro, a retired military officer, has consistently framed himself as a moral savior for the country, combining a neoliberal economic project, a messianic discourse, and hatred for the country's social and political minorities. He has openly defended military rule, torture, wider access to firearms and seizing Indigenous lands. He has also applauded discrimination against LGBT people, normalized violence against women, and argued that the discourse of human rights has done a "disservice" to Brazil. As a far-right populist, Bolsonaro's communication strategy was based on aggressive discourse, politically incorrect statements, misleading information, and declarations discrediting mainstream media (BBC, 2018).

We have already demonstrated in previous chapters that Bolsonaro was both a prominent author and predominant topic. Nonetheless, the assumption of a high affinity between populists and social media have not been put to a hard test yet (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). As such, examining how Twitter influenced the political landscape in Brazil still remains relevant and necessary. In the present chapter, we aim at understanding how populist communication strategies were employed on social media during the elections, focusing on the question of how Twitter provided an ideal media channel to disseminate Bolsonaro's populist discourse.

Laclau (2005) understands populism as discourses that articulate and communicate social demands while creating social identities and dividing society into antagonistic groups. A condition for populism is the consolidation of a chain of equivalences that unifies these demands into a stable system of signification. Hence, our purpose is to investigate the articulation of dispersed struggles, diffused values and fragmented demands into what became

the prevalent signification effort on Twitter: Bolsonaro's discourse articulation linked to the citizen of good.

Initially, we provide an overview of the relation between populism and social media. Then, we critically interpreted what kind of populist narratives Bolsonaro disseminated on Twitter. We investigate how empty signifiers were socially produced during the campaign, engaging in chains of equivalence and indicating their role in the discursive battleground of hegemonic projects. After analysing the tweets as a set of signifying practices through which a particular sense of political reality is constituted, we discuss how Bolsonaro's discursive articulations took advantage of Twitter uses, affordances and architecture during the elections.

4.1. POPULISM 2.0 AND SOCIAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

Despite being the object of sustained research interest, populism is an elusive and slippery concept. The definition introduced by Albertazzi and McDonnell (2008) conceives populism as an ideological perspective that pits a virtuous people deprived (or threaten to be) from their rightful sovereignty by dangerous others and corrupt elites. From this definition, authors have argued that populism can be understood as a less elaborate or thin ideology, usually enriched by more substantive ideologies, such as socialism, nationalism, or liberalism (KRIESI, 2014). Nonetheless, the lack of a universal definition of populism hinges on its different manifestations that depend on contextual conditions.

Populist movements can emerge across the ideological spectrum, on left, right and center parties (POSTILL, 2018). The commonality shared between different these platforms is the political transversal logic centered on the principle of popular sovereignty (GERBAUDO, 2018). As Gerbaudo (2018) indicates, this unifying appeal can take differing forms according to the political orientation of a given movement. Thus, we adopt Ernesto Laclau's (2005) understanding of populism as the emergence of equivalences between social and political demands into a unified chain articulated around the nodal point 'the people' that represents society and divides it based on antagonistic principles. Populism involves the appeal to the entirety of the political community against a common enemy (LACLAU, 2005).

There has also been a vivid debate around populist communication (ESSER; STRÖMBÄCK, 2014; NADLER, 2019; WETTSTEIN *et al.*, 2019), from which we can identify common approaches: populism as ideology relates to the content of populist communication; populism as style focuses on the form of populist communication; and

populism as strategy refers to the motives behind populist communication. There is some agreement that these definitions merely represent different aspects of populism and that they are not mutually exclusive (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). Populist communication manifests itself in concrete terms by emphasizing the sovereignty of the people, advocating for them, attacking the elite, ostracizing others, and invoking the 'heartland' (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). Three main dimensions underpin the populist communication style: negativity, emotionality, and sociability (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). As Ernst *et al.* (2019) indicate, there is a growing consensus that populist communication combines both the use of key ideological messages and populist rhetoric stylistic elements.

Contemporary parties and political actors have guaranteed a major role for social media platforms on their political communication strategies (STIEGLITZ; DANG-XUAN, 2013). Network media logic requires campaign strategies based on interest-bound and like-minded peer networks, distancing from the traditional media logic, based on professional gatekeepers and a relatively passive audience (KLINGER; SVENSSON, 2015). This networked logic is built upon the virality potential of online communication, which compels users' feedback to be considered as a source of legitimacy (GERBAUDO, 2014). Social media has offered populist a direct democracy of likes, a means of permanent consultation of the people's voice, as well as an unmediated and inexpensive access to voters.

The logic of interactivity and participation, involved with the development of the Web 2.0, has brought about updates of traditional populist features and communicative strategies. Populism and online communication have been theoretically approached early in the history of the Internet: scholars envisioned on the web a potential to restructure political power by enabling unmediated communication between citizens, politicians and governments (BIMBER, 1998). The appeal to unity, the anti-establishment claims, the strive for direct democracy, and the suspicion of intermediaries matched with social media communicative architecture, based on interactivity, openness and directness (GERBAUDO, 2014). An elective affinity, based on the suitability of social media for the populist to appeal to ordinary people, has created a social imaginary for online populist discourse to be understood as 'the people's voice' and for online collective action to be acknowledged as 'the people's rally' (GERBAUDO, 2018).

Social media assumed other roles besides providing real-time feedback about what the people are saying: these platforms allow political actors to directly promote themselves, to personally communicate with their electorate, to actively circumvent traditional news channels and to connect with 'like-minded others' (JACOBS; SPIERINGS, 2016). This means

that social media is highly compatible with populist communication for simultaneously encapsulating a direct access to the citizens without journalistic interference, a close connection to the people, an infinite potential for personalization, and the possibility to target specific groups (ERNST *et al.*, 2017).

Furthermore, we can claim that there is a paradoxical relationship between populism and traditional mass media: on one hand, populists criticize mainstream media, accusing legacy outlets of privileging their own interests over the people's will; on the other, they need it to reach a larger audience and to increase their legitimacy (GERBAUDO, 2018). Provocative statements have become a key social media strategy to overcome the media threshold: for example, the exploitation of populist news values by outsiders, backbenchers and newcomers can be particularly effectively when criticizing those in power for political failures and the supposed neglect of the concerns of the population (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). By disseminating controversial, spectacular, and taboo-breaking messages online, populists profit from a so-called news value and often meet the selection criteria of the media. Journalists, to deal with hotly debated issues holistically, often feel obliged to cover extreme positions, who populists claim ownership and problem-solving competence (ERNST *et al.*, 2017).

Whilst this social media strategy establishes their own closeness to the people and grants these political underdogs a certain degree of authenticity, the need to break into mainstream media is still pressing. From this understanding, we can derive some expectations of populist actors: as they systematically circumvent legacy outlets, they need a platform that allows them to criticize the mainstream media as distorted and unfair, as well offer an alternative medium to those citizens they have been able to alienate from the traditional media (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). Social media platforms can act as this alternative medium because they create protected spaces in which one-sided anecdotes of political conviction and uncivil messages accumulate into massive quantities, promoting an in-group mentality that populists can use to mobilize supporters and coordinate political actions (KRÄMER, 2017).

Structured around custom connections, populist communication campaigns often rely on like-minded citizens sharing populist messages among their peers, in order to publicly foster their support and interests. Allied to engagement around issues of common concern, populist campaigns depend on the simplification of political agendas and on technological tools to share these ideas. From Laclau's perspective, connecting diverging demands into political articulations, besides being an ideological strategy, becomes a discursive and signification endeavor that, when analyzed in depth, can help us contribute to a convincing theory of the affinity between social media and populism.

4.2. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON TWITTER

A central concern in the study of the interface between discourse and politics is the question of how ideological power is achieved and maintained through certain types of information use and communication practices. The analyses initiated by the Essex School provide a consistent formulation of populism by utilizing a series of discourse-theoretical tools (STAVRAKAKIS; KATSAMBEKIS, 2014). Post-Marxist discourse theory, as developed by the Argentinian political philosopher Ernesto Laclau, stresses the political and contingent dimensions of meaning and argues that social reality is produced through continuous hegemonic struggles (LACLAU, 1987).

Laclau (2005) regards discourse as based on inevitable and endless hegemonic conflicts and struggles over identities, assuming that social relations can never achieve the objective identity that is claimed. From a methodological standpoint, discourse theoretical analysis is valuable for deconstructing the complex relationships between representations, subjects and identities, and the way they contribute to the generation of old and new meanings (CARPENTIER; DE CLEEN, 2007). This means that the construction and sedimentation of political projects take place on signifying systems, systematized totalities called discourses (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018).

As Carpentier and De Cleen (2007) assert, this theoretical framework understands discourse as representation, accounting for interweaving of the linguistic and the non-linguistic. This approach assumes texts as materializations of meaning and ideology, by focusing on the representations embedded in the text, and not so much on the language used. Regarding the conceptual perspective, the discourse analysis refers to the social as the locus for meaning generation, instead of a confined specific setting. Nonetheless, as Walton and Boom (2014) indicate, there is little methodological guidance for operationalizing and performing a discourse analysis based on Laclau's and Mouffe's theoretical principles.

Our empirical material constituted of all 661 posts by Jair Bolsonaro's feed from August 16th, 2018 to October 27th, 2018. The analysis followed a six-step iterative process: constructing the data, compiling an outline of events, identifying key antagonistic discourses, analysing the organization of key discourses, analysing the subjectivity and examining the process of hegemonic closure (WALTON; BOON, 2014). Following the proposition of Glasson (2012), firstly we identified the main themes disseminated during the electoral period, and then addressed how these prominent themes were articulated in Bolsonaro's tweets.

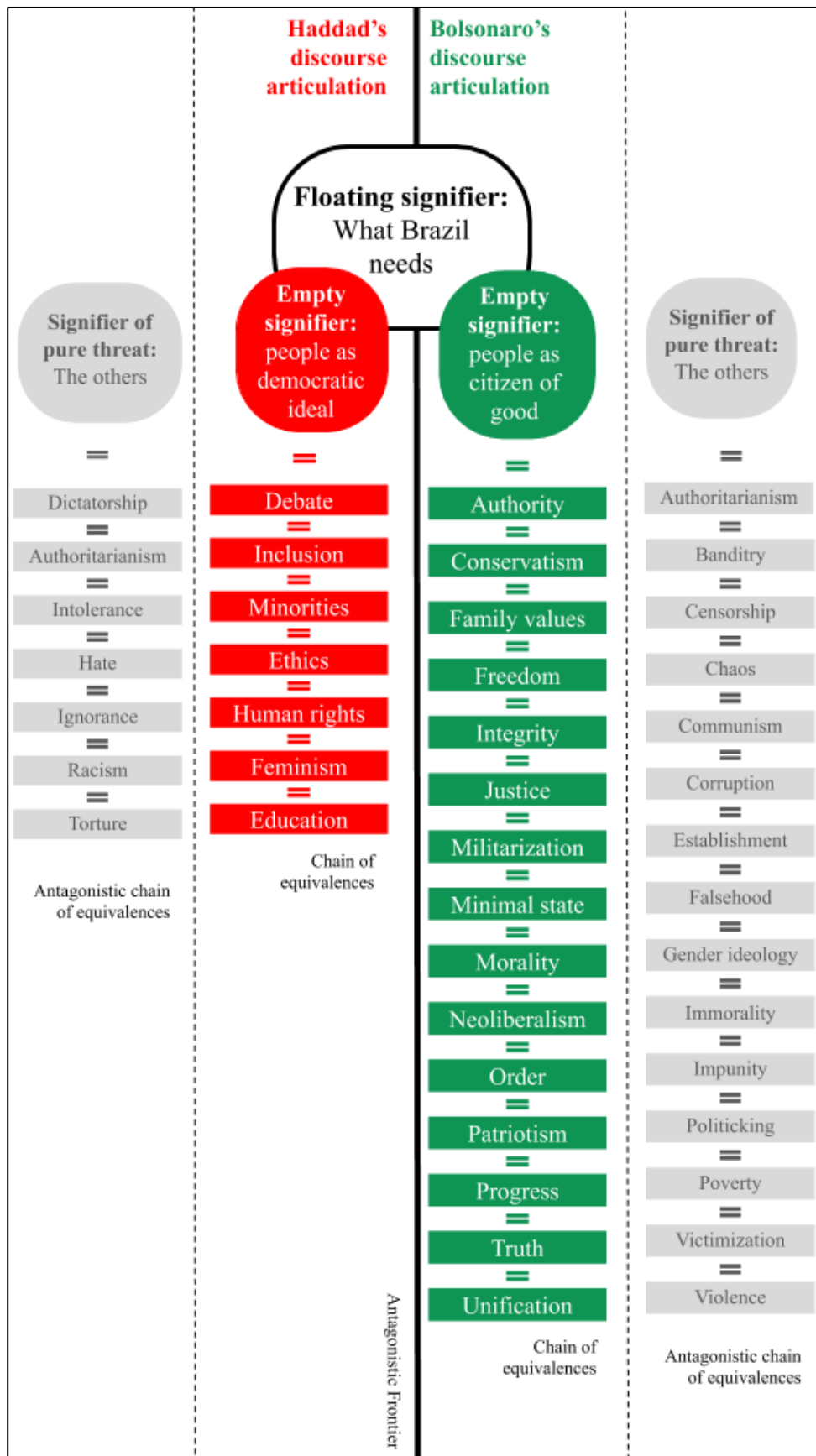
This allowed us to identify the dislocation in the meaning of ‘the people’ in his posts. That is, the meaning of ‘the people’ was being articulated in antagonistic terms, which led to the development of a floating signifier (LACLAU, 2005). In order to look for how events, objects and demands were represented and mobilized by Bolsonaro, we identified the nodal points of his signifying systems. This was achieved through an iterative process of analysing keywords, tweets, topics and themes approached by his campaign. We then examined the key discourse articulations that were triggered around this term from the different “sides” of the conflict. We point out the empty signifiers and the chain of equivalences engaged by them, as well as examine the signification strategies engaged within Bolsonaro’s discursive articulation.

4.3. THE SOCIAL MEDIA PRODUCTION OF EMPTY SIGNIFIERS

Electoral campaigns can be understood as a dislocatory event, in which the meaning of what the country needs is widely approached and its understandings and practices are disputed by different political platforms. Laclau (2005) argues that during an organic crisis, that is, when society is suffering a deep social disorganization, symbolic systems are challenged to radically recast. Beyond highlighting the floating and contingent dimensions of signification, these structural and symbolic dislocations install a crisis of meaning, re-opening political subjectivities (HOWARTH *et al.*, 2000) and drawing them to a discursive battle (WALTON; BOON, 2014). Empirically, this is perceived when different political projects seek to define the meaning and conditions of signification (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018).

Based on an ontology of the social, marked by the antagonism and contingency of identities, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) indicate that different discourses often acquire an antagonistic character. That is, through the articulation around nodal points, discourses difference themselves in a bid to hegemonize the public sphere (STAVRAKAKIS; KATSAMBEKIS, 2014). Hegemony is thus the discursive articulation of particular demands, objects and identities by one of these identities, configuring a sense of reality, a temporarily, notwithstanding contingent, stable point of identities. Hegemonic projects aim to construct and stabilize the nodal points that form the basis of concrete social orders (WALTON; BOON, 2014). The hegemonic meaning resulting from the dispute between these antagonistic projects can be achieved by the articulation of the greatest number of social demands (LACLAU, 2005).

Figure 34 - Antagonistic discourse articulations



Source: The author.

In this section we will provide examples and discuss key nodal points for the establishment of empty signifiers during the elections. In order to help us synthesize the discursive logics of the candidates, we plotted a diagram of the antagonistic discourse articulations (see Figure 34), following the schema presented by Walton and Boom (2014). We worked through the signs and nodal points mobilized by the candidates in order to delineate each discourse articulation (LACLAU, 2005). Although signification processes depend on the differentiation of a sign from all other signs, the totality of the system and ultimately the production of empty signifiers hinge on the prevalence of equivalences over the differences.

