Digital Media in Greece:

A Cyberconflict Approach

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by

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Abstract

This project examines the influence of digital media on the contentious politics in Greece, as well as, the political economic sphere's impact on the formation of the digital mediascape. The research concentrated on the parallel evolution of the (debt) crisis and the digital communications in Greece, by examining four different online media platforms and covering a seven-years period (2008; 2011-12; 2015). The research employed cyberconflict theory to situate online mediated conflict (sociopolitical and ethnoreligious cyberconflict) in a geosociopolitical and historical context, indicating the dynamic relation between the online media and the offline world. This research suggests the use of online data for the examination of cyberconflict and updates the framework, so to efficiently support the study of social media platforms. The research reflected the evolution of the sociopolitical debates and the political transformations emerged in the Greek crisis context (anti-/pro- austerity debate to the euro-vs-drachma/or grexit discussion, the anti-/pro-governmental debate, and the anti-/pro-European discourse). The pre-crisis era and discourse online, had already indicate the debates, which later, shaped the crisis discourse online and offline. Then, the SYRIZA network rides the mobilization wave of Aganaktismenoi, offering a platform and promising representation of all the included actors. During the referendum. polarization helped to the formation of less fluid identities online and offline, which further developed focusing on the division between the political Us and Them. In the crisis context, the internet used as a magnifying glass, pointing out conflict, opposition and supporting polarization. The research concludes that, indeed, digital media use supported the development of collective action and alternative structures of mobilizations, as well as political discourse, challenging both the dominant media and the traditional political structures. However, online media discourse didn't manage to dominate public sphere, but instead it resulted to fragmentation. Overall, online media reproduced existed polarization and historical discursive continuities and limitations.

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ACTA:	Anti – Counterfeiting Trade Agreement
AN.EL.:	Independent Greeks
ANT1:	Antenna Television Network
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCF:	Conspiracy of Cells of Fire
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
CH.AY.:	Golden Dawn
CLP:	Coalition of the Left and Progress
DIKKI:	Democratic Social Movement
DIMAR:	Democratic Left
EAM:	National Liberation Front
E.AR:	E.AR-Greek Left
EC:	European Commission
ECB:	European Central Bank
EIR:	Hellenic Radio Foundation
EIRT:	Hellenic Radio-Television Foundation
ELA:	Revolutionary Popular Struggle
EL. STAT:	National Statistical Service of Greece
ERT:	Hellenic Radio Television
ET-1:	Hellenic Television, Channel 1
ET-2:	Hellenic Television, Channel 2
ET-3:	Hellenic Television, Channel 3
EU:	European Union
EYP:	National Intelligence Service
FB:	Facebook
FLOSS	Free/Libre and Open Source Software
GSEE:	General Confederation of Greek Workers
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
IMF:	International Momentary Fund
ISIS:	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
KKE:	Communist Party

LAOS:	Popular Orthodox Rally
MEGA:	Mega Channel
M15:	May 15, Spanish movement of Indignados
ND:	New Democracy
NERIT:	New Hellenic Radio, Internet and Television
NSM:	New Social Movement
NWO:	New World Order
ODG:	Observatory for Digital Greece
OTE:	Hellenic Telecommunications Organizations
OWS:	Occupy Wall Street
PAK:	PanHellenic Liberation Movements
PASOK:	Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement
PIGS:	Portugal, Iceland, Greece, Spain
RMT:	Resource Movement Theory
RS:	Revolutionary Struggle
RT:	Russia Today
rt:	retweet
SE:	Solidarity Economy
SMI:	Social Movement Industry
SMO:	Social Movement Organization
SMT:	Social Movement Theory
SMS:	Social Movement Sector
SNA:	Social Network Analysis
SYNASPISMOS (SYN):	Coalition of Left, Ecology and Movements
SYRIZA:	Coalition of Radical Left
TA:	Thematic Analysis
Troika:	IMF, European Commission and European Central Bank
US:	Unites States
WSJ:	The Wall Street Journal
WWII:	World War II
WWW	World Wide Web
YENED:	Armed forces Information Centre
17November (17N):	Revolutionary Organization, 17 November

