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The Polarized Social Representations of immigration through the photographic lens of INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

The current study is inserted into a research line of a wider project, which investigates the social representations about the contemporary migratory phenomenon through various social networks. Specifically, this study focused on individuals' social representations about immigrants through *Instagram* and was inspired by the 'social representations' theoretical framework and in particular by its 'modelling' paradigmatic approach. In line with previous results, we expected to confirm the very polarized representation of immigrants. 456 photos with textual elements were analysed by SPAD through lexical correspondence analysis. The results offer a clear dichotomous discourse about immigration issue: on the one hand, the positive social representations referring to the inclusive visions and policies about immigrants; on the other hand, negative social representations referring to exclusionary visions and policies about immigrants. Thus, in the contemporary and digitalized social world, *Instagram* seems to be a powerful tool, which allows individuals to create, share and spread social representations about immigration issue, in order to contribute and participate in the debate by expressing their own position on this regard. Limitations and further research directions are discussed.

Keywords: social representations; immigration; social media; Instagram; lexical correspondence analysis.

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Introduction

Over the last decade, the immigration issue has become a major component of the social and political discourse in the international context (Mannarini et al., 2020; Avraamidou et al., 2019; Fiore and Ialongo, 2018). Such a debate was particularly pervasive and constituted one of the main arguments discussed among all the social actors, that are politicians, scientific experts and ordinary people too (Eberl et al., 2018; Ogan et al., 2018). Unfortunately, the complexity of this theme was often reduced to a simplified reading of the phenomenon, which saw two dichotomous positions to oppose (de Rosa et al., 2019, forthcoming_a, forthcoming_b, forthcoming_c; Greenland et al., 2018; Salvati et al., 2019; 2020). On the one hand, a part of the public opinion leans toward a vision of immigrants as people who needs help, victims of the economic policies of western and richer countries (Hercowitz-Amir et al., 2017). On the other hand, another considerable share of people prefers to ignore the international geo-politic dynamics behind the migratory flows and consider immigrants as individuals who freely choose to leave their own countries to find better living conditions in more developed countries (Di Cicco and Sensales, 2019; Wojcieszak and Garrett, 2018). Consequently, two different answers to the phenom are associated with these two extreme points of view, respectively. The former would encourage inclusive and welcoming policies to integrate immigrants in the social fabric of arrival countries (Pistella et al., 2020; Van Mol and De Valk, 2016). On the contrary, the latter is more prone to exclusionary policies based on the refusal and rejection of immigrants to their origin countries (Cunningset al., 2015).

In the digitalized era internet with its multiple worlds (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1988) represents an useful tool for psycho-social research (de Rosa and Bocci, 2014 de Rosa et al., 2013, 2019a, 2019b; Di Cicco and Sensales, 2019). Social networks (Riva, 2016) in particular constitute a common privileged channel, through which people all over the world can be connected and contribute to the social debate on immigration issue (Chung and Zeng, 2016; Dekker et al., 2016; de Rosa et al., 2020; de Rosa et al., forthcoming). These web platforms allow people to co-create, vehicular and spread the social representations about migration issue (Ben-David and Matamoros-Fernández, 2016; Haynes and Sattler, 2017). Considering the rapidity of such processes, the contents of the individuals' representations evolve and transform continuously (Ojala et al., 2019), making social networks a digital 'social arena' (de Rosa, 2013) where more and more digital users can take part. Social media and knowledge driven by algorithms, new technology and artificial Intelligence (AI) applications have surely contributed to generate at the same time an impressive global access to massive information (Castells et al, 2005) and the so called "dis-information society" (Marshall, 2017; Marshall et al., 2015; Caligiuri, 2019; O' Connor and Owen Weatherall, 2019), including the "fake news" phenomena (Riva, 2018; Vosoughi et al., 2018).

For these reasons, Social Representations theory - that originated from the interest to investigate the dynamic of knowledge co-construction in society through multiple levels of communication in the dialogue between expert's

reified knowledge and lay people consensual system of beliefs (Moscovici, 1961/1976; 1988, 2000; Jodelet, 1989, 2008, 2016; de Rosa, 2013; Lo Monaco et al., 2016) - represents a valid theoretical framework, by offering multiple paradigmatic and methodological approaches to the study of the polemical representations (de Rosa, 2001; de Rosa and Smith, 1998) about immigrants, generated in interpersonal, institutional and media communication (de Rosa et al, 2019; 2020). Indeed, Moscovici (1961/1976; 2001), defines social representations as system of shared meanings, thoughts, affects, symbols, attitudinal dimensions associated to social behaviors, which allow people to create meaningful knowledge about the social world through multiple communicative channels.

Compared to the large variety of social media that digital world makes available to users, Instagram certainly takes a privileged position (Rainie et al., 2012). Specifically, compared to other social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc., the main strength of Instagram consists in the use of images (Hu et al., 2014). Together with other authors (Moliner, 1996, 2016; Jodelet, 2012), we recognise the image-based channel (photos, videos, cinema, figurative arts, adverst, drawings and other figurative techniques) as fundamental in the investigation of social representations, due to the interrelated dimensions of 'icon' and 'symbol' in the communicative processes that generate them (de Rosa and Farr, 2001) and given the role of the iconic component in the processes of 'objectification' and 'anchoring' into social and collective memory, in particular of those with high emotional impact, as the traumatic events in the media (de Rosa 2007; 2014b) or 'themata' like madness and its imaginary in the history of arts and sciences and in contemporary societies, inducing 'cognitive polyphasia' (de Rosa, 1987, 2014a; de Rosa and Bocci, 2013; Moscovici and Vignaux, 1994). 'Icon' and 'symbol' in the communicative processes that generates and share social representations are also highly relevant when 'objectification' and 'anchoring' are interrelated with processes involving multi-dimensional identities, collective memory and social imagery, like in the investigation of the social representations of Europe, the EU, the European countries, own Nation, the self (de Rosa, 2000; de Rosa, d'Ambrosio, 2000, 2002, 2005; de Rosa, d'Ambrosio & Bocci, 2005; de Rosa et Al, 2007), or in the investigation of the place identity related to the historical European Capitals and place @-branding (de Rosa & Bocci, 2014; de Rosa, Bocci and Dryjanska, 2019) and not only in the commercial advertising, that has been always the powerful realm of the images, especially in the very unconventional campaigns like the Benetton advertising campaigns directed by Oliverio Toscani activating polemical representations (de Rosa, 2001b; de Rosa & Smith, 1998), or in the advertising of the aesthetic surgery and the social representations of the beauty (de Rosa & Holman, 2011).

In the above mentioned previous investigations in other thematic areas we already approached the interrelated analysis of verbal and iconic channels, even creating ad hoc specific image-based techniques (like - just to mention some of them designed by de Rosa - the "drawing of person, of mad person and as you would be a mad person"; the EuroSkyCompass, the photolanguage applied in focus groups; the "associative networks" including images, rather than stimulus words, etc.);

or using the visual or multi-media channels to investigate the logos or the institutional website as vehicle of the place @-branding, or to analyse the impact of adverts in activating polemical social representations, etc.