When political identities reference the universal as an empty place, their discursive articulation modifies the identities of both the particular and the universal. The possible mediation between the particularism and universalism can be understood as a hegemonic relationship in which a particular content becomes the signifier of the absent communitarian fullness (LACLAU, 1996). As processes of signification and social identification are precarious, instable and contingent, the success of a hegemonic project depends on the articulation of social struggles and demands into dominant chains of equivalential meanings (LACLAU, 1996).

Discursive struggles depend on a surplus of meaning (LACLAU; MOUFFE, 2001) that makes signifiers unable to contain all the possible meanings available within a hypothetical discursive horizon (WALTON; BOON, 2014). Through the articulation of antagonistic discourses towards a common enemy, a discursive boundary is established separating what is constituted and what threatens that constitution. In this opposition, a signifier of pure threat is accused of failing the totality, of frustrating the irretrievable fullness (LACLAU, 2006). The fixation of identities requires a homogenizing and polarizing logic that “renders everything interior to the system the same and everything exterior to it different—and moreover, different in the same way, so that no part of the system has a particular relation to it” (MCKEAN, 2016, p. 802).

We analyzed the signifying dispute taking place between Fernando Haddad and Jair Bolsonaro during the run-off. The antagonistic frontier was axiomatic, thus we examined the electoral dispute from a two sided perspective “of a logic of difference, the positive-negative mirroring across the frontier, and a logic of equivalence through the chains of equivalent signifiers” (WALTON; BOON, 2014, p. 368). As the dispute of which demand should embody the political project is established around the floating signifier ‘country’s’ needs’, each candidate articulated a plurality of social demands that are rendered equivalent in their

shared feature of unfulfillment.

The contingency and associated antagonism of representation of the country's needs are revealed and a floating signifier, a demand lodged in-between the opposing hegemonic projects (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018), is mobilized in the dispute to impose a given viewpoint onto the world and society. Being simultaneously articulated by these two opposing discourses indicates more than a simply growth in meaning complexity, but rather a de-fixation of 'the country's needs' during the electoral dispute. Both political actors were attempting to impose a given perspective onto the country, based on their political platforms, disputing the floating signification of what the country was constitutively lacking. Thus, candidates' articulation of political change for Brazil was perceived as an antagonistic mobilization that allowed these them to critique, delegitimize and exclude opposing political projects.

Figure 35 - Bolsonaro tweet - citizen of good



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 27, 2018

Hegemonic operations depend on the presentation of a particularity, an identity, or a social group as the incarnation of the unfulfilled reality of the communitarian order (LACLAU, 2005). Through discursive articulations, 'the people' is mobilized as a key nodal point to represent the absent fullness. To construct the idea of the people, a relationship between of the universal and the particular is established, creating an internal social frontier that divides society into two main blocs (LACLAU, 2005). The contingency of a given situation is determinant to the selection of which signifier will be emptied to provide a neutral space for the inscription of other demands. This means that the people as an empty signifier is

a boarder semiotic reference that is frequently mobilized to cover a large heterogeneous set of demands (STAVRAKAKIS, 2017).

As shown in Figure 35, Within Bolsonaro's discursive construction of 'the people' the term was articulated as intrinsically connected to a mode of belonging to and behaving in society (KALIL, 2019). The citizen of good has been mobilized by right-wing movements for the last decade and its meaning has evolved in order to accommodate emerging demands (TELES *et al.*, 2018). This figure embodies a social stereotype that captures anti-systemic tendencies and criticizes corruption in financial, moral and religious terms (SANTINI; SALLES; TUCCI, 2021). By articulating the longstanding triad of religion, nation and family as key nodal points of what corruption means, Bolsonaro bestowed the citizen of good with a moral conduct relative both to their private and civic lives.

Not any struggle is able to transform its contents in a nodal point in discourses articulations (LACLAU, 1996). The hegemonic position of a specific social group is the representation of its signifier as realizing the broader aims of society, thus creating a strong but contingent communitarian unit. In his tweet, Bolsonaro argues "good Brazilians" will have their popular sovereignty restored, after being deprived from their individual freedom by communist and corrupt initiatives. As Kalil (2019) indicates, the citizen of good also implied the reduction of the role of the family in the formation of the citizens.

Figure 36 - Bolsonaro tweet - citizen of good



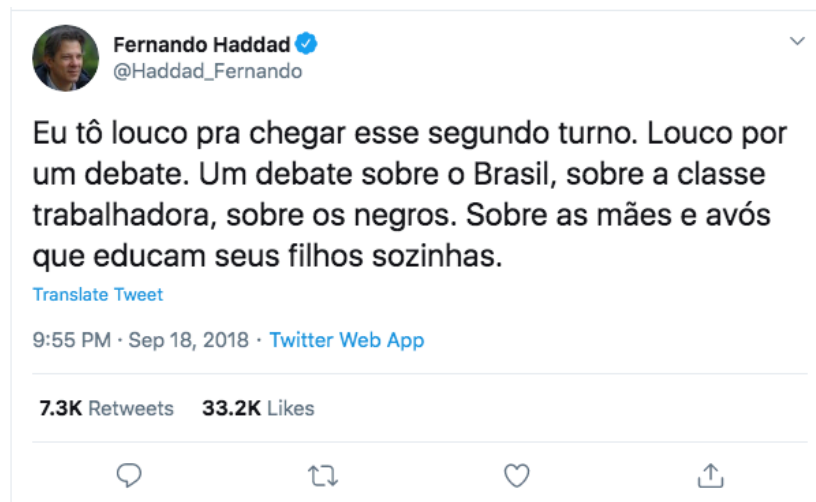
Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 05, 2018

This private and public personhood is also engaged on the fight for individual freedoms, distinguishing from categories, groups, and people connected with left wing

thinking and politics, as shown in Figure 36. Resisting the advance of communism and of gender ideology and advocating for freedom in right-wing terms were used to fix the meaning of what good Brazilians should value: “after 2016, the ‘citizen of good’ had already become synonymous with social and political actors who differ from those perceived or portrayed as ‘communists’, ‘petistas (PT supporters)’ or ‘leftists’- seen as supporters of corruption - as well as ‘those who don’t work’.” (KALIL, 2019, p. 13).

Fernando Haddad’s tweet (see Figure 37) show that left-wing partisanship attempted to articulate and hegemonise ‘the people’ by situating it in the inclusion perspective. That is, they were connecting ‘the people’ to a democratic sense of coexisting with differences. This social order created by hegemonic operations is an unfulfilled reality shared by different social groups. The constitutive lack leads to the incomplete articulation of identities, either due to discursive relations to other identities, to their own incomplete articulation of meanings, or to its antagonistic articulation with a common enemy (JEFFARES, 2014). Within this discourse, ‘the people’ is constructed as a fundamental democratic ideal, namely, that democracy depends on including minorities, instead of deliberately attempting to promote liberal agendas.

Figure 37 - Haddad's tweet: democratic ideal



Source: Twitter Screenshot Sep 18, 2018

Rooted in deliberative democracy ideals, the campaign also argued for understanding the people as participants in the democratic debate. As Friess and Eilders (2015) indicate, there is a shared comprehension that democracy is enhanced through communicative participation in general and deliberative communication in particular. In Figure 38, Haddad includes this aspect in the meaning articulated to ‘the people’: the democratic debate, the

participational ideal that democracy should be played out by the participation of the majority. He references Bolsonaro’s absence from previous debate, enhancing the antagonism between opponents.

Figure 38 - Haddad's tweet: democratic ideal



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 23, 2018

Figure 39 - Haddad's understanding of the people

QUEM ESTÁ <i>a favor</i> DO POVO?	HADDAD	BOLSONARO
DIREITOS TRABALHISTAS	A FAVOR	CONTRA
13º SALÁRIO	A FAVOR	CONTRA
LICENÇA MATERNIDADE	A FAVOR	CONTRA
BOLSA FAMÍLIA	A FAVOR	CONTRA
REVOGAÇÃO DA PEC 95 (QUE CONGELA INVESTIMENTOS EM EDUCAÇÃO, SAÚDE E SEGURANÇA POR 20 ANOS)	A FAVOR	CONTRA
APOIO ÀS UNIVERSIDADES PÚBLICAS	A FAVOR	CONTRA
VERBA DO PRÉ-SAL PARA SAÚDE E EDUCAÇÃO	A FAVOR	CONTRA
DIREITOS DAS DOMÉSTICAS	A FAVOR	CONTRA
FUNDO DE COMBATE À POBREZA	A FAVOR	CONTRA
AUMENTO DE IMPOSTOS PAGOS PELOS BANCOS E SUPER-RICOS	A FAVOR	CONTRA

© 2018 Rede de Políticas Públicas - RPPC

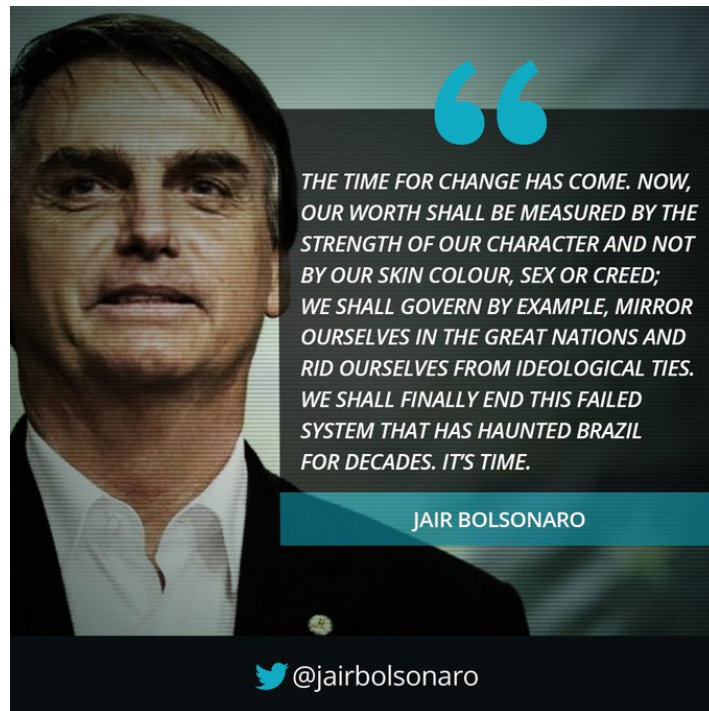
Source: Image attached on tweet from Haddad on Oct 9, 2018

By evoking former from Lula and Dilma's administrations and new policy projects, Haddad presents himself as a true defender of workers, minorities and students' interest. In Figure 39, Haddad's platform attempted to congregate these social groups as key participants in the democratic arena. This also means criticizing Bolsonaro's agenda of exclusion, privileges and liberal reforms and accusing this signifying logic of being responsible for preventing the Brazilian people of having their interests served. Haddad attempts to fix the meaning of the enemy as those who are against the demands of historically excluded actors. The 'others' fear the growth in visibility of marginalized social groups and cling on traditional relationships and attitudes. Claiming inclusion, PT was no longer referencing to the "new middle class" (SINGER, 2018), instead trying to claim the protagonism of lower classes and marginalized groups in the development of the country.

Jair Bolsonaro was also creating the antagonistic relation with a part of the social fabric. As seen in Figure 40, he implicates the people as those with the right priorities and values, free from leftist tendencies and socially guided by a moralist character. The enemies, on the other hand, are articulated with victimization, bad examples and poverty. Thereby, we could argue that criticizing 'the others' simultaneously becomes a critique of the establishment as a structure that allows for good citizens to be wronged. The citizen of good gives shape to a hegemonic worldview that deems anti-communist paranoia and moral panics involving sexual diversity as truthful. The logic of equivalence is based on the simplification of different social demands, by subverting terminological differences, increasing abstraction, reducing literality, and impoverishing their meanings (LACLAU, 1996).

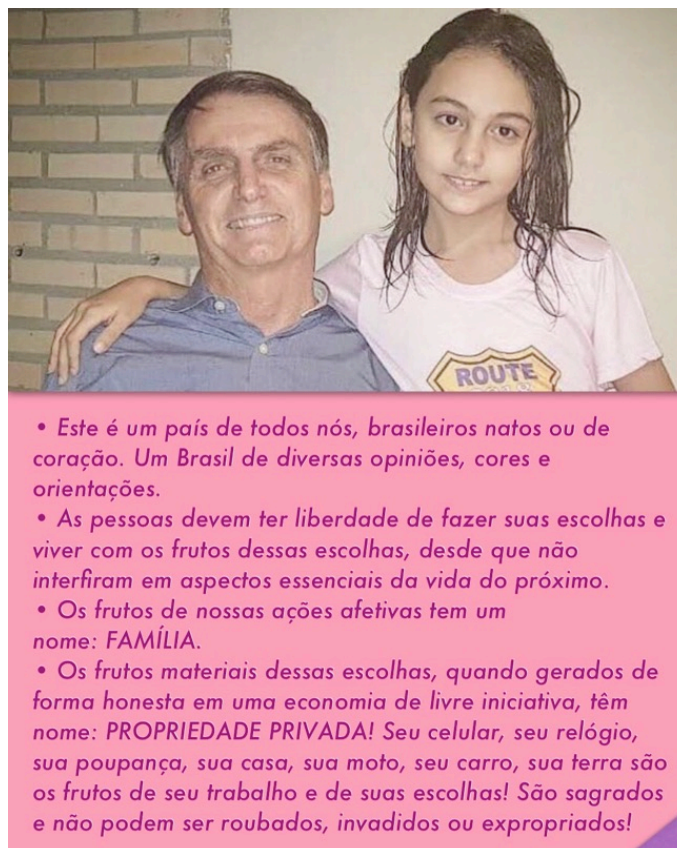
Based on Figure 41 we can argue that Bolsonaro capitalized on the sedimentation of common symbols: freedom, choices and prosperity are presented as a right to the ones that adopt an honest character and agree to the terms of a free market economy. 'The others' threaten to steal, invade and expropriate any or advantage conquered by the families and materialized by their properties and goods. Bolsonaro's discursive strategies articulated the elite's neoliberal agenda with the religious conservative agenda, subverting different narratives into the same meaning. The citizen of good is able to connect the great dissatisfaction over corruption originally directed against the left with a religious and moral "corruption" that conservatives saw in feminism and the LGBT movement as a threat to the traditional family. His discourse took advantage of different unsatisfied demands to match potential voters' identities, together with the spread of narratives constantly inciting outrage from the opposition.

Figure 40 - Bolsonaro's understanding of the people



Source: Image attached on tweet from Bolsonaro on Oct 5, 2018

Figure 41 - Bolsonaro's understanding of the people



Source: Image attached on tweet from Bolsonaro on Oct 27, 2018

Rather than only focusing on how Bolsonaro articulated a populist discourse, we have applied a perspective that also demonstrates how struggles around specific demands are in and of themselves part of a political struggle to hegemonise the social. Democratic deliberation and the citizen of good incarnate the hegemonic conflicts during the elections, in a battle to produce and articulate new modes of representation, identities and subject positions around the floating signifier of the “what the country needs”. It is important to highlight that these demands are heterogeneous despite being identified in the same signifier. By embodying the general equivalent of the whole chain, the production of an empty signifier attributes to a particularity an absolute value that is incommensurable with it.

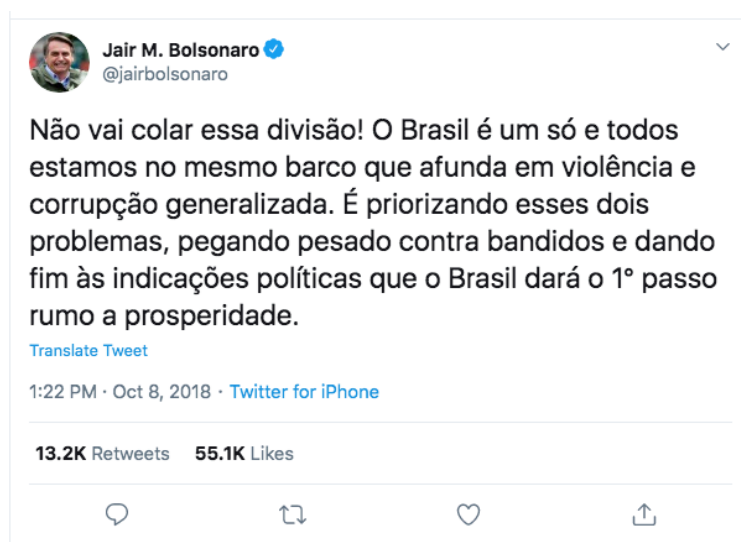
As a requirement by the system’s systematicity, this signifier is emptied to assume the representing function of the absent fullness (LACLAU, 1996). That is, the empty signifier goes beyond the specific terms of a given enumeration and transcends their specific meanings through the equivalence that the terms establish between themselves (LACLAU, 2006). Through the subversion of the signification process itself, the totality of signifying system is possible if the dimension of equivalence is privileged to the point that its differences are almost completely emptied. The empty signifier is constitutively unreachable, indicating a constitutional lack that unifies nodal points into an equivalential chain. By establishing equivalences among identities and their specific social demands, Bolsonaro elevates a particular nodal point, the citizen of good, as an empty signifier that represents all other demands and identities.