1. Digital Media in Greece: A Cyberconflict Approach

1.1. From the internet evolution, to the global recession and Greek digital media

Since the 1990s, the development of the internet and its potential use in activism, social movements and protest (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2002), the impact on politics (Castells, 2000), on democracy (Coleman and Blumler, 2009; Morozov, 2012), on the formation of identity, community and networks (Turkle, 1997; Rheingold, 2000; Bennett, 2003; Castells, 2015), on the public sphere (Habermas, 1991; Dahlberg, 2006; Papacharissi, 2002; Nguyen, 2016) and digital activism (Joyce, 2007; Karatzogianni, 2015) has grown. While there are many approaches to understanding the growth of the internet, Karatzogianni (2015) discusses its association with activism, social movements and conflict, concentrating on four waves, in collocation with the historical and theoretical developments in digital activism in the last two decades (Karatzogianni, 2015).

The first phase concentrated on the period 1994 – 2001 (ibid. 5-24) and was characterised by optimism, and the internet's potentiality for a social, political and cultural revolution. This era designated the FLOSS movement and the emergence of internet culture (ibid. 1). The second period, covering 2001 – 2007 (ibid. 25-64), illustrated the impact of the internet in war and conflict and also highlighted the impact of the internet on journalism, activism, as well as the political and social environment, challenging the dominant structures and providing alternative imaginaries and structures for mobilisation (ibid. 2). Some of the most significant examples in this period included 9/11 and the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. The third period 2008 – 2010 (ibid. 66-120) focused on the impact of digital media on mainstream politics, through the use of ICTs by social movements, dissidents and non-state actors. Among others, indicative examples of that era included the Obama campaign, the Green Movement and the origins of the anti-austerity movement as it appeared in the context of the EU debt crisis and the southern EU countries (ibid). The fourth phase identified ran from 2010 to 2014 (ibid.), after the WikiLeaks collateral damage release encompassing a wave of social media enabled mobilisations, such as the so-called Arab Spring, the Occupy movement, the Indignados

all the way through to the Snowden revelations which considerably influenced the debates surrounding surveillance and privacy, raising concerns about the use of ICTs by digital activists (ibid. 2-4). These four phases describe how the internet developed, promising to revolutionise contemporary society and the political environment, the rise and spread of digital activism and the mainstreaming of digital activism during the anti-austerity protest wave in the global recession era.

Starting from 2008, the global crisis was characterised transnationally by several cycles of social and political turmoil starting with the OWS (Occupy Wall Street) in the US, which was spread and adapted to different countries and contexts, to the Arab Spring and the Spanish Indignados, and digital media indicated multiple ways in which they supported the development of collective actions and networks of resistance. At the same time, dissent events in Iran, Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Palestine, China and elsewhere (Christensen, 2011) displaced the focus from the usage of internet and its potential role in politics, communication and so on, to online conflict, digital activism, the emergence of the i-culture and the networked individual in the networked society (Castells, 2000). The use of social media in events of dissent, revolts and occupations indicated the role of digital media and social media as an organisational and communication tool, locating the theoretical debates on the issue within the framework of social movement and public sphere theory.

While there is a very rich literature regards to the causes and the impact of the global recession and the capitalist crisis of 2008 (Plender, 2003; Katsikas, 2009; Posner, 2011, Douzinas, 2013), in Greece this resulted to what became known as the debt crisis or 'the crisis'. Later, in the Greek context, the debt crisis discussed also in political and social terms (Michael-Matsas, 2010; Douzinas, 2013). Therefore, throughout this study, the term crisis as regards to the Greek context, is used to describe the multidimensional 'crisis' which, started after the global recession as a debt crisis, but soon, further evolved and developed multiple manifestations of 'the crisis', which altogether with new crisis events, deeply affected every social and political structure in Greece. In this context, digital and social media has been examined as a tool of everyday use, which promotes the formation of online and offline networks, complementing offline everyday communicational practices and focusing on communities and networks. Beginning with

the global recession and, later the Eurozone crisis, of 2008 to the migration or refugee crisis of 2014 and onward, digital media are understood as having a significant impact on the transformation of digital networks into a digital public sphere (Karatzogianni, Nguyen and Serafinelli, 2016). While the debate on public sphere and the digital public sphere is not new (Habermas, 1991; Dahlberg, 2006; Papacharissi, 2002; Nguyen, 2016), the way that networks influence crisis, migration, culture and conflict in the digital public sphere are some of the most contemporary research considerations (Karatzogianni, Nguyen and Serafinelli, 2016).