The image and the iconic figurative visual channel indeed plays an essential role also in the research program focused on Migration, both in some tools designed ad hoc (like the drawing of the experienced journey from the homeland to the country of destination and the imagined journey back - if any - integrated by the story telling) used in the two field studies to give voice to 1st and 2nd generation of migrants and refugees and to social workers of the host communities in Germany and Italy (de Rosa et al., 2019), and in the various lines of research aimed at reconstructing the discourse on migrants in its most varied aspects (the scientific discourse, the policy-driven institutional discourse, the discourse through online press and multimedia broadcast, the discourse co-constructed through various social media including Instagram and YouTube strongly characterized by the presence of static (photographs) and dynamic images (video), as well as Facebook and Twitter more centered on textual channel with different communicative constraints (de Rosa et al., 2020; forthcoming_a, forthcoming_b, forthcoming_c).

Indeed, Instagram allows to capture and share photos and videos representing users' life moments and not only (Caldeira et al., 2018), whereas other widespread social networks such as Facebook and Twitter privilege the use of textual posts, although other kind of contents are possible. Just like its brothers, Instagram allows people to use hashtags (#), tag other persons (@), and follow other Instagram members, called 'followers'. Given these functions, Instagram represents a powerful communication tool, which connects an increasing number of individuals with no limitations in the number of followers allowed (Miles, 2013).

Based on the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words", our choice to include Instagram as platform to study social representations about immigrant issue could be easily understood. Images have a powerful impact and are able to evoke emotional responses, which makes the textual elements more incisive and memorable (de Rosa, 1987; 2014a; Martikainen, 2019). Pictures could work as frames, which organize individuals' perceptions, emotions and beliefs (Xu, 2018), and contribute to confer significant meanings to the message (Popp and Mendelson, 2010). Thus, considering the relevant role of media images in the construction of social representations of immigrants, which influence social interactions with this population target and also their social identities (Rodriguez and Dimitrova, 2011), we believe that we can not give up such a huge source of information.

Current Research and Hypotheses

The current study is inserted into a research line of a wider project on migratory experience and discourse (de Rosa et al., 2019; 2020; forthcoming_a,b,c), articulated into 'field' and 'media' studies which investigate:

- from one side the multiple experiential dimensions of migrants/refugees themselves in different target populations (89 second-generation Filipino immigrant adolescents in Italy; 75 subjects among 43 migrants and adult refugees in Germany from different countries of the world, 32 humanitarian workers and citizens of local communities adjacent to the various reception centers) (de Rosa et al., 2019);
- from the other side the polarization in the media of social representations and attitudes according to the different ideological positions and identity affiliations, which guide the processes of social inclusion/exclusion towards migrants (de Rosa et al., 2020; forthcoming_a,b,c).

The media studies are aimed at reconstructing the multi-voices and multi-agents discourses about the contemporary migratory phenomenon:

- a) the scientific discourse (by experts), based on the international scientific literature, inspired by the Social Representations Theory and other theories in social sciences;
- b) the political-institutional discourse driven by or leading the institutional policies (at national and supranational level) by institutions, NGO, policy makers, political leaders, authorities etc.;
- c) the media discourse by "journalists" in the national and international online press of different political orientations and multimedia broadcast;
- d) the social discourse through communication "for" and "among" the citizens in the various scenarios of the social networks (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).

Specifically, the current study aimed at focusing on individuals' social representations about immigrants through Instagram.

Other studies conducted on Twitter (de Rosa et al., forthcoming_b) and Facebook (de Rosa et al., forthcoming_c) found that social representations about immigrants constituted a very polarized discourse, characterized by two distinct poles:

- on the one hand, the positive representations of immigrants as 'victims' are associated with positive and supportive attitudes toward them;
- on the other hand, the negative representations of immigrants as 'invaders, deviants, criminals or terrorists' evoke people's negative beliefs, affects, and stereotypes about immigration.

These two extremes, leading to inclusive/ exclusionary policies, are well described - anchored and objectified in light of the Social Representations Theory - by the metaphors of open-ports versus closed-ports, which often return in the data (de Rosa et al., forthcoming_a).

Thus, in line with such previous results, we expected to confirm these very polarized representations of immigrants even on the data collected through Instagram presented in this study. The added value and strength of Instagram is that such a social network allows characterizing the social representations through the use of pictures too, which represent a powerful tool of transmission of information and meanings (de Rosa, 2014a; Martikainen, 2019; Popp and Mendelson, 2010; Rodriguez and Dimitrova, 2011; Xu, 2018).

Our interest for investigating social representations through both visual-figurative and textual-verbal channels

was in this specific research on Migration in line with the contributions of Peter Stockinger (2017, 2018). He also starts from images to identify thematic and categorical focuses, using the audiovisual language of You Tube platform as a key to communicate persuasively the representation of “the other”; and to develop an explicit research methodology based on structural semeiotics and discourse analysis.

Methodology

The whole research project, including this study, was inspired by the ‘modelling paradigmatic approach’ to social representations (de Rosa, 2014a). This approach is characterized by the integrated use of multi-theoretical and multi-methodological constructs and research designs. Largely implemented to study social representations (de Rosa, 2013; de Rosa et al., 2018; 2019) it allows catching the different dimensions of social representations through several sets of techniques, which depend on the specific communicative channel and nature of data collected from the different informative sources.

This specific contribution focused both on the textual and iconic elements related to posts, published on Instagram from 2015 to 2018, currently increasing with new waves of data collection in 2019-2020.

We used lexical correspondence analyses by SPAD software (Lebart et al. 1987) to analyze the data. The data comprised a large set of categorial active variables, characterized both by the factual elements of the posts and by the evaluative elements, related to the emotional impact of the message by the students involved in data collection (see below).

Participants and Procedures

University students attending the lab of the course “Social Representation and Communication: New Media and Web-Marketing” at Sapienza University, collected the data during the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. The students were divided in several groups, each of them supervised by a tutor. The lab required that each student of the “Instagram” group gather 50 photos at least, coming from both National and International Instagram users, which had to refer to migratory issue. Although several programs for automatic retrieval of Instagram posts exist for the keyword and hashtag (Danneman and Heimann, 2014), we preferred an accurate manual collection. Such a choice allowed us to produce textual and categorial variables, which did not include the factual elements of the posts only, but also the evaluative elements of the messages.

The data matrix, a content analysis grid built ad hoc for this research, was compiled individually by the subjects and therefore, for example, the variable “emotion” investigates the individual emotion of the examiner towards the information collected. The interest in the individual compilation of the grid intentionally lies in the possibility of grasping the sentiment as evoked by the analyzer, thus detecting the emotional component of social representations. Emotion is one of the

variables inherent in the reaction to the message, as part of a content analysis grid that contains numerous variables applicable to different Social Media.

The posts selected were the ones that fitted with the parameters established: time period and hashtag presence. For each post has been indicated the specific data of publication. This information has been useful in order to differentiate the variables: ‘Year’ and ‘Government’.