An empty signifier privileges the universality of the demands, nonetheless maintaining their particularities. This means that the partial retention of the particularized contents does not lead to the vanishing of their specifications. Rather, the remaining particularity puts limits to the expansion of the chain of equivalences. As the chain grows longer to include other nodal points, the capacity of the empty signifier of representing the whole chain is challenged. A universal equivalence would destroy the equivalential relation and collapse the differential particularism of its links. Hence the equivalence between signifiers only operates in some aspects of their meanings (LACLAU, 2006).

The differential meanings of each demand are also a condition for the representation of the absent fullness (LACLAU, 2006). The signifier of the pure cancellation of all difference, such as the people, can be produced by the radical exclusion of specific identities, features, demands and groups. The two blocs created by this exclusions are antagonistic inasmuch what is inside this frontier is pure positivity and what is beyond the frontier of exclusion is reduced to pure negativity, to pure threat. Similar to the positive categories, all

excluded nodal points have their differences cancelled through the “formation of a chain of equivalences to that which the system demonizes in order to signify itself” (LACLAU, 1996, p. 46). Now, we dive into Bolsonaro’s tweets to identify how diverging demands were articulated in the dispute of electoral relevance. In general terms, Laclau (2005) separates popular struggles from a pre-given social agent, indicating popular movements are comprised of demands, that is, calls for changes with the ambiguous meaning of requests and claims. In order to analyze his discourse, we understand that a specific tweet can be representative of a series of particular demands.

Figure 42 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets

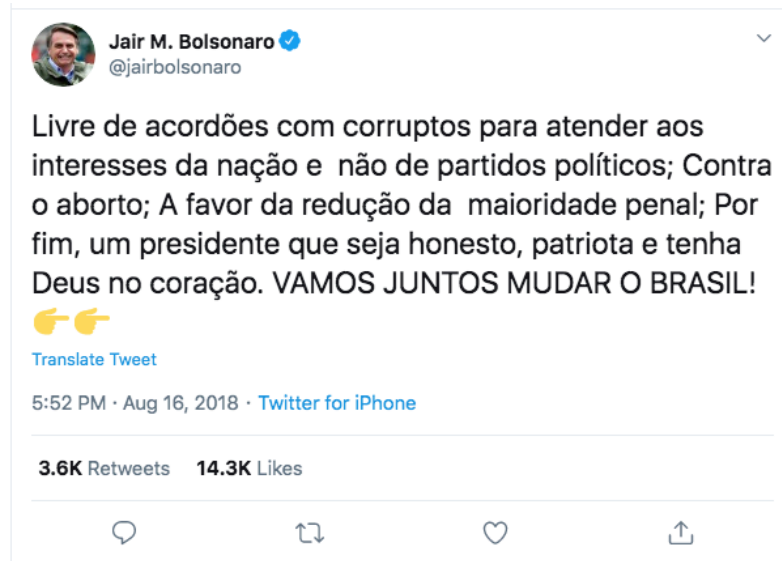


Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 8, 2018.

For example, in Figure 42, Bolsonaro argues he represents the demands of unification, militarization, authority, morality and integrity. The equivalence, a limitation and retention of particularity, is a condition for the representation of fullness, which is radically lacking (LACLAU, 1996). Despite the marked differences of each identity, they are called to position themselves in a relationship in which the difference takes on a secondary character. Bolsonaro articulated these isolated claims from a plurality of social groups around a need imposed on all of them. Aggregating these claims is possible as he opposes to polarization, violence, corruption, banditry and politicking. These negative signifiers are mobilized in order to build a common threat.

The populist signifying regime depends on the representation of an internal division of the social fabric, by representing that which the chain opposes, as well as the emergence of a particular demand as the representation of the entire chain (STAVRAKAKIS, 2017). In

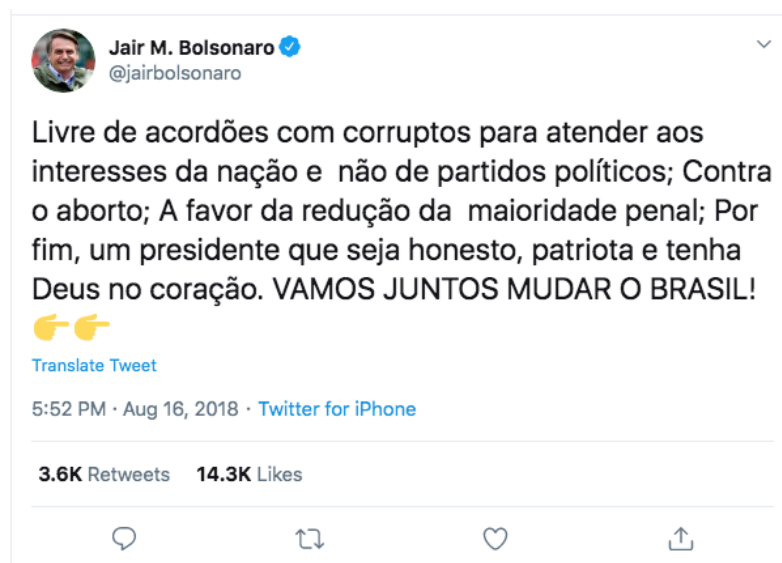
Figure 43 - Example #2 of Bolsonaro's tweets



Source: Twitter Screenshot Aug 16, 2018.

, morality, patriotism, order, conservatism, family values and integrity are linked in opposition to politicking, immorality, corruption and violence. Laclau (1996) argues that signifying systems are based on differences, whose values are relational, granting each act of signification involvement in the totality of the linguistic system. This means that discursive articulation is elastic as it is able to expand itself to feed the horizon of those who feel represented by this particular political project.

Figure 43 - Example #2 of Bolsonaro's tweets



Source: Twitter Screenshot Aug 16, 2018.

This creates an open-ended enumeration that retains the particularized meanings of each signifier by focusing on what they have in common: the threat of the establishment, the communist menace, and the immoral chaos. The logic of equivalence depends on a distortion of language that deprives its representative functions to express something that is beyond all representation (LACLAU, 2006). Bolsonaro render notions such as authority, minimal state, family values, morality, individual freedom and order as equivalent by sharing the condition of being unfulfilled (Figure 44). This indicates Bolsonaro's signifying system is structured around an empty place, around a constitutive lack shared by identities. The antagonistic exclusion of what is beyond the system's limits involves the impossibility of what is within: banditry, violence, communism, gender ideology, immorality and authoritarianism

When a contingent decision is made on what should be included and what should be excluded from certain discourses, hegemonic projects fix particular meanings in an instituting political moment. The constant negotiation and construction of meaning, as understood by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, his long-time collaborator and partner, emphasize the primacy of 'the political' (LACLAU; MOUFFE, 2001). That is, the political is structured around the precarious and always lacking ground instituting any discourse through acts of inclusion-exclusion (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018).

Figure 44 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets



Source: Twitter Screenshot Aug 16, 2018.

Figure 45 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 12, 2018.

In Figure 45 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweets



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 12, 2018.

, we can see that Bolsonaro brings forth family values, unification, conservatism and morality, as a means to indicate the threat posed by immorality, chaos and gender ideology. This tweet exemplifies that his signifying system is constructed through the discharged of antagonistic characters from the totality. Building on Saussure (2012), signification is only possible if one determines its limits, if one determines what is excluded from that system. By thinking on the limits, and consequently on what is beyond them, we are led to understand that these limits show themselves as the interruption of the process of signification. Bolsonaro

mobilizes specific struggles by relying on the differential and relational establishment of its systems limits.

Figure 46 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweet



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 18, 2018.

All identities are socially constituted by its equivalence and its difference with other equally signifiable social positions, as signification processes operate through the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence. In other words, despite its impossibility, “the necessity of signification requires the practice of closure to resolve the tension between equivalence and difference” (MCKEAN, 2016, p. 802). By combining ideals of truth, family values, justice and order, Bolsonaro position himself against violence, chaos, banditry, and falsehood (see Figure 46). Thus, the limits of Bolsonaro’s signifying system paradoxically constitute both the conditions of possibility and impossibility of a signifying system, though the interruption of the ever-growing signification processes.

To conceptualize the logic of equivalence, Laclau (2006) resorts to the two-sided idea of detachment: social demands should be considered “either in their isolated particularity, in which each of them lives a separate existence, or in their equivalent connection, in which each of them manifests the (...) essence” (LACLAU, 2006, p. 141). When constituting a chain of equivalence, a particular social demand counts as a contingent instance in a process that transcends all particular demands, despite the irreducible residue of particularity. All parts of

this system are thus rendered equivalent to each other in their common rejection of the excluded identity (LACLAU, 2005).

In Figure 47, Bolsonaro evokes notions of patriotism and justice to confront impunity, corruption, violence, banditry and victimization. His discourse was built on reshuffling the population into coherent groups, with apparently diverging opinions and demands. This signification recasting mobilized specific collective identities that became equivalential targets, unified through the identification with the citizen of good.

Figure 47 - Example of Bolsonaro's tweet



Source: Twitter Screenshot Oct 3, 2018.

Laclau (2006) understands discourse as the result of articulation practices that reorganize signifiers and meanings. By questioning the legitimacy of social satisfaction and fulfillment, popular demands can challenge existing signifying structures (STAVRAKAKIS, 2017). This understanding structures the contingency of all meanings, indicating that all identities and significations are only provisionally determined. A signifying system can then signify itself as a totality when a particular signifier loses its differential nature and, by privileging the equivalence, stands for the whole system. Despite being an ordinary signifier, empty signifiers gain a special status by establishing an equivalential chain with other social demands (LACLAU, 1996).

The 'people' as an empty signifier indicates which social group should represent the unfulfilled reality of the communitarian order proposed by each of the opposing hegemonic projects. Jair Bolsonaro mobilized the meaning of the people as the citizens of good, while

Fernando Haddad was articulating the representation of the people as the democratic ideal of inclusion. By producing antagonistic relations among social identities, Bolsonaro's populist narratives articulated an empty signifier that became hegemonic. Building on the assumption that the field of discursivity is marked by the primacy of the political, Bolsonaro's Twitter campaign indicates that social media impact campaign strategies by providing the medium for politicians to fix new meanings to unsatisfied social demands.

We can thus claim Bolsonaro and Haddad were adopting a populist discursive articulation (STAVRAKAKIS, 2017) by referencing 'the people' as key nodal points in their hegemonic projects for the country. In other words, the term becomes much more than a representation of Brazilian citizens, but rather a discursive battleground. The framing of the people by both political platforms also depends on social antagonisms and on the creation of an enemy that is deemed responsible for the nonattainment of the people's identity and sovereignty. As Howarth (2004) indicates, the hegemonic relationship depends both on the signification of people as the universal function of the included community, on the establishment of present and absent qualities and demands for this social order and on the creation of a social enemy.

4.4. POPULIST DISCOURSE AND HEGEMONIC LEGITIMATION ON TWITTER

Ernesto Laclau (2007) understands that the making of political identities is constituted by the articulation between universalism and particularism. The possible mediation between the two can be understood as a hegemonic relationship in which a particular content becomes the signifier of the absent communitarian fullness (LACLAU, 1996). Hegemony, a key concept in thinking politics, is "a relationship through which a particular content assumes, in a certain context, the function of incarnating an absent fullness" (LACLAU, 2006, p. 145).

Discourses offer identification points that are constituted of antagonistic social struggles and grant some social stability for identities. For Laclau, the discourse is a complex of elements marked by the possibilities of polysemy of the signifiers (LACLAU, 2006). As soon as a name is assigned, they enter into a relationship with other elements that determines a given meaning. What might seem objective, neutral or natural processes of signification, should instead be considered as the result of political struggles that have repressed alternative meanings (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018).

Social agents use articulatory practices (discourse) to claim a particular meaning for a signifier (HOWARTH et al., 2000). Nodal points are privileged signifiers that fix the meaning of a signifying chain, in a process of emptying themselves of their attachment to particular signifieds (LACLAU, 1996). At a certain time, one nodal point is mobilized as the representation of the whole chain, due to its emptiness of difference. As Laclau (2005) indicates, the articulation of populist discourse often involves equivalential links between initially heterogeneous unsatisfied demands, establishing a collective identity around 'the people' and the leadership representing them.

The development of an equivalential, antagonistic discursive logic articulated around the signifier of 'the people' is a key criteria proposed by Laclau's discursive theory of populism (STAVRAKAKIS; KATSAMBEKIS, 2014). This means that populism is a discursive practice that divides society into two main blocs through antagonistic representations of the establishment, the power block, versus the underdog, 'the people'. Stavrakakis (2017) argues that the creation of a chain of equivalences, something qualitatively more than the simple summation of its links, is another key operational element in the discourse analysis of populism.

With the emergence of an empty signifier, a particular demand that symbolically solidifies the equivalences, a broad chain of political and social demands are unified and championed by one social actor. Hegemony is, thus, the operation of taking up of an incommensurable universal significance by a particularity, creating an empty signifier from this hegemonic identity that achieves social dominance. Studying populism and its discursive resources relates to certain political logics, rather social contents. Hence, we focus on social-political demands and their discursive articulation through the logics of difference and equivalence (LACLAU, 2005).

By engaging on meaning-making strategies, the candidates battled to fix the signification of a particular identity of the people. This battle over identity is not limited to words, inasmuch discourse as a meaning-making process includes the ideas, practices and images as well as speech and writing. The present analysis was based on the qualitative interpretation of tweets' content as a means to map political struggles that achieved perceived online hegemony. The signifier 'the people' was mobilized within both discourses to support their own political agendas and its meanings have been mobilized in a battle to produce and articulate new modes of representation, identities and subject positions around the floating signifier of what the country needed. These diverging articulations were approached

horizontally and simultaneously, given our purpose here was not to locate the origins of each discursive strategy (FARKAS; SCHOU, 2018).

As we have shown, Bolsonaro built his electoral campaign on Twitter based on ideological fragmentation; that is, in his discursive articulation, disparate demands otherwise disaggregated are rendered equivalent. Regardless of their internal differences, demands such as individual freedom, family values, militarization and minimal state, are held together by the concept of citizen of good. This empty signifier was able to refer to urgent social claims, in a way that it was perceived as the missing link for the communitarian order. Jair Bolsonaro's discourse articulation was elastic enough to feed the horizon of those who feel represented by this particular political project.

We argue that Bolsonaro's strategies articulated the elite's neoliberal agenda with the religious conservative agenda. The logic of equivalence is based on the simplification of different social demands, by subverting terminological differences, increasing abstraction, reducing literality, and impoverishing their meanings (LACLAU, 2005). That is, Bolsonaro subverted different narratives into the same meaning, connecting the great dissatisfaction over corruption originally directed against the left with a religious and moral "corruption" that conservatives saw in feminism and the LGBT movement as a threat to the traditional family. By disseminating controversial, spectacular, and taboo-breaking messages online, Bolsonaro profited from a so-called news value and often met the selection criteria of the media.