The global recession of 2008 brought capitalism's impact and consequences into the spotlight (Plender, 2003; Posner, 2011), while the so-called Arab spring, the Occupy movement and the movement of the squares, in Mediterranean countries, expressed the necessity for democracy, highlighting the dangers raised by neoliberal politics (Gould-Wartofsky, 2015: 212-3). In this frame, radicalisation and violence, the rise of extreme or populist politics as observed both in the online and the offline space, are not unexpected phenomena and can be historically predicted and justified. Nonetheless, in this context, the usage of digital media is an interesting point of investigation, especially when concentrating the advantages and disadvantages of such technologies, as well as, the linkage between capitalism and the information society (Fuchs, 2014; Tsatsou, 2014). At the same time, the radicalisation of politics, the rise of far-right wing politics in Europe and the US, the rise of religious extremism and the usage of digital and social media, indicates another problematic aspect of the potentiality of digital media. Therefore, the global recession indicated that the impact of digital media in contemporary social movements and collective actions should be understood by focusing both on digital media per se and the context in which these are used.

Greece was among the most notable examples of countries affected by the global recession and there was a multidimensional character to this. The crisis impact in Greece was decisive, with the rise of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion (Malkoutzis, 2011; Mylonas, 2014), and the collapsed political system, resulting in intense reconfiguration of the social and political environment. At the same time, the intensification of resistance and solidarity networks, the development of the third civil society sector as well as the radicalisation of politics, indicated the potentiality of digital

media in the Greek context, pointing out the necessity for further research into the issue. The next section sets out the aims and objectives for this thesis.

1.2. Aims and Objectives

In the last years, there are many researches that concentrated on the Greek digital media, focusing on the usage of digital and social media platforms (Theocharis, 2011), on political parties, communication and voting (Coursaris and Papagiannidis, 2009; (Papagiannidis, Coursaris and Bourlakis, 2012; Papagiannidis and Manika, 2016), on the crisis and the media (Touri and Rogers; 2013, Tzogopoulos, 2013; Kaitatzi-Whitlock, 2014; Mylonas, 2014) on digital divide (Georgopoulou, 2011), surveillance (Samatas, 2015) or even protests and mobilisations (Theocharis et al., 2014). However, while the Greek digital media environment has been extensively examined, concentrated on different issues and sub-themes, still there is not any extensive research linking the media background environment, as this shaped by the sociopolitical and historical background, to the transition to the digital media era, and its development in the crisis context.

Starting from this point, this project aims to provide a longitudinal and in-depth examination of the digital media in Greece. The aim of this research is to investigate digital media in Greece within the crisis context, and at the same time, to contribute to the contemporary debate regarding the influence of digital media on contemporary social movements (Melucci, 1980; Della Porta and Diani, 2006; Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2009; Karatzogianni 2006; 2015). Another major aim of the project is to evaluate the contribution of digital media to the 'democratic function' in contrast to the crisis limitations and the global recession (Fuchs, 2011). The project examines whether and up to which level the usage of digital media has challenged the dominant (mainstream and traditional) media system, and by extension the dominant discourse. The objectives of this study embrace the in-depth examination of the usage of digital media and the impact of the so-called anti-austerity movement. The thesis focuses on Greek cyberconflict, digital activism and the use of digital media in Greece between 2008–15 on key digital platforms using thematic analysis (Indymedia, YouTube), social network (Facebook and Twitter) and semantic analysis (Twitter).