All the variables are detailed in Table 1, whereas we just report a brief narrative description here:

- ‘Year’ refers to the time frame in which the post was collected, whereas ‘Government’ variable was based on the Italian or international context and refers to the government in office at the time the post was published: both are relevant information in order to contextualise the geo-political scenario of the sources analysed through social media, often acting as echo chamber of controversial social representations driven by the polarised political discourse.
- For ‘Image Scenario’ and ‘Sentiment Analysis’ variables, recruiters were asked to indicate the presence or the absence of several characteristics (i.e., the context, the socio-relational, emotional, functional/organizational dimension, etc.) or emotions evoked in the analyzer (i.e. surprise, fear, sadness, joy, disgust, and anger).
- Finally, ‘Social network metric’ was detected for each post, reporting the level of like, followers, and comments.

The posts were published by anonymous, unknown or very famous individuals/organizations. Among the most famous there are: a) photojournalists (John Wessels, Alessio Paduano, Sebastiano Nino Fezza, Tommy Trenchard, etc.); b) NGO (Caritas, UNHCR, Unicef, Un Refugee Agency, Amnesty, Medici Senza Frontiere, etc.); c) media online (radio TV journals: SkyTG24, ANSA, La Repubblica, Rai News Official, etc.); d) other: labor unions like CGIL, etc.

Definitely, the final worksheet had 456 photos with textual elements (the hashtag without the symbol #) which were translated in English, where needed. The categorization of the data were organized in three macro-categories as listed in the Table 1 including variables and related modalities:

- A. national/international political scenario;
- B. image scenario and sentiment analysis;
- C. social network metrics.

Tab. 1. The categorization of the data

	Variables	Modalities
A. ‘National/International Political Scenario’		
1.	Year	2015, 2016, 2017, 2018.
2.	Italian Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matteo Renzi (From February 22, 2014 to December 12, 2016); • Paolo Gentiloni (from December 12, 2016 to June 1, 2018); • Giuseppe Conte (from June 1, 2018 - In charge, as at the time of data collection). • Barack Obama (from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2017);
3.	USA Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donald Trump (from January 20, 2017 - In charge, as at the time of data collection).

Variables	Modalities
B. 'Image Scenario' and 'Sentiment Analysis'	
1. Context	Urban; Naturalistic; Institutional/Organizational; Missing Context.
2. Socio-Relational Dimension	Yes; Not.
3. Emotional Dimension	Yes; Not.
4. Functional/Organizational Dimension	Yes; Not.
5. Prevailing Dimension	Socio-Relational; Emotional; Functional/Organizational.
6. Famous Testimonial	Yes; Not.
7. Other Protagonists	Yes; Not.
8. Surprise	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
9. Fear	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
10. Sadness	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
11. Joy	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
12. Disgust	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
13. Anger	Yes; Not; Missing Value.*
C. 'Social Network Metrics'	
1. Like	Few; Enough; A lot of; More.
2. Followers	Few; Enough; A lot of; More; Over million.
3. Comments	No comments; Few; Enough; A lot of.

Note: Yes indicates that the University student evoked the specific emotion for the analyzed image; Not indicates that the University student didn't evoke the specific emotion (but others) for the analyzed image; Missing indicates that the University student didn't evoke any emotion for the analyzed image.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by SPAD (Lebart et al., 1989), using firstly the Mots (Eschylle, 1987) procedure in order to reduce the high number of terms (2573) to 351 different words. Such a preliminary lemmatization was performed as usual in corpus linguistics and lexicometric approaches, which compact the contiguous lexical forms, such as eg. plural/singular forms, in order to make subsequent analyzes more stable, avoiding excessive dispersion of data. Moreover, the variables with a lower frequency have been excluded to give greater statistical stability to the results. The reduction in the number of different words is therefore not only the effect of using the threshold suitable for eliminating words with a lower frequency, but above all the effect of merging operations between words having the same root. Then we applied the Talex and Corbit procedures (Benzécri 1973; Eschylle, 1987), to create the contingency tables for the correspondence analysis. Corbit procedure allows the analysis of latent dimensions in which it was possible to consider both categorical variables and textual variables as active variables. In this way the considered variables can play the role of "active variables" that is to say variables directly involved in the analysis and cooperating to the formation of the factorial axes.

The analysis makes it possible to identify hidden dimensions that are subtended to the data and summarizes the relations between original variables. The importance of the factors is decreasing, and the first factor is the best approximation of the original data matrix. There are not strict rules in choosing the number of factors to be considered. To add factors following to the first means to gain in accuracy but means even to increase the number of factors to be interpreted. A principle suggested to decide where to stop consists in identifying the factor beyond which the contribution of explained-inertia becomes not much remarkable, in the sense that the explained cumulative inertia starts to increase very slowly, for example far less than 10% every following factor added. This is the case of the third factor, explaining 7,84% of the total variance. For this reason, the comments are concentrated on the first two factors.

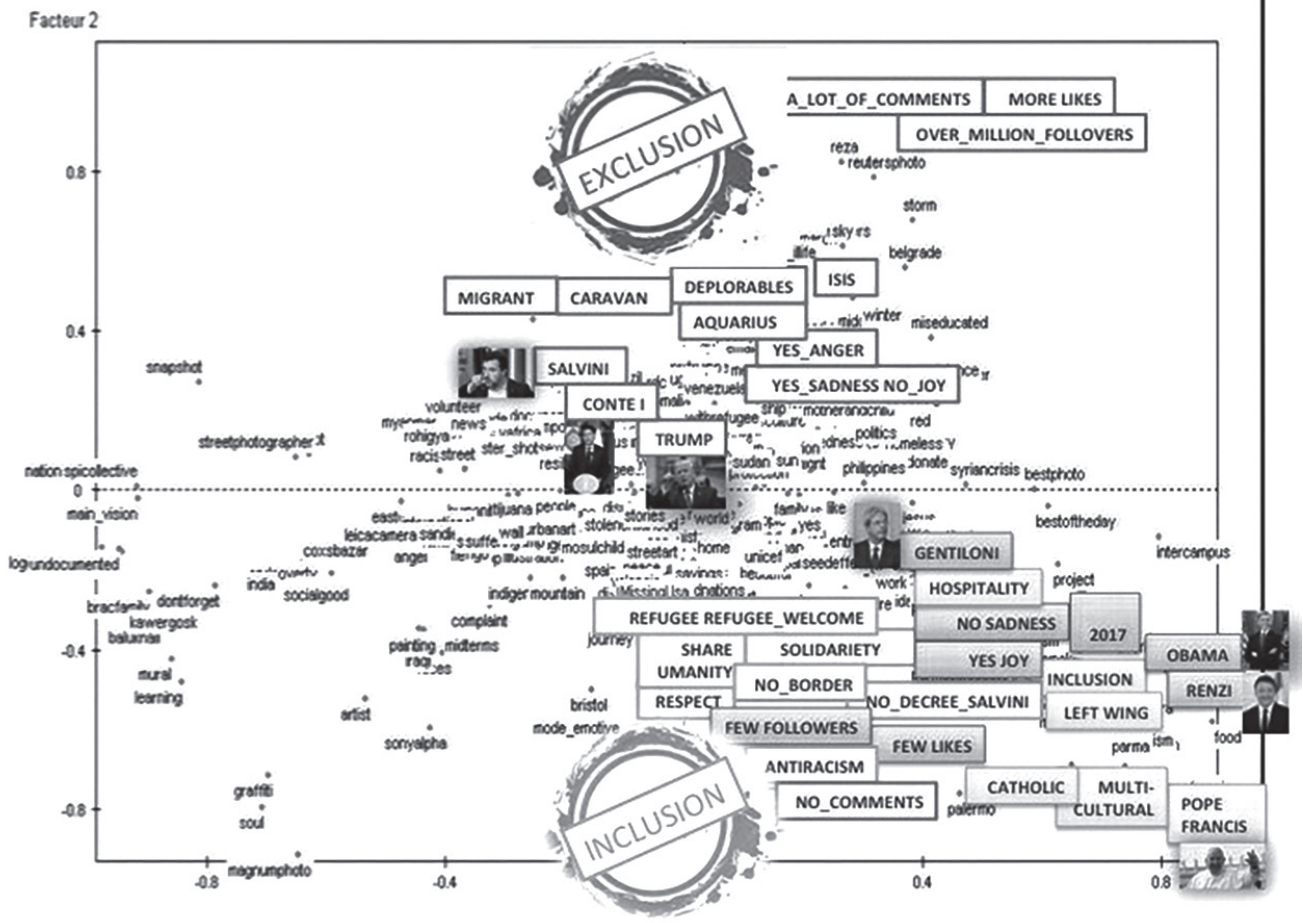
Moreover, Spad supplies with a histogram that depicts graphically the self-values using segments of a length proportional to the importance of factors. It's possible to estimate at a glance the decreasing progress of self-values.