The creation of equivalential chains on Twitter was facilitated by the adoption of populist communication style. Bolsonaro creates an antagonism between the people and the others based on three key features of populist rhetoric: simplification, emotionalization, and negativity (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). He reduces the complexity of disaffected demands by narrowing down social relations and offering simple social treatments. As Klinger and Svensson (2015) indicate, Internet favors content that 'maximizes attention', thus his emotional claims were key in granting him visibility. According to our analysis, the use of extremist-conservative rhetoric with a strong emotional appeal was key in order to personify the elite's agenda and polarize the public. His campaign emphasized jargon and soundbites, with no focus on projects and public policy, and stimulated a polarized political debate with false accusations and twisted facts.

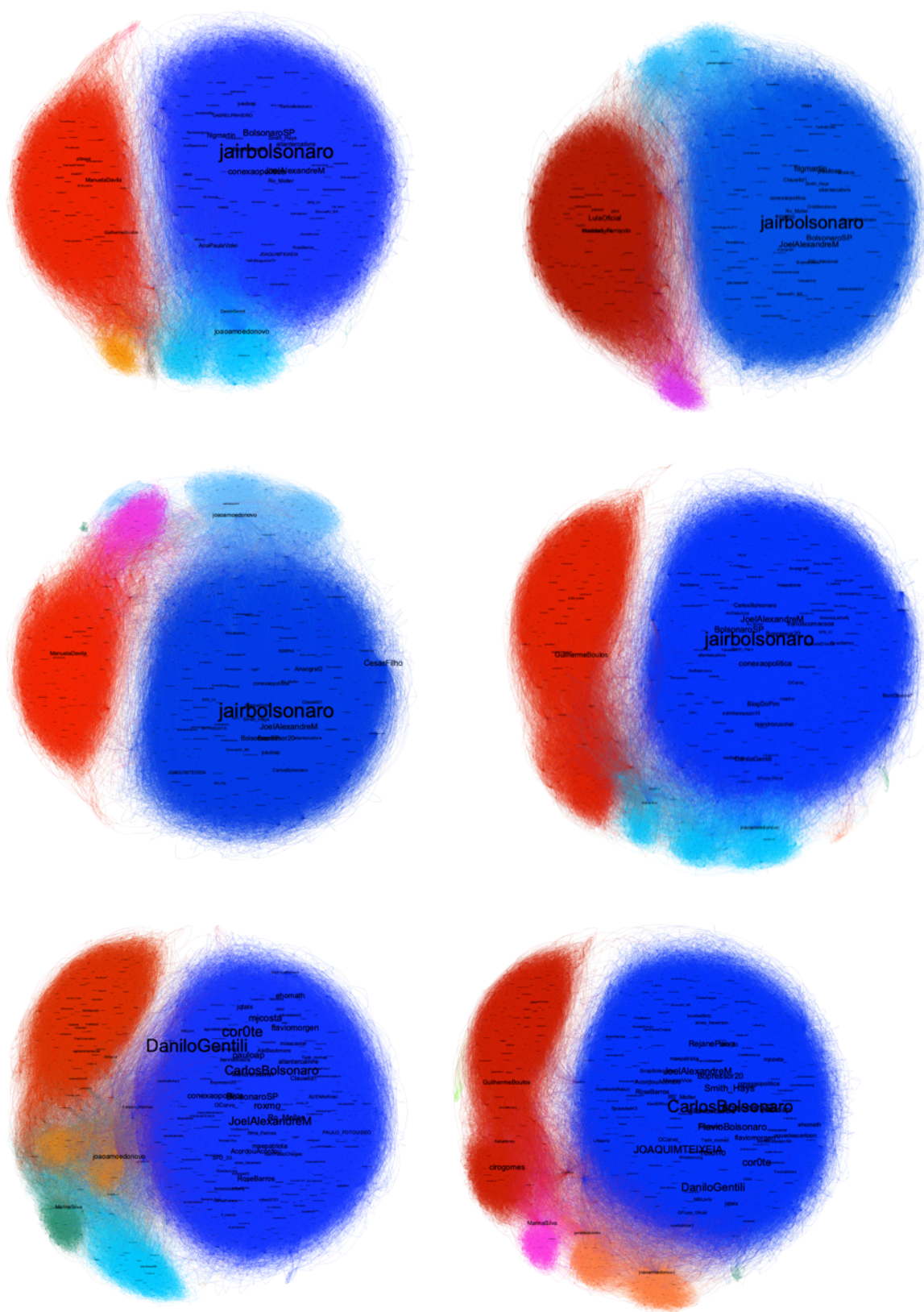
The equivalential chain and respective empty signifier mobilized by Bolsonaro were segmented in a way that the individual social media user can only complement fragments of populist ideology with various additional political elements and tailor it to her or his specific political attitudes (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). The candidate was able to

overcome citizens fragmentation by personalizing his political platform according to the aggregation logics imposed by social media. Gerbaudo (2018) argues populism emphasis on unity of otherwise atomized individuals matches well with social media's combination of an individualistic framing of the user and the increasing massification of the platforms sustaining politicians interactions. As each tweet contained a fraction of a larger equivalential chain, each user experienced a different articulation, preventing citizens to easily perceive Bolsonaro's discourse incongruences (KALIL, 2019). By restricting users' attention on content that conforms to their existing ideological standpoints while insulating them from alternative views facilitates the creation of online crowds (GERBAUDO, 2018).

Ultimately, Bolsonaro's twittering activity was able to take advantage of Twitter characteristics not only discursively, but also due to social media focalisation and aggregation mechanisms. Thus, in order to fully describe Bolsonaro's Twitter campaign, we need to take into account the massive reach and aggregative logic of social media. The filter bubble effect, for example, might have benefited Bolsonaro by focusing the attention of users only on those contents matching their interests (PARISER, 2011). We argue Bolsonaro's campaign successfully considered this filter-by-interest dynamic, since it can favor political polarization. These crowds, when attached to automation can guarantee visibility and mobilization. Hence, for Bolsonaro, Twitter was indeed a powerful tool by allowing these strategies to be implemented, tested, measured and adapted in real-time, based on users' reactions and engagement.

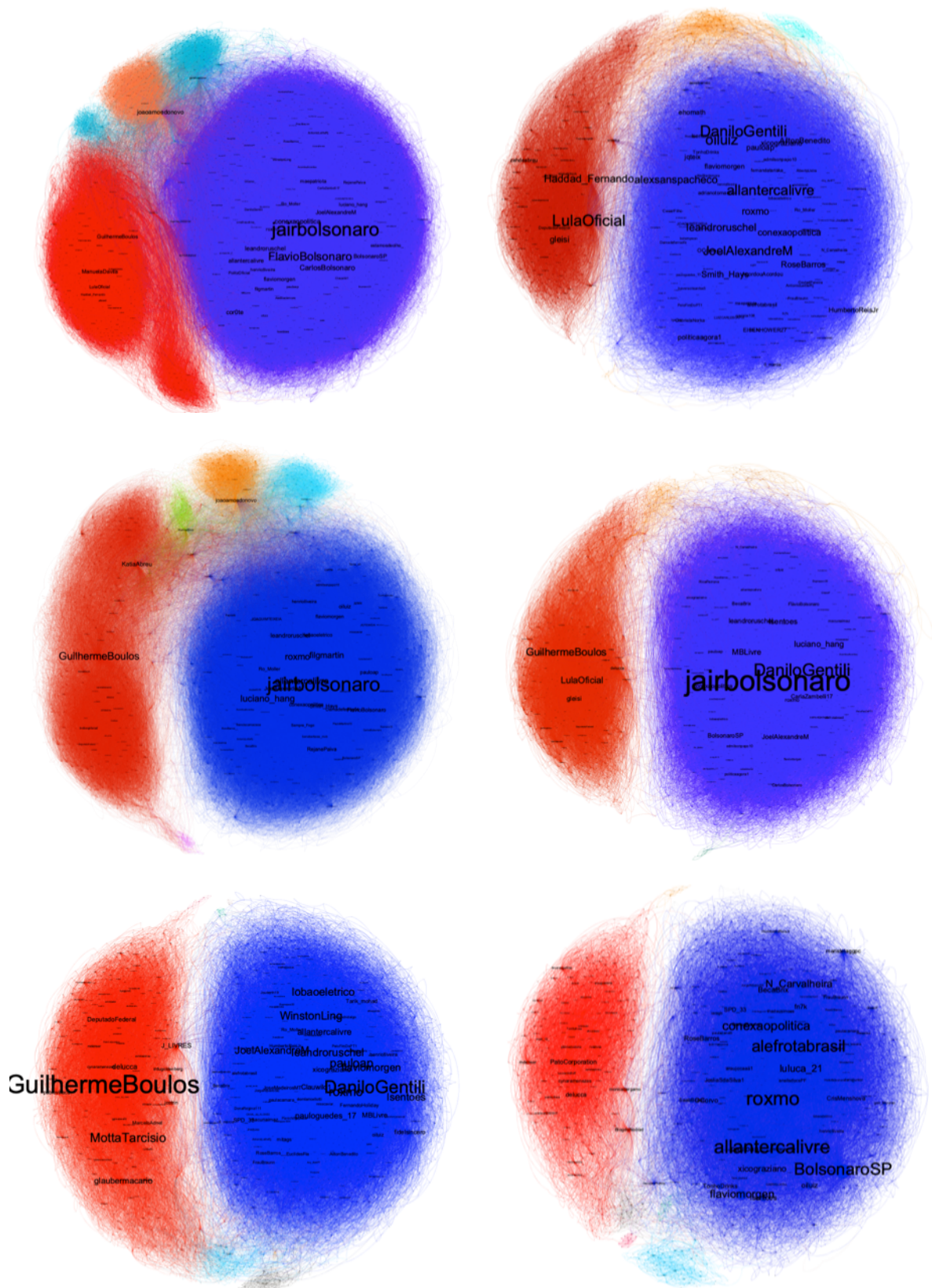
As Engesser, Fawzi and Larsson (2017) summarize, the democratizing potential bestowed to the Internet matches the populist dimension of popular sovereignty, while the direct connections enabled by social media enhance the ideological centrality of the people. Similarly, anti-elitism gains authenticity in the horizontal and non-elitist utopian environment envisioned for the web. Algorithmic filtering, echo chambers and network homophile tendencies are perceived as fertile grounds for excluding 'others', while personalized communication channels are seen an arena for populists to exert their charisma and suggestive power. Moreover, populist style based on simplification, emotionalization, and negativity thrives on the attention economic logic that rules social media.

Figure 48 - Weekly retweet networks



Source: TWIST Systems.

Figure 49 - Weekly retweet network



Source: TWIST Systems.

In order to analyze Bolsonaro influenced the political discussion during the campaign, we performed social network analysis (SNA). Since network relations serve as conduits of influence between people and are composed of preferences (SCOTT; CARRINGTON, 2011), mapping the central actors, their contagion potential and the ties between them, can help us scrutinize the speed and the reach of chain reactions. In spite of the difficulty in measuring influence (WATTS, 2011), social network analysis on Twitter allows us to identify and characterize the information cascades, the profiles involved and their reactions. Given the size of our dataset, we plotted weekly retweet networks, in order to identify the main clusters. Communities were identified using the Louvain algorithm (BLONDEL *et al.*, 2008).

In red, one can identify networks retweeting the left-wing candidates and profiles. While Boulos became a key source of political tweets among left-wing users, Haddad was not able to consolidate himself as a hub. The left-wing community has several names that appear as important, but there is no clear and defined leadership. The largest RT network is associated to Jair Bolsonaro and his supporters, being highly centralized and interconnected. His node is the biggest hub on the network, being hegemonic throughout the campaign. The absence of a strong left-wing leader, his automated strategies and a long and steady presence on Twitter granted Bolsonaro a discursive dominance on the platform.

4.5. TWEETING IN THE CATBIRD SEAT

In order to understand Bolsonaro's communication success, we need to draw a picture of the media system logics in which his campaign was embedded. This naturally takes into account both social media platforms and news media coverage. As Postill (2018) argues, populist leaders and their followers can co-create news and opinion on social media, often through trending hashtags. Bolsonaro diversified and segmented his campaign efforts in order to hegemonize the content disseminated on Twitter. He took advantage from Twitter characteristics in order to directly connect with citizens, bypassing traditional gatekeepers, and influence the news media agenda, creating social media buzz.

With journalists paying close attention to social media, legacy media articles often incorporate what populists say and disseminate on different channels (ROGSTAD, 2016). Bolsonaro was able to profit from the paradox of populist communication: condemning mainstream media while simultaneously regarding any confirmation by them as the greatest possible triumph (HALLER; HOLT, 2019). Mainstream media often include populist

discourse in their news coverage in order to criticize and deconstruct them (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). Nonetheless, media outlets have had a hard time with the principle of ‘there is no such thing as bad publicity’ followed by many populists. The mass media, adhering to news values, assumes a logic based on professional gatekeepers and a relatively passive audience (KLINGER; SVENSSON, 2015).

As Ernst *et al.* (2019) argue, many populists try to use every critic from the mainstream media as proof that the news deserve to be scorned for meeting the interests of the opposing elite. Populists pursue hybrid communication strategy by addressing these paradoxical logics (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017) and have been quite successful in getting their messages into the mainstream media agenda (ERNST *et al.*, 2019). Social media has often been associated with the people’s voice mostly in connection to criticisms of mainstream news media, as legacy outlets have experienced a considerable fall in trust since the economic crisis (GERBAUDO, 2018). Bolsonaro was able to dominate the political discussion as he engaged in recursive loops of social media activity and mainstream outlets content feeding off one another (POSTILL, 2018).

Given the current prominence of digital virality logics of social content distribution (PENNEY, 2017a), the message conduit role is strengthened by horizontal electoral promotions. While acting as “amplifiers” of campaign’s social media messaging, social media users take up the active participation by effectively spreading promotional content in informal, personalized, and culturally grounded manners. Hence, normal users can serve in an instrumental service role, as enthusiastic citizens that shape persuasive political communication by filling the intermediary role between campaign management and the public sphere.

Considering the concept of word-of-mouth promotion predates the Internet, two-step flows of political communication on social media have been explored since the early 2000s (KREISS, 2016). In a dynamic of participatory promotional labor by everyday people (PENNEY, 2017a), campaigns are eager to effectively adapt Katz and Lazarsfeld’s two-step flow model of peer influence (2017) in word-of-mouth marketing initiatives, by “using digital technologies to identify and empower supporters to persuade others in their own social network” (STROMER-GALLEY, 2014, p. 15). Bolsonaro was successful in encouraging supporters to (automatically and) publicly support their political interests by sharing campaign content on their Twitter profiles (GIBSON, 2015).

Campaign staffers have long trusted on the persuasive potential of word-of-mouth actions that could finally be harnessed toward electoral purposes, by leveraging social

connections and shareable content (SERAZIO, 2015). As Penney (2017b) argues, professional marketing has moved these electronic two-step communication flows to the center of promotional strategy. A wide range of organizational actors, from election campaigns to issue advocacy groups, have also deliberately adopted this model as a way of maximizing the reach and credibility of their political messages.

Peer-to-peer interaction is appropriated by a carefully designed viral marketing plan by actively contributing promotional labor to the campaign (PENNEY, 2017b). The use of automated profiles to disseminate viral content can be understood as a new political marketing strategy structured as citizenry organic participation. Stromer-Galley (2014) argues that this multi-way communication enabled by social media could make traditionally hierarchical and controlled political campaigns more decentered and thus involve more ordinary users in campaigning activities. Our results dissent from this perspective once they indicate that coordinated efforts have been employed in the promotion of Bolsonaro's media-based political actions.

However, as Jenkins, Ito and boyd (2015) indicate, there are several risks in giving voice to anyone who desires to be heard, regardless of ethical or moral concerns, on account of the fact that the participatory culture of the Internet enables and empowers all kinds of practices. Although potential excesses such as harassment, hate speech and intimidation must be closely watched over, Bolsonaro took advantage of several loopholes of social media platforms, such as the difficulty in identifying their intolerant and disrespectful content. Bolsonaro's Twitter activity can also be scrutinized based on its intermediary strategy, mirroring the behavior of grassroots supporters, media non professionals co-producing a brand by voluntarily spreading its promotional messages to peers by becoming part of the marketplace logic (JENKINS; FORD; GREEN, 2013).

As Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013) describe, these amateur intermediaries both assist and challenge institutional campaign agendas through their networked media-spreading and content sharing activities. Not having to comply with mass media logic enables populist actors to disseminate tweets with a more personal and sensationalistic nature, using strong language (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). The networked circulations of ideas may grant citizens with an additional set of tools with which to invigorate their political agendas and interests, while also opening a space for political equalization since it helps to bring new entrants to the political debate (PENNEY, 2017b). The presence of political issue in everyday spaces of popular culture could then have democratization potential by elevating the voices and perspectives of marginalized groups. Our data raises the question of the manipulative

potential right-wing populism have when engaging citizens by wisely taking advantage of the algorithmic possibilities of social media platforms.

Engesser, Fawzi and Larsson (2017) argue that the logic of social media provide a convenient instrument to spread populist messages by thriving on the logic of connective action. To discuss civil participation, Bennett and Segerberg (2013) propose a connective action framework based on content sharing through social media. Structured around custom communication, these connective networks depend on the simplification of political agendas and on the technological tools to share these ideas. From the connective perspective, sharing custom information within trusted networks, besides being an individual contribution towards a common good, becomes an act of personal expression, self-recognition, and self-validation (SANTINI *et al.*, 2017). Based on digitally-enabled and nonhierarchical practices, discourses and tactics, these connective networks have been adopted by formal party politics and gave rise to new hybrid organizational forms (CHADWICK, 2013).

The connective logic allows us to aggregate a hybrid structure, moving from the binary opposition between the top-down communication and the participatory culture of digital grassroots by identifying a middle point that mixes elements of organizational control with the personalized expression of networked digital publics (BENNETT; LIVINGSTON, 2018). Connective networks often rely on like-minded citizens sharing discursive expression among their peers, in order to publicly foster their support and interests (BENNETT; SEGERBERG, 2013). Allied to engagement around issues of common concern, content appropriation, adaptation and selection are key in influencing other users, giving means to the success of connective networks.

As Bennett and Segerberg (2013) note, connective networks often rely on like-minded citizens sharing discursive expression among their peers, in order to publicly foster their support and interests. Bolsonaro effectively exploited the persuasive power of electronic word of mouth, by employing efforts to fragment his populist discourse in symbolic political and ideological messages packed as relatable culture-grounded content. Social media offers a direct linkage to the people, allow populists to circumvent the journalistic gatekeepers and provide the populists with the freedom and means to uncontestedly articulate their ideology and spread their message (ENGESSER; FAWZI; LARSSON, 2017). This is because social media evolves from 'like-minded' networks and follows the ideal of 'attention maximation' (KLINGER; SVENSSON, 2015).

We understand Twitter provided a suitable channel for Bolsonaro's populist appeals because of the common understanding of social media as a platform for the voice of the

people in opposition to the mainstream news media (GERBAUDO, 2018). That is, a widespread social belief that social media is the space where ordinary people express themselves directly, bypassing mediators such as broadcasters and journalists. Furthermore, unofficial parties have the potential to shape the flow of messages through their social networks, since peer-to-peer media spreading can in fact be politically persuasive, at least for a portion of the social media users (PENNEY, 2017b). Problems with this narrative include the profit-driven agenda of a corporate web controlled by gigantic companies such as Google and Facebook.

Social media is perceived both as the people's voice and the people's rally. While acting as a means for disaffected individuals to express themselves, social media platforms are also the space in which disgruntled Internet users could gather and form partisan online crowds (GERBAUDO, 2018). During the Brazilian elections, Twitter's architecture allowed Bolsonaro to express himself without media intermediation and to embody the voice of the underdog and the unrepresented. In this sense, we argue that the use of Twitter by the extreme right succeeded because it was based on a populist logic of online communication.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

WHY TWITTER MATTERS?

Political figures have long relied on the media to inform and influence society, since a well-designed and well-financed political campaign can increase the voter's level of knowledge about a candidate's positions, raise emphasized issues higher on the electorate's decisional criteria, promote social interest in the campaign, and intensify personal affects toward the candidate, either positive or negative. Contemporary political campaigns heavily rely on social media informational infrastructure, aiming at opportunities to alter who controls information, who consumes information, and how that information is distributed. Approaching these digital strategies from a qualitative and discursive perspective helped us understand how ordinary users make sense of the overall political discussion on Twitter by contextualizing fragmentary tweets within larger narrative configurations.

In an attempt to sum up the big picture from the 2018 Brazilian presidential elections, we approached Twitter digital trace data to analyze how did the candidates affect the overall political discussion. By putting together several descriptive outcomes, we explored the affinity between social media and populist campaigns, based on the networking and mass outreach capabilities of social media and ideological factors. we have shown that presidential candidates and specially Bolsonaro were taking advantage of the role acquired by social media as the people's voice and as the people's rally. Bolsonaro employed social media as a means to establish direct connections with voters, criticize the mainstream media and automate support and visibility.

Thereafter we dove into the popular content and narratives disseminated during the campaign to understand different frames and topics were approached in order to influence the general climate of opinion. Based on a qualitative content analysis, we the relationship between popular social media content and public opinion through the prism of public deliberation. Our findings indicate Bolsonaro was the hottest topic of the elections. Left-wing candidates were not only guaranteeing spontaneous polemics around moral issues brought about by Bolsonaro, but were also unable to address their own topics and perspective. The

progressive agenda faced the uphill struggle to reframe moral issues and was pushed to a more assertive tone coupled with radicalizing content. Meanwhile Bolsonaro was able to frame himself as a moral savior for the country, combining a neoliberal economic project, a messianic discourse, and hatred for the country's social and political minorities.

Our results suggest that Bolsonaro influenced twittering activities from left- and right-wing candidates, taking advantage from public deliberation dynamics. He was able to place himself a prominent and urgent topic on Twitter, monopolizing the issues and frames approached in public deliberation. Left-wing candidates were not only guaranteeing spontaneous polemics around moral issues brought about by Bolsonaro, but were also unable to address their own topics and perspective. With the left placing the emphasis on the extreme-right, disruptive initiatives backfired at progressive leaders, turning their visibility and speech directly correlated to Bolsonaro's.

Building upon the theoretical framework proposed by Ernesto Laclau about discourse and hegemony, we examined the alleged affinity between populist communication and social media. We described how the two run-off candidates employed populist communication strategies on Twitter and how Bolsonaro was able to hegemonize the network buzz with his political platform. In our findings, few users produce relevant content: automated accounts, candidates, online personalities, mainstream media outlets and hyper-partisan media. These different social actors are articulated in a more or less professional manner and have symbiotic relations among each other. These segmented communications has been central to political campaigns, based on algorithmic profiling of whom and how to influence. This was particularly important to Bolsonaro's communication strategy that was based on segmenting information for different profiles of potential voters.

We found that opposing political actors, namely Fernando Haddad and Jair Bolsonaro, were disputing the meaning of key signifiers that allowed them to critique, delegitimize and exclude opposing political projects. Bolsonaro's victory was built on reshuffling the population into coherent groups where collective identities and opinions were becoming more polarized in homogenous targets. We demonstrate the articulation of dispersed struggles, diffused values and fragmented demands into a chain of equivalences represented by the 'citizen of good'. His twittering activity was able to take advantage of Twitter characteristics not only discursively, but also due to the platforms focalisation and aggregation mechanisms. We argue Bolsonaro's campaign successfully considered this filter-by-interest dynamic, since it can favor political polarization. These crowds, when attached to automation can guarantee visibility and mobilization.

These methodological approaches allowed us to investigate how candidates took advantage of the mass networking capabilities of Twitter and how Bolsonaro successfully employed the platform as a channel for populist appeals. The present study was an attempt to empirically address how social media became the stage and the viabilization of right wing populism in Brazil. Although we provided an in-depth interpretation of the different political narratives explored during the campaign, the risks embedded in computational propaganda strategies deserve further attention.

We believe this research can contribute to the growing body of knowledge of the emerging right wing populism on Brazil, by exploring qualitative methods for data analysis. Nonetheless, it is crucial to point out to some of the limitations of this study, such as the lack of representativeness and the focus on a single platform. Thus, there is still a pressing research agenda about the automation degree of active users during the campaign, as well as about cross-platform strategies. We also envision the need to cover mainstream media content published during the elections. Future scholarship on social media and populism will have to take into account more complex interactions between different media actors.

Finally, as Santini, Salles and Tucci (2021) argue, it is important to recognize that social media platforms and computational tools are not responsible for an authoritarian government's election in Brazil. There are many variables on the table, which range from economic, ideological, moral, religious and institutional dynamics that reflect and are reflected in the media ecosystem, driving the country to a worrying democratic setback. At the same time, it is undeniable that technology can increase the advantage of any campaign reducing costs, risks and unpredictability, which can leverage cutting-edge behavioral science to manipulate users' beliefs and attitudes. Big data techniques, computational modeling, algorithm manipulations and micro-targeting communication are powerful innovations, regardless of who uses it and for what purposes.

REFERENCES

A quick guide to Brazil's scandals. **BBC News**, [s. l.], 8 abr. 2018. Latin America & Caribbean Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-35810578>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

A rightwing maverick lights up Brazil's presidential campaign. **Financial Times**, [s. l.], 31 ago. 2018. Opinion Brazil Disponível em: <https://www.ft.com/content/b06080ea-a274-11e8-85da-eeb7a9ce36e4>

A trajetória de Ciro Gomes, candidato do PDT à Presidência. . [s. l.], [s. d.]. Disponível em: <https://www.nexojornal.com.br/expresso/2018/08/09/A-trajet%C3%B3ria-de-Ciro-Gomes-candidato-do-PDT-%C3%A0-Presid%C3%Aancia>. Acesso em: 12 fev. 2020.

ABRIL, Eulalia Puig. Unmasking Trolls: Political Discussion on Twitter During the Parliamentary Elections in Catalonia. **TRIPODOS**, [S. l.], n. 39, p. 53–69, 2016.

ALBERTAZZI, Daniele; MCDONNELL, Duncan. Introduction: The Sceptre and the Spectre. In: ALBERTAZZI, Daniele; MCDONNELL, Duncan (org.). **Twenty-First Century Populism: The Spectre of Western European Democracy**. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2008. p. 1–11. *E-book*. Disponível em: https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230592100_1. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

ALBURQUEQUE, Ana Luiza. **Eleição no Rio tem tática “antiboato” e suspeita de uso de robôs - 18/10/2016 - Poder - Folha de S.Paulo.** [s. l.], 2016. Disponível em: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/eleicoes-2016/2016/10/1823713-eleicao-no-rio-tem-tatica-antiboato-e-suspeita-de-uso-de-robos.shtml>. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2019.

ALVES DOS SANTOS JUNIOR, Marcelo; ALBUQUERQUE, Afonso de. Perda da hegemonia da imprensa - a disputa pela visibilidade na eleição de 2018. **Lumina**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 3, p. 5–28, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.34019/1981-4070.2019.v13.28668>. Acesso em: 3 fev. 2020.

Amoêdo surpreende e fica em quinto lugar em sua estreia. . [s. l.], [s. d.]. Disponível em: <https://valor.globo.com/politica/noticia/2018/10/07/amoedo-surpreende-e-fica-em-quinto-lugar-em-sua-estreia.ghhtml>. Acesso em: 9 mar. 2020.

ANSTEAD, Nick; O'LOUGHLIN, Ben. Social Media Analysis and Public Opinion: The 2010 UK General Election. **Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 2, p. 204–220, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12102>. Acesso em: 4 dez. 2018.

ARNAUDO, Dan. **Computational Propaganda in Brazil: Social Bots during Elections.** [S. l.: s. n.].

AZEVEDO, André Luiz; TRIGUEIRO, André; MARTINS, Marco Antônio. Jair Bolsonaro afirma que não vai a debates no segundo turno. **G1**, [s. l.], 18 out. 2018

BBC. Who is Brazil's new leader Jair Bolsonaro? [s. l.], 31 dez. 2018. Latin America & Caribbean Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45746013>. Acesso em: 28 fev. 2019.

BEAUCHAMP, Zack. **Social media is rotting democracy from within**. [s. l.], 2019. Disponível em: <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/1/22/18177076/social-media-facebook-far-right-authoritarian-populism>. Acesso em: 13 fev. 2019.

BECHMANN, Anja; LOMBORG, Stine. Mapping actor roles in social media: Different perspectives on value creation in theories of user participation. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 15, n. 5, p. 765–781, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812462853>. Acesso em: 26 fev. 2019.

BEER, David. Power through the algorithm? Participatory web cultures and the technological unconscious. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 11, n. 6, p. 985–1002, 2009. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444809336551>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2019.

BEER, Dr David. Social network(ing) sites...revisiting the story so far: A response to danah boyd & Nicole Ellison. **Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 2, p. 516–529, 2008. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2008.00408.x>. Acesso em: 14 fev. 2019.

BENKLER, Yochai; FARIS, Rob; ROBERTS, Hal. **Network propaganda: manipulation, disinformation, and radicalization in American politics**. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018. *E-book*.

BENNETT, W. Lance; LIVINGSTON, Steven. The disinformation order: Disruptive communication and the decline of democratic institutions. **European Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 33, n. 2, p. 122–139, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323118760317>. Acesso em: 6 jul. 2020.

BENNETT, W. Lance; SEGERBERG, Alexandra. **The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics**. [S. l.]: Cambridge University Press, 2013. *E-book*.

BIMBER, Bruce. The Internet and Political Transformation: Populism, Community, and Accelerated Pluralism. **Polity**, [S. l.], v. 31, n. 1, p. 133–160, 1998. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.2307/3235370>. Acesso em: 6 jul. 2020.

BLONDEL, Vincent D. *et al.* Fast unfolding of communities in large networks. **Journal of Statistical Mechanics: Theory and Experiment**, [S. l.], v. 2008, n. 10, p. P10008, 2008. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-5468/2008/10/P10008>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

BODE, Leticia; DALRYMPLE, Kajsia E. Politics in 140 Characters or Less: Campaign Communication, Network Interaction, and Political Participation on Twitter. **JOURNAL OF POLITICAL MARKETING**, [S. l.], v. 15, n. 4, p. 311–332, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2014.959686>

BOLSOVER, Gillian; HOWARD, Philip. Computational Propaganda and Political Big Data: Moving Toward a More Critical Research Agenda. **Big Data**, [S. l.], v. 5, n. 4, p. 273–276, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1089/big.2017.29024.cpr>. Acesso em: 17 ago. 2018.

BOSSETTA, Michael. The Digital Architectures of Social Media: Comparing Political Campaigning on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat in the 2016 U.S. Election. **Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly**, [S. l.], v. 95, n. 2, p. 471–496, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699018763307>. Acesso em: 18 out. 2018.

BOULIANNE, Shelley. Does Internet Use Affect Engagement? A Meta-Analysis of Research. **Political Communication**, [S. l.], v. 26, n. 2, p. 193–211, 2009. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600902854363>. Acesso em: 5 fev. 2019.

BOULIANNE, Shelley. Social media use and participation: a meta-analysis of current research. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 18, n. 5, p. 524–538, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1008542>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste**. 8th Reprint ed. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984. *E-book*.

BOURDIEU, Pierre. A opinião pública não existe. In: THIOLLENT, Michel J. M. (org.). **Crítica metodológica, investigação social & enquête operária**. São Paulo, Brazil: Polis, 1987. p. 137–151. *E-book*.

BOYD, Danah. Hacking the attention economy. **Data and Society: Points**. Available at: <https://points.datasociety.net/hacking-the-attention-economy-9fa1daca7a37>, [S. l.], 2017.

BRACCIALE, Roberta; MARTELLA, Antonio. Define the populist political communication style: the case of Italian political leaders on Twitter. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 1310–1329, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1328522>. Acesso em: 17 fev. 2020.

BRADSHAW, Samantha; HOWARD, Philip N. Troops, Trolls and Troublemakers: A Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation. [S. l.], p. 37, 2017.

BRADSHAW, Samantha; HOWARD, Philip N. **The Global Disinformation Order: 2019 Global Inventory of Organised Social Media Manipulation**: Project on Computational Propaganda. Oxford: [s. n.], 2019. Working Paper. Disponível em: comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk.

