

Title: Expanding a Scope of South Korean Media Strike in 2012: Network Analysis of the Issue Framing on Twitter

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Abstract

This study investigates how the scope of conflict is expanded through an interactive and discursive process on Twitter in terms of dimensions of issue dominance. Twitter is used as a political platform enabling political actors and groups not just to participate in the political process, but to “control the expansive power of conflict that determine the shape of the political system” (Schattschneider, 1960, p. 17). As Schattschneider (1960) suggested, expanding the scope and the extent of the conflict is not additive process; but rather process of displacement of issue frames. This paper aims to see how the original frame of a conflict loses its dominance and is replaced by new ones. The case examined involves the media strike against the government’s suppressive journalism policies in South Korea, begun on January 30, 2012 and lasting until July 7, 2012, which exhibited tensions and changes as a consequence of the widening involvement of people in the strike.

To examine how the extent, the scope and the control of the media strike had changed, this paper utilizes networked framing theory, and employs social and semantic network analysis, which allows the researcher to understand the associative network of political actors, a major concept of the strike and its related ideas, as well as the strength of these relations. Specifically, this paper explores how “particular problem definitions, casual interpretations, moral evaluations and treatment recommendations attain prominence through crowdsourcing process” (Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013, p. 22) using Tweets and Retweets collected between January 30, 2012 and July 7, 2012. Multiple keywords are used to collect data on Twitter, which are # Media Strike, #Surveillance, #Media independence, and # the 19th election for National Assembly, and investigates what other concepts and words were associated to these keywords in the networked framing process.

Title: Fighting against the ball: communicative spaces of twittered protests

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Abstract

The *Akademikerball* [ball of the Academics] is an event for German-national Associations, many of its attendees are members of far-right organisations in Europe. The public institutions of the city support it by providing public spaces for the event (the symbolically charged *Hofburg*) and protect the ball participants from those who demonstrate against the event. Beyond the debates about the ball and the permission to hold it in the Hofburg, on the evening of January 24th 2014 the center of Vienna was a hot zone. The continuous report of violent clashes between police and claimed antifascist demonstrators extended along hours, across the streets, and over the social media, in real time. Protests and citizen social action challenge the understandings of communicative spaces. The combination of mobile devices, social network sites and the struggle for political visibility breaks the traditionally stable conceptions of public space, of media of communication, and of the political languages of protest.

This paper responds to the need of new theoretical models and methodologies by avoiding the dichotomy between media-centered and place-centered approaches. The communicative spaces are taken as fields of cultural production. Protests against the *Akademikerball* in Vienna show how media, place and social practices integrate in the formation of complex communicative spaces. Touristic spots are under curfew, and the public squares are taken to express disagreement, order or resistance. The conflict and the geolocalized tweets, the overlapping of places and practices, of communications and structures collide and define a complex territory of visual and textual constructions of place, a whole geography of media activity integrated by a myriad of social activities. The complexity of discourses meeting and struggling across the communicative spaces is analyzed using the model suggested by Adams and Jansson (2012) that distinguishes four dimensions: representations, structures, textures and connectivity. This paper is part of an ongoing research about governance of communicative spaces that started by testing the model on cases of crowdmapping and the Spanish protests involving the 25s “rodea el Congreso”. The corpus

is formed by tweets containing the most popular hashtags #nowkr, #wkr, and #akademikerball and there, the four dimensions are explored. Findings show that the model applied is very useful to understand the social media practices across the boundaries between the physical and the virtual; and that in spite of the different mapping conditions between the Spanish #25S and the Viennese #nowkr both communicative spaces have many interesting similarities.

Title: The coup that flopped: the role of Facebook in a grassroots political action in the Czech Republic

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Abstract

The potential of social media to serve as an instrument of political activism has recently become a popular subject of academic enquiry. Across the world, social network sites such as Twitter, Facebook or YouTube have been increasingly utilized as instruments of protest movements, demonstrations or attempted revolutions. However, while these events have proven the ability of social media to become a catalyst of collective action, their real-life effects on processes of social and political change have been often disputed. At the same time, SNSs have been incorporated by the established political actors and power holders as tools of political marketing and propaganda, challenging thereby the widespread hopes about the emancipatory and democratizing potential of these new communication platforms.

In this paper, we use these contradicting arguments surrounding the contemporary discourse on new media and civic participation as a springboard for our own empirical case study, in which we attempt to explore the course of online mobilization and the relationship between online and offline political engagement related to the attempted “coup” within the Czech Social Democratic Party in 2013. During this coup, directly following the 2013 Parliamentary Elections, several party members tried to depose the chairman and aspiring Prime Minister Candidate, Bohuslav Sobotka. However, after a few days of political turmoil, the coup was eventually fended off, following the wave of public outrage and Facebook-organized, non-partisan support activities for Sobotka.

Using a combination of content and discourse analysis of communication from the sample of over 2500 comments posted on the Facebook profile of the Czech Social Democratic Party, as well as of the special Facebook group established to support Mr. Sobotka, we attempt to demonstrate that: a) grassroots social media mobilization, real-life

demonstrations and critical coverage in news media mutually supported each other's agenda of criticism of the coup; b) framing the events by the Facebook users in terms of (im)morality instead of political affiliation helped rally support among voters of otherwise competing parties; c) a major reason for the extent and the success of the protests was the fact that the immediate and emotional nature of the protest is well suited to the social media discourse, which lends itself to communication of affective messages and compelling narratives.

Title: The Hashtag Game: Protests in Postcolonial Kuala Lumpur.

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Abstract

In societies where mainstream media is controlled by the state, social media has proven emancipatory for the subaltern in providing a platform to communicate and express their anxieties. In this context, due to the major role that social media play in igniting social movements and uprisings, it has been hailed as an alternative form of public sphere, at times more important than the material urban spaces. On the other hand, it has been argued that real change only happen once events unfold in the material urban space, and social media depend on these events for the images that they produce in order to have material to broadcast. In this instance, due to the loosening monopoly that the state has on flows of information, their hold on material urban space is challenged as well. The democratization of both public spheres is taking place, and the state is playing catch up in the social media game.

Since 2007 to present, there has been an upsurge of protests happening in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in contrast to sporadic events happening over previous years since achieving independence in 1957. These protests share the common trait of actively utilizing social media as a means of mobilization, as spearheaded by the Bersih movement in 2007. Social media are used from the beginning, for igniting awareness, to real time protest communication, and finally as forum for discourse post-protest. Post Bersih 2.0 in 2011, the police had responded to this flood of imagery by releasing their own version of the story, via a video released on social media. In the recent protest against rising living costs, the state's news agency, Bernama, uses the hashtag '#guling' (topple), instead of the hashtag used by the organizers themselves, '#turun' (down/go down).

I am using that hashtag as a departure point for this paper, where I am interested to investigate the state's effort at catching up with social media, from blatant attempts to police it outright, to having 'Cyber Troopers' monitoring and countering statements made by activists and opposition parties, and finally the softer approach of monopolizing it via setting up various interest groups. I will focus on the evolution of this attempt, and situate it within the political context of postcolonial Malaysia, to explore the changing dynamics of interaction between the state and the subaltern, and how this translates into the imagery of public sphere.