Additionally, focusing on the bidirectional linkage between the online and the offline world, the project aims to examine the 'revolutionary virtual' as this applied in the Greek crisis context and to the anti-austerity movement (Karatzogianni, 2012). Karatzogianni (ibid.) discussed this term in extension to the Deleuzian aspect of the virtual, as 'a potentiality for change' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Karatzogianni, 2012: 57) the 'digital virtual' offers a zone of intensity or affect, a system of affective structures, which enable the Revolutionary Virtual and actualise Revolution. The digital virtual is becoming more and more necessary for the revolutionary virtual to materialise than the necessity of the actual' (ibid. 57). The digital materialisation of protest creates a significant possibility for physical materialisation, as thousands of people declaring online their intent to protest, coordinate, organise and meet in public spaces creates the potential for revolution: 'a plane of consistency where new zones of affect can be created or old ones reactivated and brought into the present' (ibid. 68). At the same time, in less philosophical terms, the project aims to situate the case of Greece into the global 'taxonomy' of contemporary contentious movements or collective actions and the role digital media play in their ideology, organisation and mobilisation (e.g. Occupy movement, Indignados, UK riots, etc.).

Finally, an overall objective of the research is to contribute to the field by looking both at a single case study, in depth and longitudinally over a long period of time across multiple digital platforms and, also, by using a combination of research techniques and extending cyberconflict as a framework. Among the goals of this research is to update and enrich the cyberconflict theory, so to efficiently support the study of social media mediated conflict. At the same time, taking under consideration the latest discussion and critiques regards to digital research methods, another goal of this research is to test the use of such methods for research cyberconflict. Until now, the use of these research methods and online material is unprecedented in previous applications of this framework. The next section explains the justification for employ cyberconflict as a frame and Bennett's (2012) connective theoretical frame used in combination to address limitations of the cyberconflict framework below.

1.3. Research Questions and the Cyberconflict Framework

Greece, as a significant empirical case affected by the global recession, is potentially well set as a case study to examine the contribution and digital media use in the crisis context. The analysis of digital media here concentrates on the individual, on the collective actions and social movements, and finally, on socio/political/economic cyberconflict and its linkage to the offline world. At a final stage, the project provides an insight into the digital media impact on political polarisation and radical politics. The main and the secondary questions that this research explores are the following:

How did digital media influence contentious politics and the political transformations in Greece between 2008 and 2015 and how did the political economic sphere influence the formation of the digital mediascape?

➢ Digital Media and events in the crisis context: How did individuals, groups and political movements use digital media during the Greek crisis?

➢ Digital Media and social movements: *How did cyberconflict and digital activism evolve in* Greece and what are the linkages of online networks, online coalitions to the offline world and vice versa?

1.4. Overview of the Project

The research of digital media in Greece is developed under the theoretical umbrella of cyberconflict theory, starting with a review of the theoretical framework (Chapter 2). Following the cyberconflict framework, a review of the historical and sociopolitical background of Greece (Chapter 3) is provided before proceeding to the methodological design of the project (Chapter 4). Then, the next three chapters concentrate on the empirical data and the findings (2008 Indymedia and YouTube on Chapter 5; 2011-2012 Facebook and Twitter Chapter 6; 2015 Twitter Chapter 7). The findings from the three studies are discussed comparatively in the final and concluding chapter of the thesis (Chapter 8).

In more detail, the first chapter, the introductory chapter of this thesis, provides the contextualisation of the research (Chapter 1). The first step in this process was to locate the study of the case of Greece into the debate on digital media and their association/usage in the global recession context. Then, the aims and objectives (Chapter 1.2), as well as the research questions (1.3) of the project are presented, while, here, an overview of the thesis (1.4) is also provided.