Results

The findings indicated five different factors, explaining the 49.50% of total variance. Due to words limits allowed for this article, we present the results referring only to the first two factors, cumulatively explaining 28,36% of the total variance. The semantic space around the first two factors points out the presence of a net contrast between the positive and negative point of views expressed toward migratory issue. The polarized social representations referring to the inclusive and exclusionary policies are well represented in the graphical space, reported in Figure 1. The two opposed dichotomies of the discourse about immigration summarized by the metaphors of open/closed ports and borders are significantly related to different values, human rights beliefs and political and religious leaders.

The first and second factors explain the 17.15% and 11.21% of the total variance respectively. Inclusive social representations appear on the positive semi-axis of the factor 1 (table 2). Words such as 'Pope Francis'(a.c. 2.4), 'inclusion'(a.c. 2.1), 'hospitality'(a.c. 1.2), 'multicultural'(a.c. 0.5), 'Catholic'(a.c. 1.0) appear associated to political-institutional and cultural terms such as 'sinistra/left'(a.c. 0.8), 'activism'(a.c. 0.7), 'EU'(a.c. (0.7), 'welcome'(a.c. 0.7), 'African art'(a.c. 0.6), 'intercampus'(a.c. 0.6), 'culture'(a.c. 0.6), 'human rights'(a.c. 0.4), 'amnesty'(a.c. 0.4), 'community'(a.c. 0.3), together with other words referring to geographical aspects, like 'Mediterranean'(a.c. 0.7), 'Africa'(a.c. 0.4), 'Ivory Coast'(a.c. 0.6), 'Naples'(0.7), and terms referring to target population politically relevant for migratory flows, like 'Syrian crisis'(a.c. 0.4), 'Palestinian'(a.c. 0.3), and Filipino'(a.c. 0.5). This positive semi-axis is related to the categorial variables: years 2016 and 2017 as temporal frame; the Italian Prime Ministers Renzi and Gentiloni and American President Obama; absence of emotions like surprise, fear, sadness, disgust, and anger, and presence of joy aroused by the message; low impact denoted by the few likes and followers (table 3).

Fig. 1. Intersection between Factor 1 (horizontal) and Factor 2 (vertical)



Note. In the online version of the article, in the upper half-plane of the graph, marked by the representational core “exclusion”, the salient textual variables are distinguished by labels in red and text in blue, while the most relevant categorical variables have labels in purple and blue text. In the lower half-plane of the graph, marked by the representational core “inclusion”, the salient textual variables are distinguished by green labels and blue text, while the most relevant categorical variables have the labels in purple and blue text. The words and categorical variables relevant for both factors (shared by F1 and F2) are highlighted with the colored text box inside (both for words and for categorical variables).

Tab. 2. Factor 1: Absolute and relative contributes of specific words on positive and negative semiaxes

Words	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Words	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Popefrancis	+	2.4	0.17	Logodailylogonew	-	4.0	0.53
Inclusion	+	2.1	0.40	Beinghuman	-	2.5	0.70
Migrant	+	1.6	0.51	Rohigya	-	2.5	0.63
Food	+	1.5	0.25	Undocumented	-	2.5	0.49
Cooking	+	1.3	0.36	Bracfamily (Ong)	-	2.3	0.73
Hospitality	+	1.2	0.56	Kmasad	-	1.2	0.68
Catholic	+	1.0	0.19	Myanmar	-	1.2	0.43
Project	+	0.9	0.32	Nationalgeographic	-	1.2	0.68
Sinistra	+	0.8	0.32	Neworleans	-	1.2	0.50
Activism	+	0.7	0.33	Refugeecamp	-	1.2	0.70
Eu	+	0.7	0.32	Spicollective	-	1.2	0.68
Mediterranean	+	0.7	0.27	Asia	-	1.1	0.73
Naples	+	0.7	0.09	India	-	1.1	0.34
Parma	+	0.7	0.42	Live	-	1.1	0.54
Welcome	+	0.7	0.46	Bangladesh	-	1.0	0.40