Brazil election frontrunner Bolsonaro skips final debate. . [s. l.], [s. d.]. Disponível em: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/10/brazil-election-frontrunner-bolsonaro-shows-final-debate-181005010402842.html>. Acesso em: 18 mar. 2020.

BRUNS, Axel; WELLER, Katrin. Twitter data analytics – or: the pleasures and perils of studying Twitter. **Aslib Journal of Information Management**, [S. l.], v. 66, n. 3, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-02-2014-0027>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

CAESAR, Gabriela. Repasses de partidos a candidatos ultrapassam R\$ 1 bilhão; MDB, PR e PP são os que mais transferiram recursos. **G1**, [s. l.], 19 set. 2018

CAMILLO, Mateus. Folha publica palavras “bolso” e “bolovo” no Twitter e respostas sugerem ação de robôs pró-Bolsonaro. *In: #hashtag*. 24 out. 2018. Disponível em: <https://hashtag.blogfolha.uol.com.br/2018/10/24/folha-publica-palavras-bolso-e-bolovo-no-twitter-e-respostas-sugerem-acao-de-robos-pro-bolsonaro/>. Acesso em: 28 fev. 2019.

CAMPOS MELO, Patricia. **Empresários bancam campanha contra o PT pelo WhatsApp**. [s. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2018/10/empresarios-bancam-campanha-contra-o-pt-pelo-whatsapp.shtml>. Acesso em: 28 fev. 2019.

CARLSON, M. Fake news as an informational moral panic: the symbolic deviancy of social media during the 2016 US presidential election. **Information Communication and Society**, [S. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1505934>

CARPENTIER, Nico; DE CLEEN, Benjamin. Bringing Discourse Theory into Media Studies: The applicability of Discourse Theoretical Analysis (DTA) for the Study of media practises and discourses. **Journal of Language and Politics**, [S. l.], v. 6, n. 2, p. 265–293, 2007. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.6.2.08car>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

CARPINI, Michael X. Delli; COOK, Fay Lomax; JACOBS, Lawrence R. PUBLIC DELIBERATION, DISCURSIVE PARTICIPATION, AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT: A Review of the Empirical Literature. **Annual Review of Political Science**, [S. l.], v. 7, n. 1, p. 315–344, 2004. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.7.121003.091630>. Acesso em: 18 abr. 2020.

CARRO, Rodrigo. **Brazil - Digital News Report 2019**. [S. l.]: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2019. Disponível em: <http://www.digitalnewsreport.org/survey/2019/brazil-2019/>.

CARTY, Victoria. NEW INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND GRASSROOTS MOBILIZATION. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 2, p. 155–173, 2010. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180902915658>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

CERIONI, Clara. Pode ou não pode? Entrevista de Bolsonaro à Record divide especialistas. **Exame**, [s. l.], 4 out. 2018 Disponível em: <https://exame.com/brasil/pode-ou-nao-pode-entrevista-de-bolsonaro-a-record-divide-especialistas/>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

CHADWICK, Andrew. **The hybrid media system: politics and power**. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. (Oxford studies in digital politics).*E-book*.

CHAMBERS, Simone. Deliberative Democratic Theory. **Annual Review of Political Science**, [S. l.], v. 6, n. 1, p. 307–326, 2003. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.6.121901.085538>. Acesso em: 23 abr. 2020.

CHILD, David. Brazil: Lula renounces candidacy ahead of presidential poll. Al Jazeera, 11 set. 2018. Latin America Disponível em: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/09/brazil-lula-renounces-candidacy-presidential-poll-180910132703852.html>. Acesso em: 28 jun. 2020.

CHO, Charles H. *et al.* Astroturfing Global Warming: It Isn’t Always Greener on the Other Side of the Fence. **Journal of Business Ethics**, [S. l.], v. 104, n. 4, p. 571–587, 2011. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0950-6>. Acesso em: 13 ago. 2018.

COHEN, Bernard C. **The press and foreign policy**. Princeton (N.J.): Princeton University Press, 1963. *E-book*.

CONOVER, M. D. *et al.* Political Polarization on Twitter. *In: FIFTH INTERNATIONAL AAAI CONFERENCE ON BLOGS AND SOCIAL MEDIA 2011, Anais [...]*. [S. l.: s. n.] p. 8.

CONWAY, Bethany A.; KENSKI, Kate; WANG, Di. The Rise of Twitter in the Political Campaign: Searching for Intermedia Agenda-Setting Effects in the Presidential Primary. **Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 4, p. 363–380, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12124>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

CORRESPONDENT, Tom Phillips Latin America; PHILLIPS, Dom. Jailed leftwing leader Lula drops out of Brazil presidential race. **The Guardian**, [s. l.], 11 set. 2018. World news Disponível em: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/11/lula-brazil-presidential-election-candidate-gives-up-race>. Acesso em: 9 mar. 2020.

D'AGOSTINO, Rosane; OLIVEIRA, Mariana. Empresas de internet dizem ao TSE que Bolsonaro não pagou para impulsionar conteúdo. **G1**, Brasília, 12 nov. 2018. Política

DAHLBERG, Lincoln. Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyberpublic: from consensus to contestation. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 5, p. 827–847, 2007. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444807081228>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

DANG-XUAN, Linh *et al.* AN INVESTIGATION OF INFLUENTIALS AND THE ROLE OF SENTIMENT IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION ON TWITTER DURING ELECTION PERIODS. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 16, n. 5, p. 795–825, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.783608>. Acesso em: 16 abr. 2019.

DE ALBUQUERQUE, Afonso. Media/politics connections: beyond political parallelism. **Media, Culture & Society**, [S. l.], v. 35, n. 6, p. 742–758, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443713491302>. Acesso em: 5 maio. 2019.

DE ANDRADE, Hanrrikson; MAIA, Gustavo. **Bolsonaro sobre papel da imprensa: “Cheguei ao poder graças às mídias sociais”**. [s. l.], 2018a. Disponível em: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2018/11/01/bolsonaro-relacao-com-imprensa-midias-sociais.htm>. Acesso em: 13 fev. 2019.

DE ANDRADE, Hanrrikson; MAIA, Gustavo. Bolsonaro sobre papel da imprensa: “Cheguei ao poder graças às mídias sociais”. **UOL**, [s. l.], 1 nov. 2018b

DEL VALLE, M. E. *et al.* Unpredictably Trump? Predicting clicktivist-like actions on Trump’s Facebook posts during the 2016 U.S. primary election. *In: 2018, ACM International Conference Proceeding Series*. : Association for Computing Machinery, 2018. p. 64–70. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3217804.3217898>

DELEUZE, Gilles. **Conversações: 1972-1990**. 1 edition ed. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1992. *E-book*.

DEMERS, Jayson. The Top 10 Benefits Of Social Media Marketing. **Forbes**, [S. l.], 2014. Disponível em: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2014/08/11/the-top-10-benefits-of-social-media-marketing/>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

DIGRAZIA, Joseph *et al.* More Tweets, More Votes: Social Media as a Quantitative Indicator of Political Behavior. **PLOS ONE**, [S. l.], v. 8, n. 11, p. 5, 2013.

DIJCK, José Van; POELL, Thomas. **Understanding Social Media Logic**. [S. l.: s. n.]. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.12924/mac2013.01010002>. Acesso em: 28 ago. 2019.

DIMITROVA, Daniela V. *et al.* The Effects of Digital Media on Political Knowledge and Participation in Election Campaigns: Evidence From Panel Data. **Communication Research**, [S. l.], v. 41, n. 1, p. 95–118, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650211426004>. Acesso em: 14 ago. 2018.

DIMITROVA, Daniela V.; MATTHES, Jörg. Social Media in Political Campaigning Around the World: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges. **Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly**, [S. l.], v. 95, n. 2, p. 333–342, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699018770437>. Acesso em: 18 out. 2018.

DOMINGOS DE LIMA, Juliana. As mulheres contra Bolsonaro. E a dimensão da ação nas redes. **Nexo Jornal**, [s. l.], 18 set. 2018. Disponível em: <https://www.nexojornal.com.br/expresso/2018/09/18/As-mulheres-contra-Bolsonaro.-E-a-dimens%C3%A3o-da-a%C3%A7%C3%A3o-nas-redes>. Acesso em: 9 abr. 2020.

Eleições 2018: Como as pesquisas eleitorais influenciam a decisão do voto? - BBC News Brasil. [S. l.], [s. d.]. Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-45740880>. Acesso em: 12 mar. 2020.

ELLISON, Nicole B.; BOYD, Danah M. **Sociality Through Social Network Sites**. [S. l.]: Oxford University Press, 2013. v. 1 *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199589074.013.0008>. Acesso em: 26 fev. 2019.

ELMER, Greg. Live research: Twittering an election debate. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 15, n. 1, p. 18–30, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812457328>. Acesso em: 27 fev. 2019.

ENGESSER, Sven; FAWZI, Nayla; LARSSON, Anders Olof. Populist online communication: introduction to the special issue. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 1279–1292, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1328525>. Acesso em: 11 dez. 2019.

ERNST, Nicole *et al.* Extreme parties and populism: an analysis of Facebook and Twitter across six countries. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 1347–1364, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1329333>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

ERNST, Nicole *et al.* Favorable Opportunity Structures for Populist Communication: Comparing Different Types of Politicians and Issues in Social Media, Television and the Press. **The International Journal of Press/Politics**, [S. l.], v. 24, n. 2, p. 165–188, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161218819430>. Acesso em: 30 abr. 2020.

ESSER, Frank; STRÖMBÄCK, Jesper (org.). **Mediatization of politics: understanding the transformation of western democracies**. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, [England] ; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. *E-book*.

ESTADÃO. **Eleições 2018 | Pesquisa**. [s. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://politica.estadao.com.br/eleicoes/2018/pesquisas-eleitorais/primeiro-turno/presidente/ibope>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

FAGUNDEZ, Ingrid. Como Alckmin e Marina entraram “grandes” na eleição e saíram “nanicos”. **BBC News Brasil**, [s. l.], 8 out. 2018. Brasil Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-45780350>. Acesso em: 12 fev. 2020.

FARKAS, Johan; SCHOU, Jannick. Fake News as a Floating Signifier: Hegemony, Antagonism and the Politics of Falsehood. **Javnost - The Public**, [S. l.], v. 25, n. 3, p. 298–314, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2018.1463047>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

FERRARA, Emilio *et al.* The rise of social bots. **Communications of the ACM**, [S. l.], v. 59, n. 7, p. 96–104, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1145/2818717>. Acesso em: 9 ago. 2018.

FRENKEL, Sheera; CONGER, Kate; ROOSE, Kevin. Russia’s Playbook for Social Media Disinformation Has Gone Global. **The New York Times**, [s. l.], 1 fev. 2019. Technology Disponível em: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/31/technology/twitter-disinformation-united-states-russia.html>. Acesso em: 13 fev. 2019.

FRIESS, Dennis; EILDERS, Christiane. A Systematic Review of Online Deliberation Research: A Review of Online Deliberation Research. **Policy & Internet**, [S. l.], v. 7, n. 3, p. 319–339, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1002/poi3.95>. Acesso em: 23 abr. 2020.

FUCHS, Christian. **Social media: a critical introduction**. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2014. *E-book*.

GAINOUS, Jason; WAGNER, Kevin M. **Tweeting to power: the social media revolution in American politics**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. *E-book*.

GALLUP, George Horace. **Public Opinion in a Democracy**. [S. l.]: Pub. under the University extension fund, Herbert L. Baker foundation, Princeton university, 1939. *E-book*.

GAYO-AVELLO, Daniel. A Meta-Analysis of State-of-the-Art Electoral Prediction From Twitter Data. **Social Science Computer Review**, [S. l.], v. 31, n. 6, p. 649–679, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439313493979>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

GERBAUDO, Paolo. Populism 2.0 : Social media activism, the generic Internet user and interactive direct democracy. In: TROTTIER, Daniel; FUCHS, Christian (org.). **Social Media, Politics and the State: Protests, Revolutions, Riots, Crime and Policing in the Age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube**. 1. ed. New York, NY, US: Routledge, 2014. p. 26. *E-book*.

GERBAUDO, Paolo. Social media and populism: an elective affinity? **Media, Culture & Society**, [S. l.], v. 40, n. 5, p. 745–753, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718772192>. Acesso em: 2 jun. 2020.

GIBSON, Rachel K. Party change, social media and the rise of 'citizen-initiated' campaigning. **PARTY POLITICS**, [S. l.], v. 21, n. 2, p. 183–197, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068812472575>

GIBSON, Rachel K.; MCALLISTER, Ian. Normalising or Equalising Party Competition? Assessing the Impact of the Web on Election Campaigning. **Political Studies**, [S. l.], v. 63, n. 3, p. 529–547, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12107>. Acesso em: 14 ago. 2018.

GIBSON, Rachel K.; RÖMMELE, Andrea. Measuring the Professionalization of Political Campaigning. **Party Politics**, [S. l.], v. 15, n. 3, p. 265–293, 2009. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068809102245>. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2019.

GIBSON, Rachel K.; WARD, Stephen J. U.K. Political Parties and the Internet: “Politics as Usual” in the New Media? **Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics**, [S. l.], v. 3, n. 3, p. 14–38, 1998. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1081180X98003003003>. Acesso em: 5 fev. 2019.

GIGLIETTO, Fabio; SELVA, Donatella. Second Screen and Participation: A Content Analysis on a Full Season Dataset of Tweets. **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 64, n. 2, p. 260–277, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12085>. Acesso em: 14 maio. 2019.

GIL DE ZÚÑIGA, Homero; GARCIA-PERDOMO, Victor; MCGREGOR, Shannon C. What Is Second Screening? Exploring Motivations of Second Screen Use and Its Effect on Online Political Participation: Second Screen Use & Online Political Participation. **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 65, n. 5, p. 793–815, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12174>. Acesso em: 28 ago. 2019.

GILLESPIE, Tarleton. The Relevance of Algorithms. In: GILLESPIE, Tarleton; BOCZKOWSKI, Pablo J.; FOOT, Kirsten A. (org.). **Media Technologies**. [S. l.]: The MIT Press, 2014. p. 167–194. *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9780262525374.003.0009>. Acesso em: 29 mar. 2019.

GLASSON, Benjamin J. The intellectual outside: Anti-intellectualism and the subject of populist discourses in Australian newspapers. **Continuum**, [S. l.], v. 26, n. 1, p. 101–114, 2012. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2012.630147>. Acesso em: 25 maio. 2020.

GRAGNANI, Juliana. Exclusivo: investigação revela exército de perfis falsos usados para influenciar eleições no Brasil. **BBC News Brasil**, [s. l.], 8 dez. 2017. Brasil Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-42172146>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

GRAHAM, Todd *et al.* BETWEEN BROADCASTING POLITICAL MESSAGES AND INTERACTING WITH VOTERS: The use of Twitter during the 2010 UK general election campaign. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 16, n. 5, p. 692–716, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.785581>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

GREENWALD, Glenn; POUGY, Victor. Video: As Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro Prepares to Meet Donald Trump, His Family's Close Ties to Notorious Paramilitary Gangs Draw Scrutiny and Outrage. In: The Intercept. 18 mar. 2019. Disponível em:

<https://theintercept.com/2019/03/18/jair-bolsonaro-family-militias-gangs-brazil/>. Acesso em: 15 nov. 2019.

GUNDELACH, Peter. Grass Roots Organizations. **Acta Sociologica**, [S. l.], v. 22, n. 2, p. 187–189, 1979. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/000169937902200206>. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2019.

HABERMAS, Jürgen. **The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society**. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989. (Studies in contemporary German social thought). *E-book*.

HALLER, André; HOLT, Kristoffer. Paradoxical populism: how PEGIDA relates to mainstream and alternative media. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 22, n. 12, p. 1665–1680, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1449882>. Acesso em: 6 jul. 2020.

HAMPTON, Keith N.; SHIN, Inyoung; LU, Weixu. Social media and political discussion: when online presence silences offline conversation. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 7, p. 1090–1107, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1218526>. Acesso em: 23 abr. 2020.

HARVEY, David. **The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change**. [S. l.]: Wiley, 1992. *E-book*.