Then the second chapter presents cyberconflict theory and additional theoretical debates, based on which the research developed (2.1). This theoretical framework borrows elements from three overlapping theories, and supports the examination of online mediated conflict (Karatzogianni, 2006). However, this framework was created for the examination of pre-social media events, and therefore in this research was enriched further (2.2.3; 2.4), so to support the examination of social media use in the examined cases. Thus, starting from the basic components of cyberconflict, the Social Movement Theories, including New Social Movement Theory (2.2.1) and Resource Mobilization Theory (2.2.2), the framework is enriched with additional theoretical debates on contemporary forms of collective action, *concentrating on the transformation of collective action to connective action by using Bennett's theory of connective action* (2.2.3). Then, the next component of cyberconflict, media theory is discussed focusing on digital media (2.3), elaborating on the way that online data (2.4) can be utilised, before drawing conclusions on the way that this framework is applied for the study of the Greek case (2.5).

In the Chapter 3, a review of the historical and sociopolitical background of the examined case is provided. This includes an overview of the mainstream political parties, both as these were shaped before and during the development of the crisis (3.1.), an insight into the most significant social movements in Greece and the extra-parliamentary left and right (3.2), with reference to which, the examination of the anti-austerity movement (Chapter 5, 6, 7) developed. It should be noted that these points were discussed in the same section for reasons of structure, offering an insight into the non-mainstream or parliamentary politics of the examined case. To preclude additional concerns this is a structural decision to enable the discussion of extra-parliamentary groups, and it does not imply any ideological association between the extreme left and right. Finally, the

understanding of the Greek case is completed through an overview of the Greek mediascape (3.3), including a review of the evolution of both the traditional and digital media sectors.

Chapter 4 presents the research design and how the research was conducted. The research design of the project was built focusing on digital research methods (4.1.) and associative characteristics with the cyberconflict framework (2). Next, the thesis lays out the techniques and the research tools used in the project, providing a justification for the theoretical and computational tools (4.3.;4.4.), and a timeline relating to the selection of the analysed cases and platforms (4.2).

What follows are the empirical chapters (Chapter 5, 6, 7). The empirical examination of digital media in Greece starts with the case of the December Riots (5.1) and data collection from two different online media platforms (5.2). This chapter provides an understanding of the early days of digital media and its association with collective action, and at the same time, it analyses the use of digital media during the December Riots, as a prelude to the crisis that was about to break out. After explaining the way that the data was identified, collected, coded and analysed (5.3), the chapter offers a discussion of the usage of Indymedia and YouTube in the case of the December Riots (5.4).

Next, the research focuses on digital media in the crisis context, examining the usage of Facebook in the anti-austerity mobilisations of 2011 (Aganaktismenoi) and the SYRIZA Online Diaspora, as shaped until 2015, January elections when SYRIZA came to power (Chapter 6). After giving the sociopolitical and historical context of the two examined cases (6.1.) then the methods, sampling and the analysis techniques (6.2.) are provided. What follows, is the overall understanding of the two examined cases, focusing on the identified networks and the overall graph metrics (6.2.1.). At this point, the overall graph statistics of the two networks are discussed in the same section, for structural purposes, without suggesting any comparison between the two cases. Instead, what is provided here is a more general descriptive and statistical-oriented understanding of the two networks. Then, each of the two cases are discussed separately in 6.3. and 6.4., culminating in the analysis and the findings of each case (6.3.1; 6.4.1).

The third and lastly examined platform of the project is Twitter and the so-called 'Greferendum' in June/July 2015. Following the same pattern, as the previously analysed platforms, the study of Twitter begins with a description of methods, sampling and analysis techniques used for the specific platform (7.1). Next, the examination of Twitter concentrates on the two conflicted ideological and political fronts and the review of the examined case (7.2) with the analysis of online data and the identification of networks and discourse (7.2.1–7.2.5). Finally, the findings about the use of Twitter during the referendum are presented and discussed (7.3), completing the empirical part of the project. In Chapter 8, I offer a discussion of the main findings of the thesis, the contribution to the field of digital activism, and the limitations and suggestions for future research.

2.   Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a combination of cyberconflict (Karatzogianni, 2006: 2015) and connective action (Bennett, 2012). In this chapter, I first explain what the core elements of cyberconflict are (environment, social movement, media and conflict theories), and then proceed to analyse social movement theories in more depth to extend the frame to connective action to update it in line with social media-enabled mobilisations. Then, I discuss the next important element of the theory – digital media theory.