Words	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Words	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Africanart	+	0.6	0.21	Angel	-	0.9	0.60
Ivorycoast	+	0.6	0.21	Historic	-	0.9	0.32
Culture	+	0.6	0.36	Coxbazar	-	0.8	0.68
Intercampus	+	0.6	0.12	Donate	-	0.8	0.72
Bestoftheday	+	0.5	0.18	Dreamact	-	0.8	0.49
Bestphoto	+	0.5	0.18	Main_Vision	-	0.8	0.72
Causes	+	0.5	0.28	Streetphotographer	-	0.8	0.63
Filipino	+	0.5	0.13	Balukhali	-	0.7	0.36
Happy	+	0.5	0.26	Endpoverty	-	0.7	0.63
Journalism	+	0.5	0.27	Graffiti	-	0.7	0.31
Minimal	+	0.5	0.22	Learning	-	0.7	0.60
Multicultural	+	0.5	0.29	Mural	-	0.7	0.45
Africa	+	0.4	0.30	Sketch	-	0.7	0.57
Amnesty	+	0.4	0.18	Soul	-	0.7	0.29
Changemaker	+	0.4	0.35	Dontforget	-	0.6	0.59
Humanright	+	0.4	0.46	Emotions	-	0.6	0.18
Migration	+	0.4	0.30	Kawergosk	-	0.6	0.61
Red	+	0.4	0.16	Leicacamera	-	0.6	0.35
Repost	+	0.4	0.28	Natgeoyourshot	-	0.6	0.38
Reuters	+	0.4	0.09	People	-	0.6	0.47
Right	+	0.4	0.27	Snapshot	-	0.6	0.32
Syriancrisis	+	0.4	0.19	Socialgood	-	0.6	0.54
Work	+	0.4	0.42	Sonyalpha	-	0.6	0.14
Archive	+	0.3	0.28	Suffering	-	0.6	0.42
Bnw	+	0.3	0.11	Artist	-	0.5	0.25
Cinema	+	0.3	0.19	Fled	-	0.5	0.47
Community	+	0.3	0.27	Volunteer	-	0.5	0.19
Dogood	+	0.3	0.31	Draw	-	0.4	0.20
Family	+	0.3	0.24	Hope	-	0.4	0.38
Gallery	+	0.3	0.23	Magnumphoto	-	0.4	0.18
Palestinian	+	0.3	0.08	News	-	0.4	0.22
Politics	+	0.3	0.14	Ngo	-	0.4	0.36
Reutersphoto	+	0.3	0.07	Racism	-	0.4	0.31
Summer	+	0.3	0.27	Art	-	0.3	0.08
Youth	+	0.3	0.26	Boxing	-	0.3	0.19
				Burma	-	0.3	0.46
				Colour	-	0.3	0.30
				Displaced	-	0.3	0.28
				Easter	-	0.3	0.26
				Immigrant	-	0.3	0.15
				International	-	0.3	0.41
				Iraqi	-	0.3	0.23
				Life	-	0.3	0.22
				Painting	-	0.3	0.41
				Sandiego	-	0.3	0.19
				Street	-	0.3	0.26
				Tijuana	-	0.3	0.23

Tab. 3. Factor 1: Absolute and relative contributes of categorial variables on positive and negative semiaxes

Categorial Variables	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Categorial Variables	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Year: 2016	+	1.7	0.11	Emotions: Missing Surprise	-	8.8	0.87
Year: 2017	+	2.9	0.20	Emotions: Missing Fear	-	8.8	0.87
Ita Government: Renzi	+	1.9	0.13	Emotions: Missing Sadness	-	8.6	0.87
Ita Government: Gentiloni	+	1.9	0.15	Emotions: Missing Joy	-	8.8	0.87
Usa Government: Obama	+	2.0	0.14	Emotions: Missing Disgust	-	8.8	0.87
Emotions: No Surprise	+	3.4	0.83	Emotions: Missing Anger	-	8.8	0.87
Emotions: No Fear	+	2.9	0.73	Followers: Enough Followers	-	2.9	0.29
Emotions: No Sadness	+	4.2	0.40				
Emotions: Yes Joy	+	3.5	0.27				
Emotions: No Disgust	+	3.4	0.85				
Emotions: No Anger	+	3.3	0.69				
Likes: Few Likes	+	1.7	0.13				
Followers: Few Followers	+	2.9	0.19				

Note. As indicated in the categorization, about the emotions: Yes indicates that the University student evoked the specific emotion for the analyzed image; Not indicates that the University student didn't evoke the specific emotion (but others) for the analyzed image; Missing indicates that the University student didn't evoke any emotion for the analyzed image.

The negative semi-axis of factor 1 highlights the situation of displaced and refugee with many references to one of the most persecuted ethnic groups in the world: the Rohingya. The Asian geo-cultural context is therefore focused. The Muslim ethnic group lives in the northern part of Myanmar, on the border with Bangladesh. The Rohingya are not part of the ethnic groups recognized by the State and are therefore refugees in refugee camps in Bangladesh. Many of them are being held in inhumane conditions in mass detention camps in Rakhine. Among the keywords, in addition to human beings (a.c. 2.5), other words appear: Rohingya (a.c. 2.5) Myanmar (a.c. 1.2) and Burma (a.c. 0.3) -term linked to the majority ethnic group of Bamar. There is also Bangladesh (a.c. 1.0) with Cox's Bazar (a.c. 0.8) and the Rohingya refugee camp of Balukhali (a.c. 0.7) in Cox's Bazar. There is also a reference to the independent documentary professional Knasad (a.c. 1.2).

We can label the first factor "Protagonists": where the positive semi-axis is focused on the religious leader Pope Francis and his inclusion policies, while the negative semi-axis is focused on ethnic minorities subject to atrocious persecution such as the Asian Muslim religious leader of the Rohingya. It

is on the first factor, positive semi-axis, that we find the rethoric figure of "Personification" in the charismatic figure of Pope Francis who becomes the catalyst for coherent inclusive practices/policies for immigration.

Like on the positive semi-axis of the factor 1, similar positive social representations can be identified on the negative semi-axis of the factor 2 too (table 4). Again, words such as 'Pope Francis'(a.c. 2.8), 'inclusion'(a.c. 2.1), 'refugeeswelcome'(a.c. 2.0), 'emotions'(a.c. 1.8), 'Catholic'(a.c. 1.7), 'antiracism'(a.c. 0.8), 'no more bombs'(a.c. 0.8), 'solidarity'(a.c. 0.8), 'respect'(a.c. 0.5), 'help'(a.c. 0.5), 'hospitality'(a.c. 0.4), 'share humanity'(a.c. 0.6) appear. These terms are again associated with political-institutional and cultural terms like 'sinistra/left'(a.c. 0.6), 'activism'(a.c. 0.4), 'EU'(a.c. 0.4), 'children rights'(a.c. 0.3), 'saving'(a.c. 0.3), terms referring to the metaphor of inclusive ports such as 'open ports'(a.c. 0.4), 'no borders'(a.c. 0.9), 'no decreto Salvini'(a.c. 0.3), and terms referring to the typical places inherent the migration issue, like 'Lampedusa'(a.c. 0.3) or 'Parnacità'asilo'(a.c. 0.3). This negative semi-axis is related to the following categorial variables: the presence of joy aroused by the message; but

again, the low impact of the few likes and followers and no comments (table 5).

On the contrary, the positive semi-axis of the factor 2 is characterized by social representations driven by the process of exclusion and negative feelings toward immigrants (table 4). Here, the names of political leaders 'Trump' (a.c. 0.8) and 'Salvini' (a.c. 0.5) appear. Furthermore, there are terms referring to politically elements like the search and rescue ship 'Aquarius'(a.c. 0.7), the NGOs that became a media case in 2018 because of the contrast with the policy of closed ports adopted by Salvini. This semi-axis also presents words related to the contextual scenario about 'migrant's(a.c. 0.5) flows across the sea, in 'caravan'(a.c. 0.7), from the two sides of Atlantic and their roots from many countries worldwide, like 'America'(a.c. 0.3), 'Mexico'(a.c. 1.8), "Guatemala"(a.c. 0.5), 'Italia'(a.c. 0.3), 'Mediterranean'(a.c. 0.5), 'middleEast'(a.c. 0.5), 'Belgrade'(a.c. 0.4), 'Bangladesh'(a.c. 0.3), 'Uganda'(a.c. 0.3), across 'border'(a.c. 0.4), during 'storm'(a.c. 0.7), 'winter'(a.c. 0.3), under the 'sky'(a.c. 1.9). Also, several terms referring to the communicative channels of Instagram photos and videos are presents like 'FanPage.it' (a.c. 3.5), 'Reutersphoto' (a.c. 3.1), 'Reuters' (a.c. 3.0), 'GettyImages' (a.c. 0.5). Also, we found references to the American and European geo-cultural context: Mexico (a.c. 1.8), Trump (a.c. 0.8), Aquarius (a.c.