HOSCH-DAYICAN, Bengue *et al.* How Do Online Citizens Persuade Fellow Voters? Using Twitter During the 2012 Dutch Parliamentary Election Campaign. **SOCIAL SCIENCE COMPUTER REVIEW**, [S. l.], v. 34, n. 2, p. 135–152, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439314558200>

HOWARD, Philip N. Deep Democracy, Thin Citizenship: The Impact of Digital Media in Political Campaign Strategy. **The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science**, [S. l.], v. 597, n. 1, p. 153–170, 2005. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716204270139>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

HOWARTH, David. Hegemony, Political Subjectivity, and Radical Democracy. In: CRITCHLEY, Simon; MARCHART, Oliver (org.). **Laclau: A Critical Reader**. [S. l.]: Routledge, 2004. p. 256–276. *E-book*.

HOWARTH, David J. *et al.* **Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change**. [S. l.]: Manchester University Press, 2000. *E-book*.

HUNTER, Wendy; POWER, Timothy J. Bolsonaro and Brazil's Illiberal Backlash. **Journal of Democracy**, [S. l.], v. 30, n. 1, p. 68–82, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2019.0005>. Acesso em: 6 nov. 2019.

Investors Love This Brazilian Candidate. That Doesn't Mean They'll Vote for Him. **Bloomberg.com**, [s. l.], 13 set. 2018. Disponível em: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-13/brazil-banker-is-investors-favorite-but-won-t-get-their-votes>. Acesso em: 9 mar. 2020.

ISAAC, Mike; EMBER, Sydney. For Election Day Influence, Twitter Ruled Social Media. **The New York Times**, [s. l.], 22 dez. 2017. Technology Disponível em:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/technology/for-election-day-chatter-twitter-ruled-social-media.html>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

ISAAC, Mike; ROOSE, Kevin. Disinformation Spreads on WhatsApp Ahead of Brazilian Election - The New York Times. **The New York Times**, [S. l.], 19 out. 2018 Disponível em: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/19/technology/whatsapp-brazil-presidential-election.html>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

JACOBS, Kristof; SPIERINGS, Niels. Saturation or maturation? The diffusion of Twitter and its impact on preference voting in the Dutch general elections of 2010 and 2012. **JOURNAL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & POLITICS**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 1, p. 1–21, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2015.1131652>

JEFFARES, Stephen. **Interpreting Hashtag Politics**. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014. *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137357748>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

JENKINS, Henry; FORD, Sam; GREEN, Joshua. **Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture**. New York ; London: NYU Press, 2013. *E-book*.

JENKINS, Henry; ITO, Mizuko; BOYD, danah. **Participatory Culture in a Networked Era: A Conversation on Youth, Learning, Commerce, and Politics**. [S. l.]: John Wiley & Sons, 2015. *E-book*.

JIANG, Ying. ‘Reversed agenda-setting effects’ in China Case studies of Weibo trending topics and the effects on state-owned media in China. **Journal of International Communication**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 2, p. 168–183, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2014.908785>. Acesso em: 9 set. 2019.

JUNGHERR, Andreas. Twitter use in election campaigns: A systematic literature review. **Journal of Information Technology & Politics**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 1, p. 72–91, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2015.1132401>. Acesso em: 11 fev. 2020.

JUNGHERR, Andreas; SCHOEN, Harald; JUERGENS, Pascal. The Mediation of Politics through Twitter: An Analysis of Messages posted during the Campaign for the German Federal Election 2013. **JOURNAL OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION**, [S. l.], v. 21, n. 1, p. 50–68, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcc4.12143>

KALIL, Isabela. **Who are Jair Bolsonaro’s voters and what they believe**. [S. l.: s. n.]. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.35662.41289>.

KATZ, Elihu. Rediscovering Gabriel Tarde*. **Political Communication**, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 3, p. 263–270, 2006. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600600808711>. Acesso em: 18 abr. 2020.

KATZ, Elihu; LAZARFELD, Paul F. **Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications**. [S. l.]: Routledge, 2017. *E-book*.

KELLER, Tobias R.; KLINGER, Ulrike. Social Bots in Election Campaigns: Theoretical, Empirical, and Methodological Implications. **Political Communication**, [S. l.], v. 36, n. 1, p.

171–189, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2018.1526238>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

KELLY GARRETT, R. Protest in an Information Society: a review of literature on social movements and new ICTs. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 2, p. 202–224, 2006. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180600630773>. Acesso em: 14 fev. 2019.

KILKKI, Kalevi. A practical model for analyzing long tails. **First Monday**, [S. l.], 2007. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v12i5.1832>. Acesso em: 29 jun. 2020.

KIM, Sung-Tae; LEE, Young Hwan. News function of internet mediated agenda-setting: agenda-rippling ad reserved agenda-setting. **Korean journal of journalism & communication studies**, [S. l.], v. 50, n. 3, p. 175–205, 2006.

KLEIS NIELSEN, Rasmus; GANTER, Sarah Anne. Dealing with digital intermediaries: A case study of the relations between publishers and platforms. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 4, p. 1600–1617, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817701318>. Acesso em: 10 abr. 2019.

KLING, Rob. Hopes and Horrors: Technological Utopianism and Anti-Utopianism in Narratives of Computerization. In: **Computerization and Controversy**. [S. l.]: Elsevier, 1996. p. 40–58. *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-415040-9.50091-9>. Acesso em: 18 mar. 2019.

KLINGER, Ulrike; SVENSSON, Jakob. The emergence of network media logic in political communication: A theoretical approach. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 17, n. 8, p. 1241–1257, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814522952>. Acesso em: 4 dez. 2018.

KLOTZ, Robert J. Internet Campaigning for Grassroots and Astroturf Support. **Social Science Computer Review**, [S. l.], v. 25, n. 1, p. 3–12, 2007. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439306289105>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

KRAFFT, P. M.; DONOVAN, Joan. Disinformation by Design: The Use of Evidence Collages and Platform Filtering in a Media Manipulation Campaign. **Political Communication**, [S. l.], v. 37, n. 2, p. 194–214, 2020. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2019.1686094>. Acesso em: 9 abr. 2020.

KRÄMER, Benjamin. Populist online practices: the function of the Internet in right-wing populism. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 1293–1309, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1328520>. Acesso em: 2 jun. 2020.

KREISS, Daniel. Seizing the moment: The presidential campaigns' use of Twitter during the 2012 electoral cycle. **NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY**, [S. l.], v. 18, n. 8, p. 1473–1490, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814562445>

KREISS, Daniel; LAWRENCE, Regina G.; MCGREGOR, Shannon C. In Their Own Words: Political Practitioner Accounts of Candidates, Audiences, Affordances, Genres, and Timing in Strategic Social Media Use. **Political Communication**, [S. l.], v. 35, n. 1, p. 8–31, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1334727>. Acesso em: 11 fev. 2020.

KRIESI, Hanspeter. The Populist Challenge. **West European Politics**, [S. l.], v. 37, n. 2, p. 361–378, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2014.887879>. Acesso em: 6 jul. 2020.

KÜMPEL, Anna Sophie; KARNOWSKI, Veronika; KEYLING, Till. News Sharing in Social Media: A Review of Current Research on News Sharing Users, Content, and Networks. **Social Media + Society**, [S. l.], v. 1, n. 2, p. 205630511561014, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305115610141>. Acesso em: 5 maio. 2019.

LACLAU, Ernesto. Why do Empty Signifiers Matter to Politics? In: **Emancipation(s)**. [S. l.]: Verso, 1996. p. 36–46. *E-book*.

LACLAU, Ernesto. **On populist reason**. London ; New York: Verso, 2005. *E-book*.

LACLAU, Ernesto. On the Names of God. In: VRIES, Hent de; SULLIVAN, Lawrence Eugene (org.). **Political theologies: public religions in a post-secular world**. 1st ed ed. New York: Fordham University Press, 2006. p. 137–147. *E-book*.

LACLAU, Ernesto. **Emancipation(s)**. [S. l.]: Verso, 2007. (Radical Thinkers). *E-book*.

LACLAU, Ernesto; MOUFFE, Chantal. **Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics**. [S. l.]: Verso, 2001. *E-book*.

LARSSON, Anders Olof; MOE, Hallvard. Studying political microblogging: Twitter users in the 2010 Swedish election campaign. **NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY**, [S. l.], v. 14, n. 5, p. 729–747, 2012. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811422894>

LARSSON, Anders Olof; MOE, Hallvard. Triumph of the Underdogs? Comparing Twitter Use by Political Actors During Two Norwegian Election Campaigns. **SAGE Open**, [S. l.], v. 4, n. 4, p. 215824401455901, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014559015>. Acesso em: 5 fev. 2019.

LAZARSFELD, Paul F.; MERTON, Robert K. Mass communication popular taste and organized social action. [S. l.], 1948. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/null>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

LEE, Caroline W. The Roots of Astroturfing. **Contexts**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 1, p. 73–75, 2010. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1525/ctx.2010.9.1.73>. Acesso em: 13 ago. 2018.

LIPPMANN, Walter. **Public opinion**. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A: Transaction Publishers, 1997. *E-book*.

LOADER, Brian D.; MERCEA, Dan. NETWORKING DEMOCRACY?: Social media innovations and participatory politics. **Information, Communication & Society**, [S. l.], v. 14, n. 6, p. 757–769, 2011. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2011.592648>. Acesso em: 24 abr. 2020.

LÓPEZ-GARCÍA, G. New vs ‘old’ leaderships: The campaign of spanish general elections 2015 on twitter. **Communication and Society**, [S. l.], v. 29, n. 3, p. 149–168, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.29.3.149-168>

LUO, Michael. The Urgent Quest for Slower, Better News. *[S. l.]*, 2019. Disponível em: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-inquiry/the-urgent-quest-for-slower-better-news>. Acesso em: 10 abr. 2019.

Man who stabbed Brazil's leader acquitted. **BBC News**, *[s. l.]*, 15 jun. 2019. Latin America & Caribbean Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-48645339>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

MARGOLIS, Michael; RESNICK, David. **Politics as Usual: The Cyberspace "Revolution"**. Thousand Oaks, California: *[s. n.]*, 2000. *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452233475>. Acesso em: 5 fev. 2019.

MAZZOLENI, Gianpietro; SCHULZ, Winfried. "Mediatization" of Politics: A Challenge for Democracy? **Political Communication**, *[S. l.]*, v. 16, n. 3, p. 247–261, 1999. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/105846099198613>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

MCCOMBS, Maxwell. **Setting the Agenda: The Mass Media and Public Opinion**. *[S. l.]*: Polity, 2004. *E-book*.

MCCOMBS, Maxwell E.; SHAW, Donald L. The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. **The Public Opinion Quarterly**, *[S. l.]*, v. 36, n. 2, p. 176–187, 1972. Disponível em: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2747787>. Acesso em: 31 maio. 2019.

MCKEAN, Benjamin L. Toward an Inclusive Populism? On the Role of Race and Difference in Laclau's Politics. **Political Theory**, *[S. l.]*, v. 44, n. 6, p. 797–820, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591716647771>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

MCLEOD, Jack M.; BECKER, Lee B.; BYRNES, James E. Another Look At the Agenda-Setting Function of the Press. **Communication Research**, *[S. l.]*, v. 1, n. 2, p. 131–166, 1974. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/009365027400100201>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

MCNUTT, John; BOLAND, Katherine. Astroturf, Technology and the Future of Community Mobilization: Implications for Nonprofit Theory. **Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare**, *[S. l.]*, v. XXXIV, n. 3, p. 15, 2007.

MENEGUETTI, Fernanda. **Clássico botequeiro, bolovo ganha releituras de chefs paulistanos - 20/10/2018 - sãopaulo - Folha de S.Paulo**. *[s. l.]*, 2018. Disponível em: <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/saopaulo/2018/10/1983457-classico-botequeiro-bolovo-ganha-releituras-de-chefs-paulistanos.shtml>. Acesso em: 28 fev. 2019.

METAXAS, Panagiotis T.; MUSTAFARAJ, Eni; GAYO-AVELLO, Dani. How (Not) to Predict Elections. *In*: 2011 IEEE THIRD INT'L CONFERENCE ON PRIVACY, SECURITY, RISK AND TRUST (PASSAT) / 2011 IEEE THIRD INT'L CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL COMPUTING (SOCIALCOM) 2011, Boston, MA, USA. **2011 IEEE Third Int'l Conference on Privacy, Security, Risk and Trust and 2011 IEEE Third Int'l Conference on Social Computing**. Boston, MA, USA: IEEE, 2011. p. 165–171. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1109/PASSAT/SocialCom.2011.98>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

MITCHELL, A.; PAGE, D. **State of the News Media**. *[S. l.]*: Pew Research Center., 2014. Disponível em: <http://www.journalism.org/files/2014/03/Overview.pdf>.

MOLINA, Brett. **Twitter overcounted active users since 2014, shares surge on profit hopes.** [s. l.], 2017. Disponível em: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/news/2017/10/26/twitter-overcounted-active-users-since-2014-shares-surge/801968001/>. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2019.

MONITORING, B. B. C. Fernando Haddad: The man in Lula's mantle. **BBC News**, [s. l.], 25 out. 2018. Latin America & Caribbean Disponível em: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-45746012>. Acesso em: 9 mar. 2020.

MORRIS, David S. Twitter Versus the Traditional Media: A Survey Experiment Comparing Public Perceptions of Campaign Messages in the 2016 US Presidential Election. **SOCIAL SCIENCE COMPUTER REVIEW**, [S. l.], v. 36, n. 4, SI, p. 456–468, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894439317721441>

MORSTATTER, Fred *et al.* Is the Sample Good Enough? Comparing Data from Twitter's Streaming API with Twitter's Firehose. **arXiv:1306.5204 [physics]**, [S. l.], 2013. Disponível em: <http://arxiv.org/abs/1306.5204>. Acesso em: 17 mar. 2019.

Movimento a favor da união de centro com Ciro cresce nas redes. . In: ISTOÉ DINHEIRO. 5 out. 2018. Disponível em: <https://www.istoedinheiro.com.br/movimento-a-favor-da-uniao-de-centro-com-ciro-cresce-nas-redes/>. Acesso em: 18 mar. 2020.

MUSTAFARAJ, Eni *et al.* Vocal Minority versus Silent Majority: Discovering the Opinions of the Long Tail. In: 2011 IEEE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRIVACY, SECURITY, RISK AND TRUST AND 2011 IEEE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL COMPUTING 2011, Boston, MA, USA. **Anais [...]**. Boston, MA, USA: [s. n.], 2011. p. 8. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1109/PASSAT/SocialCom.2011.188>

NADLER, Anthony. Populist communication and media environments. **Sociology Compass**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 8, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12718>. Acesso em: 12 jan. 2020.

NEE, Rebecca Coates; DOZIER, David M. Second screen effects: Linking multiscreen media use to television engagement and incidental learning. **Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies**, [S. l.], v. 23, n. 2, p. 214–226, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856515592510>. Acesso em: 28 ago. 2019.

NEWMAN, Nic. Journalism, Media, and Technology Trends and Predictions 2019. [S. l.], p. 48, 2019.

NEWMAN, Nic *et al.* **Digital News Report 2019**. [S. l.]: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2019. Disponível em: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2019-06/DNR_2019_FINAL_0.pdf.

NEYAZI, Taberez Ahmed; KUMAR, Anup; SEMETKO, Holli A. Campaigns, Digital Media, and Mobilization in India. **The International Journal of Press/Politics**, [S. l.], v. 21, n. 3, p. 398–416, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161216645336>. Acesso em: 23 out. 2018.

NIELSEN, Rasmus Kleis. Mundane internet tools, mobilizing practices, and the coproduction of citizenship in political campaigns. **NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 5, p. 755–771, 2011. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444810380863>

NOELLE-NEUMANN, Elisabeth. The Spiral of Silence a Theory of Public Opinion. **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 24, n. 2, p. 43–51, 1974. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00367.x>. Acesso em: 18 abr. 2020.