0.7), Caravan (a.c. 0.7), Migrant (a.c. 0.5), Salvini (a.c. 0.5), Italy (a.c. 0.3). This positive semi-axis of the factor 2 is related to the following categorical variables: year 2018 as temporal frame; absence of "joy" and presence of "sadness" and "anger" as emotions aroused by the message; the high impact denoted by a lot of "likes"/"more likes" "and "more followers"/"over million followers" and "a lot of comment"/"enough comments"(table 5).

On the second factor, the opposition in terms of "Leadership" is between Pope Francis on the negative semi-axis and the Italian Salvini present on the positive semi-axis together with the American political leader Trump. On this second factor there is a double reference to Italy: on the negative semi-axis there is the Pope and the policies of inclusion while the negative semi-axis refers to Salvini and his policies of exclusion.

Despite some similarities, however different geo-cultural contexts are reported in the first and second factors as exemplary scenarios of inclusion/exclusion. Different continents of the world are affected by the phenomenon of immigration which, depending on the geo-cultural context and the historical period/Governments, it takes on different meanings generating various social representations and it is subject to different practices/policies of inclusion/exclusion.

Tab. 4. Factor 2: Absolute and relative contributes of specific words on positive and negative semiaxes

Words	Semiasis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Words	Semiasis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Fanpageit	+	3.5	0.21	Popefrancis	-	2.8	0.13
Reutersphoto	+	3.1	0.40	Inclusion	-	2.1	0.26
Reuters	+	3.0	0.47	Refugeesrefugeeswelcome	-	2.0	0.55
Sardegna_Illife	+	2.2	0.35	Emotions	-	1.8	0.35
Sky	+	1.9	0.33	Sonyalpha	-	1.8	0.27
Mexico	+	1.8	0.58	Catania	-	1.7	0.40
Reza	+	1.4	0.14	Catholic	-	1.7	0.21
Picture	+	1.1	0.39	Demonstration	-	1.7	0.55
Alghero	+	1.0	0.35	Cooking	-	1.5	0.26
Doctor	+	1.0	0.16	Soul	-	1.4	0.37
Drone	+	1.0	0.14	Magnumphoto	-	1.2	0.35
Trump	+	0.8	0.27	Graffiti	-	1.1	0.32
Aquarius	+	0.7	0.22	Art	-	1.0	0.15
Caravan	+	0.7	0.38	Food	-	1.0	0.11
Report	+	0.7	0.30	Bnw (Black and White)	-	0.9	0.22
Storm	+	0.7	0.14	Noborder	-	0.9	0.42
Yallerslife	+	0.7	0.35	Antiracism	-	0.8	0.39
Guatemala	+	0.6	0.41	Artist	-	0.8	0.24
Isis	+	0.6	0.36	Filipino	-	0.8	0.14
Gettyimages	+	0.5	0.13	Nomorebombs	-	0.8	0.34
Khalsaaidiraq	+	0.5	0.18	Palermo	-	0.8	0.28
March	+	0.5	0.35	Parma	-	0.8	0.30
Mediterranean	+	0.5	0.12	Solidarity	-	0.8	0.34
Middleeast	+	0.5	0.21	Bristol	-	0.7	0.43
Migrant	+	0.5	0.10	Culture	-	0.7	0.30
Mother	+	0.5	0.25	Multicultural	-	0.7	0.25

Words	Semixis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Words	Semixis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Salvini	+	0.5	0.12	Minimal	-	0.6	0.18
Withrefugee	+	0.5	0.13	Naples	-	0.6	0.05
Belgrade	+	0.4	0.15	Repost	-	0.6	0.30
Border	+	0.4	0.15	Sharehumanity	-	0.6	0.15
Onassignment	+	0.4	0.28	Sinistra	-	0.6	0.15
Poetry	+	0.4	0.21	Disability	-	0.5	0.21
America	+	0.3	0.19	Education	-	0.5	0.20
Bangladesh	+	0.3	0.08	Help	-	0.5	0.29
Conservative	+	0.3	0.11	Journalism	-	0.5	0.18
Deplorables	+	0.3	0.11	Respect	-	0.5	0.18
Drc	+	0.3	0.15	Activism	-	0.4	0.12
Italia	+	0.3	0.15	Eu	-	0.4	0.10
Servinghumanity	+	0.3	0.12	Faces	-	0.4	0.29
Uganda	+	0.3	0.22	Greece	-	0.4	0.22
Winter	+	0.3	0.15	Hospitality	-	0.4	0.11
				Idp	-	0.4	0.27
				Mode_Emotive	-	0.4	0.26
				Openport	-	0.4	0.19
				Boxing	-	0.3	0.12
				Bracfamily	-	0.3	0.06
				Changemaker	-	0.3	0.17
				Childrenrights	-	0.3	0.19
				Color	-	0.3	0.12
				Ivorycoast	-	0.3	0.06
				Girl	-	0.3	0.33
				Immigrant	-	0.3	0.11
				Iraqi	-	0.3	0.18
				Lampedusa	-	0.3	0.09
				Learning	-	0.3	0.19
				Midterms	-	0.3	0.12
				Mural	-	0.3	0.11
				Nodecretosalvini	-	0.3	0.13
				Painting	-	0.3	0.27
				Parmacittadasilo	-	0.3	0.13
				Savings	-	0.3	0.19

Tab. 5. Factor 2: Absolute and relative contributes of categorial variables on positive and negative semiaxes

Categorial Variables	Semixis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Categorial Variables	Semixis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Year: 2018	+	1.8	0.25	Emotions: Yes Joy	-	2.0	0.10
Emotions: Yes Sadness	+	3.0	0.26	Likes: Few Likes	-	10.0	0.47
Emotions: No Joy	+	3.5	0.28	Followers: Few Followers	-	9.2	0.40
Emotions: Yes Anger	+	1.8	0.12	Comments. No Comments	-	8.1	0.43
Likes: A Lot of Likes	+	8.7	0.39				
Likes: More Likes	+	2.0	0.11				

Categorial Variables	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute	Categorial Variables	Semiaxis	Absolute Contribute	Relative Contribute
Followers: More Followers	+	4.5	0.22				
Followers: Over Million Followers	+	2.7	0.13				
Comments: Enough Comments	+	5.7	0.32				
Comments: A Lot of Comments	+	5.1	0.21				

Discussion

The goal of this paper is to furnish an interpretation of the socio-psychological reality related to the online social discourse through Instagram, in light of the Social Representations Theory. As the migration cannot be studied as an isolated object of investigation, or as the sum of contents evoked in people's minds, we consider it as an interrelated set of representations, involving various psychological dimensions, as in the modelling paradigmatic approach inspiring the methodological research design. By adopting the Social Representations Theory, we have shifted our attention from the individualistic cognitivist approach to a model of the individual as a social actor involved in communicative processes including the online exchanges. This paradigmatic option allows us to articulate the collective, group, inter-group, inter-individual, and individual levels involved in the process of the construction, transmission and transformation of online social discourse vehiculed via Instagram through powerful images and their captions.