OSAKABE, Marcelo; AMENDOLA, Gilberto. Casa de mãe solteira é “fábrica de desajustados”, diz Mourão. **Época Negócios**, [s. l.], 18 set. 2018 Disponível em: [//epocanegocios.globo.com/Brasil/noticia/2018/09/casa-de-mae-solteira-e-fabrica-de-desajustados-diz-mourao.html](http://epocanegocios.globo.com/Brasil/noticia/2018/09/casa-de-mae-solteira-e-fabrica-de-desajustados-diz-mourao.html). Acesso em: 9 abr. 2020.

OZ, Mustafa; ZHENG, Pei; CHEN, Gina Masullo. Twitter versus Facebook: Comparing incivility, impoliteness, and deliberative attributes. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 3400–3419, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817749516>. Acesso em: 18 out. 2018.

PAGLIARINI, Andre. The Man Standing Between Brazil and Authoritarianism. **The New Republic**, [S. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://newrepublic.com/article/151467/man-standing-brazil-authoritarianism>. Acesso em: 9 mar. 2020.

PAPACHARISSI, Zizi. The virtual sphere: The internet as a public sphere. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 4, n. 1, p. 9–27, 2002. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614440222226244>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

PAPACHARISSI, Zizi A. **A Private Sphere: Democracy in a Digital Age**. [S. l.]: John Wiley & Sons, 2013. *E-book*.

PAPACHARISSI, Zizi; DE FATIMA OLIVEIRA, Maria. Affective News and Networked Publics: The Rhythms of News Storytelling on #Egypt. **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 62, n. 2, p. 266–282, 2012. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2012.01630.x>. Acesso em: 5 dez. 2018.

PAPAKYRIAKOPOULOS, Orestis *et al.* Social media and microtargeting: Political data processing and the consequences for Germany. **Big Data & Society**, [S. l.], v. 5, n. 2, p. 2053951718811844, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951718811844>. Acesso em: 6 jul. 2020.

PARISER, Eli. **The Filter Bubble: What The Internet Is Hiding From You**. [S. l.]: Penguin UK, 2011. *E-book*.

PENNEY, Joel. Social Media and Citizen Participation in “Official” and “Unofficial” Electoral Promotion: A Structural Analysis of the 2016 Bernie Sanders Digital Campaign. **JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION**, [S. l.], v. 67, n. 3, p. 402–423, 2017 a. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12300>

PENNEY, Joel. **The Citizen Marketer: Promoting Political Opinion in the Social Media Age**. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017 b. (Oxford Studies in Digital Politics). *E-book*.

PERRIN, Andrew J.; MCFARLAND, Katherine. Social Theory and Public Opinion. **Annual Review of Sociology**, [S. l.], v. 37, n. 1, p. 87–107, 2011. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.012809.102659>. Acesso em: 18 abr. 2020.

PHILLIPS, Tom. Bolsonaro business backers accused of illegal Whatsapp fake news campaign. **The Guardian**, [S. l.], 18 out. 2018. World news Disponível em: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/18/brazil-jair-bolsonaro-whatsapp-fake-news-campaign>. Acesso em: 21 jan. 2019.

POSTILL, John. Populism and social media: a global perspective. **Media, Culture & Society**, [S. l.], v. 40, n. 5, p. 754–765, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718772186>. Acesso em: 2 jun. 2020.

RAINS, Stephen A.; BRUNNER, Steven R. What can we learn about social network sites by studying Facebook? A call and recommendations for research on social network sites. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 17, n. 1, p. 114–131, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814546481>. Acesso em: 13 fev. 2019.

RAMALHO, Renan. Supremo proíbe doação de empresas para campanhas eleitorais. **G1**, Brasília, 17 set. 2015. Política

RAMOS-SERRANO, Marina; FERNANDEZ GOMEZ, Jorge David; PINEDA, Antonio. ‘Follow the closing of the campaign on streaming’: The use of Twitter by Spanish political parties during the 2014 European elections. **NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 1, p. 122–140, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816660730>

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS; INTERVOZES. **Media Ownership Monitor**. [S. l.], 2019. Disponível em: <https://brazil.mom-rsf.org/en/>. Acesso em: 10 set. 2019.

ROBISCHON, Noah. **Twitter’s Influence Problem, Visualized**. [S. l.], 2015. Disponível em: <https://www.fastcompany.com/3043788/twitters-influence-problem-visualized>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

ROGERS, Everett M.; DEARING, James W. Agenda-Setting Research: Where Has It Been, Where Is It Going? **Annals of the International Communication Association**, [S. l.], v. 11, n. 1, p. 555–594, 1988. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.1988.11678708>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

ROGSTAD, Ingrid. Is Twitter just rehashing? Intermedia agenda setting between Twitter and mainstream media. **Journal of Information Technology & Politics**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 2, p. 142–158, 2016. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2016.1160263>. Acesso em: 28 ago. 2019.

RUSSELL NEUMAN, W. *et al.* The Dynamics of Public Attention: Agenda-Setting Theory Meets Big Data: Dynamics of Public Attention. **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 64, n. 2, p. 193–214, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12088>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

SADLER, Neil. Narrative and interpretation on Twitter: Reading tweets by telling stories: **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817745018>. Acesso em: 30 mar. 2020.

SANTINI, Rose Marie *et al.* Media and mediators in contemporary protests: Headlines and hashtags in the June 2013 in Brazil. In: ROBINSON, Laura; SCHULZ, Jeremy; WILLIAMS, Apryl (org.). **Studies in Media and Communications**. [S. l.]: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2017. v. 13p. 259–278. *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2050-206020170000013019>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

SANTINI, Rose Marie *et al.* Software Power as Soft Power. A Literature Review on Computational Propaganda Effects in Public Opinion and Political Process. University of Salento, 2018 a. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1285/i20356609v11i2p332>. Acesso em: 3 dez. 2018.

SANTINI, Rose Marie *et al.* **The automated discourses of social bots: artificial public opinion and the political polarization on social media**. Oxford: Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, 2018 b.

SANTINI, Rose Marie; SALLES, Debora; TUCCI, Giulia. When machine behavior targets future voters: The use of social bots to test narratives for political campaigns in Brazil. **International Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], spring. 2021. Special Section on Comparative Approaches to Disinformation

SAUSSURE, Ferdinand de. **Curso de Linguística Geral**. Edição: 28 ed. São Paulo: Cultrix, 2012. *E-book*.

SAYRE, Ben *et al.* Agenda Setting in a Digital Age: Tracking Attention to California Proposition 8 in Social Media, Online News and Conventional News. **Policy & Internet**, [S. l.], v. 2, n. 2, p. 7–32, 2010. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.2202/1944-2866.1040>. Acesso em: 1 jun. 2019.

SCOTT, John; CARRINGTON, Peter J. (org.). **The SAGE handbook of social network analysis**. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2011. *E-book*.

SERAZIO, Michael. Qualitative Political Communication| Managing the Digital News Cyclone: Power, Participation, and Political Production Strategies. **International Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 0, p. 19, 2015. Disponível em: <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/3379>. Acesso em: 3 fev. 2020.

SINGER, André. **O lulismo em crise: Um quebra-cabeça do período Dilma**. Edição: 1 ed. São Paulo, Brazil: Companhia das Letras, 2018. *E-book*.

SISSON, Diana C. Inauthentic communication, organization-public relationships, and trust: A content analysis of online astroturfing news coverage. **Public Relations Review**, [S. l.], v. 43, n. 4, p. 788–795, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.05.003>. Acesso em: 13 ago. 2018.

SKOGERBØ, Eli; KRUMSVIK, Arne H. Newspapers, Facebook and Twitter: Intermedial agenda setting in local election campaigns. **Journalism Practice**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 3, p. 350–366, 2015. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2014.950471>. Acesso em: 25 jul. 2018.

SPERB, Paula. “Nós vamos voltar e recuperar o país”, promete Lula no Rio Grande do Sul - 29/04/2017 - Poder - Folha de S.Paulo. [S. l.], 2017. Disponível em:

<https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/poder/2017/04/1879908-nos-vamos-voltar-e-recuperar-o-pais-promete-lula-no-rio-grande-do-sul.shtml>. Acesso em: 9 abr. 2020.

STATISTA. **Countries with most Twitter users 2019**. [s. l.], 2019. Disponível em: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/>. Acesso em: 10 set. 2019.

STAVRAKAKIS, Yannis. **Populism and Hegemony**. [S. l.]: Oxford University Press, 2017. v. 1 *E-book*. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.013.26>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

STAVRAKAKIS, Yannis; KATSAMBEKIS, Giorgos. Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA. **Journal of Political Ideologies**, [S. l.], v. 19, n. 2, p. 119–142, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2014.909266>. Acesso em: 7 maio. 2020.

STIEGLITZ, Stefan; DANG-XUAN, Linh. Social media and political communication: a social media analytics framework. **Social Network Analysis and Mining**, [S. l.], v. 3, n. 4, p. 1277–1291, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13278-012-0079-3>. Acesso em: 14 ago. 2018.

STOYCHEFF, Elizabeth *et al.* What have we learned about social media by studying Facebook? A decade in review. **New Media & Society**, [S. l.], v. 19, n. 6, p. 968–980, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817695745>. Acesso em: 13 fev. 2019.

STREET, John. Remote Control? Politics, Technology and ‘Electronic Democracy’. **European Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 12, n. 1, p. 27–42, 1997. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323197012001003>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

STRÖMBÄCK, Jesper. Four Phases of Mediatization: An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics. **The International Journal of Press/Politics**, [S. l.], v. 13, n. 3, p. 228–246, 2008. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161208319097>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

STROMER-GALLEY, Jennifer. **Presidential campaigning in the Internet age**. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. *E-book*.

TARDE, Gabriel. **As leis da imitação**. Porto: Rés, 1983. *E-book*.

TELES, Edson *et al.* **O ódio como política: A reinvenção das direitas no Brasil**. Edição: 1 ed. São Paulo, SP: Boitempo, 2018. *E-book*.

TOWNER, Terri L.; DULIO, David A. New Media and Political Marketing in the United States: 2012 and Beyond. **Journal of Political Marketing**, [S. l.], v. 11, n. 1–2, p. 95–119, 2012. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2012.642748>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

TSE. **DivulgaCandContas**. [s. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <http://www.tse.jus.br/eleicoes/eleicoes-2018/divulgacandcontas#/municipios/2018/2022802018/BR/candidatos>. Acesso em: 7 jul. 2020.

TUCKER, Joshua *et al.* Social Media, Political Polarization, and Political Disinformation: A Review of the Scientific Literature. **SSRN Electronic Journal**, [S. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3144139>. Acesso em: 8 ago. 2019.

TUFEKCI, Zeynep. Big Questions for Social Media Big Data: Representativeness, Validity and Other Methodological Pitfalls. *In: EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL AAAI CONFERENCE ON WEBLOGS AND SOCIAL MEDIA* BIG QUESTIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA BIG DATA 2014, **Eighth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media**. [S. l.: s. n.] Disponível em: <https://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM14/paper/view/8062>. Acesso em: 20 set. 2019.

TWITTER BRASIL. O segundo turno das #Eleições2018 no Twitter. *In: Twitter Blog*. 26 out. 2018. Disponível em: https://blog.twitter.com/pt_br/topics/company/2018/o-segundo-turno-das-eleicoes-2018-no-twitter.html

UOL. Com dólar a R\$ 4, brasileiro “cancela” compra da China e viagem aos EUA. **UOL**, [S. l.], 21 ago. 2018a. Cotação - Economia Disponível em: <https://economia.uol.com.br/cotacoes/noticias/redacao/2018/08/21/dolar-a-r-4-memes-piada-brasileiro.htm>. Acesso em: 27 jun. 2020.

UOL. Temer rebate Alckmin e lista ministros que apoiam tucano: “Fale a verdade”. **UOL**, [S. l.], 5 set. 2018b. ELEIÇÕES 2018 Disponível em: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/eleicoes/2018/noticias/2018/09/05/em-video-temer-critica-alckmin-fale-a-verdade.htm>. Acesso em: 30 jun. 2020.

Urnas selam derrocada histórica dos tucanos e a queda livre de Marina Silva | Notícias | EL PAÍS Brasil. [S. l.], [S. d.]. Disponível em: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/10/06/actualidad/1538842500_232910.html. Acesso em: 12 mar. 2020.

VACCARI, Cristian; NIELSEN, Rasmus Kleis. What Drives Politicians’ Online Popularity? An Analysis of the 2010 U.S. Midterm Elections. **Journal of Information Technology & Politics**, [S. l.], v. 10, n. 2, p. 208–222, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2012.758072>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

VAN DIJK, Teun A. How Globo media manipulated the impeachment of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. **Discourse & Communication**, [S. l.], v. 11, n. 2, p. 199–229, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481317691838>. Acesso em: 9 jul. 2020.

VAROL, Onur *et al.* Online Human-Bot Interactions: Detection, Estimation, and Characterization. **arXiv:1703.03107 [cs]**, [S. l.], 2017. Disponível em: <http://arxiv.org/abs/1703.03107>. Acesso em: 30 maio. 2019.

VENTURINI, Lilian. O que esperar do patrocínio de posts de candidatos durante a eleição. **Nexo Jornal**, [S. l.], 7 jan. 2018

VERGEER, Maurice; HERMANS, Liesbeth; SAMS, Steven. Online social networks and micro-blogging in political campaigning: The exploration of a new campaign tool and a new campaign style. **Party Politics**, [S. l.], v. 19, n. 3, p. 477–501, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068811407580>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

VOS, Tim P.; RUSSELL, Frank Michael. Theorizing Journalism's Institutional Relationships: An Elaboration of Gatekeeping Theory. **Journalism Studies**, [S. l.], p. 1–18, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2019.1593882>. Acesso em: 10 abr. 2019.

WALTON, Sara; BOON, Bronwyn. Engaging with a Laclau & Mouffe informed discourse analysis: a proposed framework. **Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 4, p. 351–370, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-10-2012-1106>. Acesso em: 6 maio. 2020.

WATTS, Duncan J. **Everything Is Obvious: *Once You Know the Answer**. [S. l.]: Crown Publishing Group, 2011. *E-book*.

WETTSTEIN, Martin *et al.* What Drives Populist Styles? Analyzing Immigration and Labor Market News in 11 Countries. **Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly**, [S. l.], v. 96, n. 2, p. 516–536, 2019. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699018805408>. Acesso em: 30 abr. 2020.

WILLIAMS, Shirley A.; TERRAS, Melissa M.; WARWICK, Claire. What do people study when they study Twitter? Classifying Twitter related academic papers. **Journal of Documentation**, [S. l.], v. 69, n. 3, p. 384–410, 2013. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-03-2012-0027>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.

WOJCIESZAK, Magdalena E.; MUTZ, Diana C. Online Groups and Political Discourse: Do Online Discussion Spaces Facilitate Exposure to Political Disagreement? **Journal of Communication**, [S. l.], v. 59, n. 1, p. 40–56, 2009. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2008.01403.x>. Acesso em: 26 jul. 2018.

WOOLLEY, Samuel; HOWARD, Philip N. (org.). **Computational propaganda: political parties, politicians, and political manipulation on social media**. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019. (Oxford studies in digital politics). *E-book*.

YANG, JungHwan; KIM, Young Mie. Equalization or normalization? Voter–candidate engagement on Twitter in the 2010 U.S. midterm elections. **Journal of Information Technology & Politics**, [S. l.], v. 14, n. 3, p. 232–247, 2017. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2017.1338174>. Acesso em: 14 jan. 2019.

ZHANG, Yini *et al.* Attention and amplification in the hybrid media system: The composition and activity of Donald Trump's Twitter following during the 2016 presidential election. **NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY**, [S. l.], v. 20, n. 9, p. 3161–3182, 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817744390>

ZHENG, P.; SHAHIN, S. Live tweeting live debates: How Twitter reflects and refracts the US political climate in a campaign season. **Information Communication and Society**, [S. l.], 2018. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1503697>

ZIMMER, Michael; PROFERES, Nicholas John. A topology of Twitter research: disciplines, methods, and ethics. **Aslib Journal of Information Management**, [S. l.], v. 66, n. 3, p. 250–261, 2014. Disponível em: <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-09-2013-0083>. Acesso em: 25 fev. 2019.