The results - in line with previous studies investigating the same social representations via Twitter (de Rosa et al., forthcoming_b) and Facebook (de Rosa et al, forthcoming_c) among other social media under analysis (de Rosa et al., 2020)- support the hypothesis that social representations about immigrant issue are highly polarized also through the photographic lens of Instagram. The picture emerging from the data offers a clear dichotomous discourse about immigration issue. On the one hand, it shows positive social representations referring to the inclusive vision and policies about immigrants, which can be well summarized by the metaphor of open ports and having Pope Francis as the main reference leader. On the other hand, it shows negative social representations referring to exclusionary vision and policies about immigrants, which can be represented by the metaphor of closed ports, and which have Trump and Salvini as main reference political leaders. This polarized discourse reveals polemical social representations of immigrants as vulnerable groups (victims, minors, children, women) opposed to those as dangerous invaders (deviants, criminals, associated with rapes, illegals and terrorists). The former suggests a tendency to solidarity aspects as attempts to approach the phenomenon perceived as a humanitarian emergency. The latter is more focused on underlying legal, economic and ethnic aspects, exploiting citizens' fear for political propoganda in the name of national interests inspired by sovereign ideology.

The different social representations of the migratory phenomenon are therefore linked by the geo-cultural and

historical context, to religious issues, to political leaders and to the policies adopted, with a strong relationship between social representations and political interventions (de Rosa et al., forthcoming a).

The first factor translates the concept of immigration into something tangible (objectification) through the reference to the static image of refugee camps in inhumane conditions (see among others the photos 1 and 2, both with showing a child living in camps for displaced or refugees in horrible conditions qualified in the caption as a 'crime against the humanity') or even their expulsion from the camps (see the photo 3 published on 13/11/2018 of what remains from the tent city of the #Baobab Center in Rome, which housed hundreds of migrants, after their expulsion by the Interior Ministry Salvini).

Photo 1



Author: Kate Holt Photographer

Date of publication: 1/8/2018

Hashtag: #reportagespotlight#nofilter #photography #natgeoyourshot #realpeople #instadaily #photojournalism #nofilter #everydayafrica #health #development #canon #5Dmark3 #womeninphotojournalism #womenphotographers #toldwithexposure #portrait#SouthSudan #displaced #bucketbath#onassignment

Caption: #SouthSudan #displaced A young boy takes a #bucketbath in the Protection of Civilian (POC) camp in#Bentiu in South Sudan Wednesday, Sept. 26.

Thousands of people are still living in these camps since war erupted again in the region in 2013 and they are still too frightened to return home. @aretestories #onassignment @guardian @canonuk @unicefsouthsudan

Photo 2



Author: --

Date of publication: 22/11/2018

Hashtag: #refugees

Caption: World, please try to remember millions of children will have to live in a tent during the winter, this is a crime against humanity.

Photo 3



Author: Skytg24 (Veichulded Thorough Instagram)

Date of publication: 13/11/2018

Hashtag: #Baobab #Roma #migranti #Salvini #sky #skytg24 #migration

Caption: The banner "Migrating is not a crime" is what remains after the evacuation of the tent city of the #Baobab Center near the Tiburtina station in #Roma which housed hundreds of #migrants.

"Free zones, without a state and legality, are no longer tolerated. We promised, we are doing it. And that's not all. From words to deeds", #Salvini's comment. (Credits: vincenzo livieri/LaPresse)

Original Caption in Italian:

Lo striscione "Migrare non è un reato" è ciò che rimane dopo lo sgombero della tendopoli del Centro #Baobab nei pressi della stazione Tiburtina a #Roma che ospitava centinaia di #migranti.

"Zone franche, senza Stato e legalità, non sono più tollerate. L'avevamo promesso, lo stiamo facendo. E non è finita qui. Dalle parole ai fatti", il commento di #Salvini.

The second factor presents the dynamic vision of the movement of migrants by ship or caravan (see the exemplary photos 4,5,6). The social representation of immigrants as victims is opposed to that of immigrants as invaders. After all, as history informs us, in the face of important economic, social, cultural and political changes/crises, some interrelated phenomena can arise: nationalism (Schanz, 2018), fascism and populism (Ionescu & Gellner, 1969; Taggart, 2000; Rosenbergh, 2020). This is what we are seeing in different countries around the world.

Photo 4



Author: Pedro Pardo

Date of publication: 25/10/2018

Hashtag: #immigration #mexico #honduras #immigrants

Caption: Central American migrants walking and aboard trucks head in a caravan to the U.S., in Huixtla, on their way to Mapastepec Chiapas state, Mexico, Oct. 24, 2018.

Photo 5



Author: Tommy Trenchard

Date of publication: 11/6/2018

Hashtag: #reportage #photojournalism #war #conflict #warphotography #conflictphotography #onassignment #iraq #mosul #hamamalalil #isis #islamicstate #middleeast #displaced #displacement

Caption: Civilians displaced by fighting between Iraqi forces and ISIS militants in Mosul walk through ham al Alil IDP camp. April 2017.

Photo 6



Author: Hohn Wessels

Date of publication: 13/3/2018

Hashtag: #Ituri #Congo #DRC #rdc #photojournalism #afp #displaced #conflict #refugees #reportagespotlight #reportage #bunia #LakeAlbert

Caption: 39 Dead after attacks last night - The Road To Uganda - Tchomia, Ituri - 2018.

Sentiment analysis shows that these representations are accompanied by specific affective states, which underline the “pro” and “anti” immigrant beliefs and attitudes, respectively:

- social representations that are emotionally positively connoted by joy and absence of anger, sadness, fear, or disgust;
- the other extreme of the discourse that is mainly driven by emotions of anger and sadness and absence of joy.

This emotional dimension was particularly relevant and clearly emerges from Instagram data, compared to the results found in the study conducted on Twitter (de Rosa et al., forthcoming_b). A possible explanation might be attributed to the greater evocative power of the images of Instagram, compared to the mere textual tweets of Twitter: an impressive photo, which has aroused a strong emotional echo in the social discourse, is that of the child lying dead on the beach at the end of his crossing the sea toward the promised land. The caption invite us to overcome the dehumanization of migrants reduced to anonymous numbers of death at sea where “taxi do not exist” (Saviano, 2019) by remembering that he has a name: Alan Kurdi (see photo 7).

Photo 7



Author: Sebastiano Fezza

Date of publication: 17/3/2018

Hashtag: #syrianchildren #stolenchildhood #refugees #displaced #syria #warinsyria #warcrimes #war #syriancrisis #bambinisiriani #russia #usa #italy #turkey #lebanon

Caption: This child had a name. It was Alan Kurdi...
Let's not forget...

Indeed, images allow emotional aspects to emerge and they can be connected to ancestral fears and multiple expressions of social memory (de Rosa, 1987, 2005, 2007, 2014b). Relating to this, several studies stressed the importance of the figurative character of the common-sense thinking, suggesting that images constitute fundamental elements capable to link emotional, symbolic and imaginary dimensions of social representations (de Rosa, 2013; 2014b; de Rosa and Bocci, 2013; Martikainen, 2019; Popp and Mendelson, 2010; Rodriguez and Dimitrova, 2011; Xu, 2018).

While - in agreement with our hypothesis - the results included in this paper are coherent with some of the results already obtained through the analysis of printed (Hassan, 2018) and other social media (de Rosa et Al., forthcoming a,b,c), this contribution constitutes another attempt to get closer the understanding of the social representations of the immigration, in this case by studying the iconic language, through the images and their captions posted into Instagram and their symbolic and emotionally evocative dimensions.

Indeed, we are persuaded, together with Jodelet (2012), that “the importance assigned to the figurative, imaginative character of the common sense thinking has not received the echo which it deserves in the investigation on social representations”. We pursue the interest of both iconic and verbal channels by the application of the multi-method modelling approach as one of the paradigmatic options specific to the research field inspired by the Social Representation Theory (de Rosa, 2014a). Following the modelling approach, the research designs require to be fully justified and adequately complex depending on the multi-theoretical perspective adopted and the variety of constructs selected, as functions of specific hypotheses also concerning the interaction between

the nature of diverse techniques (structured and projective, textual and figurative, verbal or behavioural, etc.), the choice of the data analysis strategies and the expected results.

This contribution focuses various results read in light of the Social Representations Theory:

- a) the anchoring and objectification processes of (im) migration through metaphors of open/closed ports, through the refugee camps and the caravans;
- b) the personification of inclusive thinking and policies toward migrants through the protagonist Pope Francis (higher absolute contribution F1 positive semi-axis together with inclusion and higher absolute contribution F2 negative semi-axis together with inclusion);
- c) the relationship between social representations and practices/interventions (Abric, 1993; Flament, 1994; Wagner, 2015) as shown by the inclusive vs exclusionary policies driven by the polarised views of (im)migrants anchored into different world views respectively personified by the ethical authority Pope Francis, claiming for the rights of the entire humanity beyond the racial or national borders, and the sovereign political leaders, like Donald Trump in the USA and Matteo Salvini in Italy among others (de Rosa et al., forthcoming a).

Moreover, our results are consistent also with the cultural visions of (im)migrants and (im)migration in the digital social mediasphere presented by Peter Stockinger (2017) in "Multiple Video Staging of the Figure of Migrant on the YouTube Platform." In fact it is not difficult to recognise the polarised social representations of (im)migrants that we found transversally to multiple levels of the discourse and through different social media, including Instagram (de Rosa et al., 2020), beyond the two principals actors that Stockinger has identified analysing YouTube used as 'video-texts' to detect 'central cultural models' producing, disseminating and sharing representations of the 'other' interpreted by the viewer: basically the 'Homelander' and the 'Strangers', "represented, staged by individuals, groups, communities, generations, anonymous people, persons identified by their name, people from different ethnic and religious origins, babies, children, adults and elder persons, etc." (Stockinger, 2017: 69). These main actors/protagonists of the video-texts organise a diversity of cultural visions and representations of the migrant/immigrant and the migration/immigration complex, that can be expressed through several macro-topics (see Stockinger, 2017: 27) in a dialogical relation between 'self-other'. Consistently with our results found through the photographic lens of Instagram, the relation between the 'Homelander' and the 'Strangers' analysed by Stockinger through YouTube video-texts can be at the end translated in two polarised visions:

1. an inclusive sovra-ordered vision in terms of humanity (where the Homelander and the Stranger have both human right to live together in the world as 'common house', sharing the same human condition who let people to move or to be moved (see topic 1). The "Stranger 's reasons to leave original Homeland" (see topic 2) can be thematized and narrated through "stories of people who are forced to leave their home, who leave it against their will, who have to assume the hard experience of the infelicitous Stranger, searching desperately a new Homeland" (Stockinger, 2017: 26). He makes often

at risk his and his family/children's lives in the attempt to reach the desired Homeland (see topic 3), where he can be welcomed and admitted by the Homelander, who offers 'a cultural model that articulates visions and values of hospitality, open-mindedness and magnanimity' (see topic 4). He may try to become a new Homelander (topic 5) and be perceived as somebody who may enrich and empower the homeland (see topic 6) in a context animated by "understanding and empathy between Homelander and infelicitous Stranger, promoting visions and values of pity, compassion for everyone who is in need and the basic message "help the other in distress" (see topic 9);

2. an exclusionary vision where the immigrant is depicted as the Destructive Stranger, "that invades present Homeland with the intention to become a new homelander in replacing (physically) the grown, the old Homelander" (see topic 7), leading to the "Infelicitous Stranger who lives in inaccessible Homeland excluded and in distress" thematized through stories of exclusion and confinement in secluded spaces from which he risks being sent back to his original place (see topic 8).

Limitations and further directions

Our study is not without potential limitations. The main limitation could be represented by our amount of data, compared to the studies with big-data datasets (Weller et al., 2013). However, we believe that the choice of a manual collection might also constitute strength of the current research. Indeed, it allowed us to detect also the evaluative dimension of social representations, that an automatic procedure of data collection would not have allowed.

Further studies will extend and might confirm our results through a larger data collection in order to give more robustness to our results. It will be interesting for us also to verify if the results presented in this article will remain consistent also on the data set including the new wave of data collection in 2019-2020. Relating to this, future development of this study as part of a larger project research on different social networks will imply also new waves of data collection, that will integrate both automatic and manual procedures.

Futhermore we intend to further analyse the symbolic dimensions of the images themselves and not simply their role in evoking the representational set.

Further studies could be inspired by this research, in order to extend and corroborate our results on social representations about immigrants, contributing to understand communicative structure in social media and inspiring social interventions to prevent and contrast negative attitudes against immigrants through policies driven programs, also including communication campaigns on social media. Indeed, Instagram and other social networks are confirmed to be valid tools through which social representations are created and spread rapidly among people.

To conclude, in the contemporary world, more and more a digitalized social world, Instagram seems to be a powerful tool, allowing individuals to create, share and spread social representations about immigration issue, in order to contribute

and participate in the debate by expressing their own visions. Like any other social network, Instagram proves to be an excellent medium where a very huge set of contents can move quickly, influencing and being influenced by other digital users' representations. Such an aspect allows people to contribute in the continuous process of negotiation of meanings, influencing their beliefs, affects and behaviours in the non-digital reality too.

Author Contributions

The authors contributed equally to this manuscript.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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Ethical approval

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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