2.1.   The Rationale for Employing Cyberconflict Theory and Extending to Connective Action

Della Porta and Diani (2006: 2-3) highlighted that the beginning of the millennium was the first time after 1968, that movements (e.g. the global justice movement, etc.) combined the characteristics of class and new movements, and at the same time, were characterised by a degree of radicalism, thereby influencing the political processes (ibid.) (challenge/change the society/structures, etc.). Globalisation, altogether with technological revolution (Fenton, 2007: 225) deeply influenced contemporary society, promising the consolidation of 'democracy around the world' (Diaz Romero, 2013).

Digital media supported the political and social mobilisations, contributing to the rise of social movements and collective action. Therefore, the intersection between the two was understood as a response to the 'dominant capitalist communication' and its limitations, indicating the potentiality to overcome the privatisation of 'information and culture' (Fenton, 2007: 225). Hence, Fenton rather optimistically, argues that the internet invokes 'a cultural politics that resists, transforms, or presents alternatives to the dominant virtual and real worlds' (ibid. 232).

The significant growth of the internet in the new millennium and the first examples of its impact on politics and society pointed to the necessity of a theoretical framework, able to evaluate the use and the impact of digital media in different cases of cyberconflict, which refers to conflict in computer-mediated environments (Karatzogianni, 2006). The theoretical framework of cyberconflict provides a theoretical and practical path based on which the researcher is able to situate conflict in digital media (digital media platforms) in a geosociopolitical, historical and communication context, borrowing elements from three overlapping theories; Social Movement Theories (RMT/ NSM), Media Theory (networks, new media and traditional media elements), Conflict Theory (international conflict analysis) (ibid.). This theoretical framework suggests two major types of online mediated conflict (Sociopolitical and Ethnoreligious) (ibid.). This is among the basic assets of this theoretical framework as it manages to study conflict, without categorizing/labelling the type of actions or events which are examined (e.g. social movements and collective actions, type of movements, activism, terrorism, etc.). Instead, the two different types of conflict, as suggested above, assign different characteristics and features, which are adjust to the significant characteristics of the examined cases.

However, this framework was developed before the rapid growth of social media and therefore, in this study it is interesting to consider how it could be used for the in-depth study of social media. Thus, what proposed in this research is an 'extended' or 'enriched' version of cyberconflict theory, with additional theoretical elements, so to efficiently study of cyberconflict in social media platforms concentrating both on networks and discourse. Up to now, cyberconflict theory used in various studies which concentrated on computer mediated conflict (e.g. anti-rape movement in India, Boko Haram in Nigeria and MEND), still this theoretical framework did not used for the study of conflict in

social media platforms. In this research Cyberconflict theory, which is comprised by three overlapped theories, will be 'combined' with a fourth theoretical element, Bennett's connective action (2012). Connective action focused on the organisational dynamics of contemporary contentious politics, highlighting the contribution of digital media, thus, this theoretical element will be an interesting addition to cyberconflict, as will be able to point out the change and the evolution of organisational dynamics, of the framing processes and finally the struggle for political change, as this emerges in the internet and more precisely in social media platforms, which here are understood as the space of conflict (2.2.3.).

At the same time, traditionally, this framework applied in various researches by conducting and studying in-depth interviews and CDA. The second innovative component of using Cyberconflict theory in this research is that this will be now supported by a very rich toolkit and the use of digital research methods (4.1). For example, Dey's research using cyberconflict theory on the anti-rape movement in India (2016) and Olabode's cyberconflict analysis of Boko Haram, Occupy Nigeria and MEND in Nigeria (2016), use CDA and in-depth interviews without social network or semantic analysis involving thousands of networks and threads which this thesis sets out to deliver.

Focusing on the above two points, the extended version of Cyberconflict, so as to examine social media, and the use of digital research methods, this research could provide a helpful example for other researchers on how to use the theory for social media research and also, on how to use digital research methods in this framework. While the combination of the two is not a requirement, still it is suggested as an interesting research approach, both theoretically and methodologically.

Figure 1: Cyberconflict Theory -Three overlapping theories:
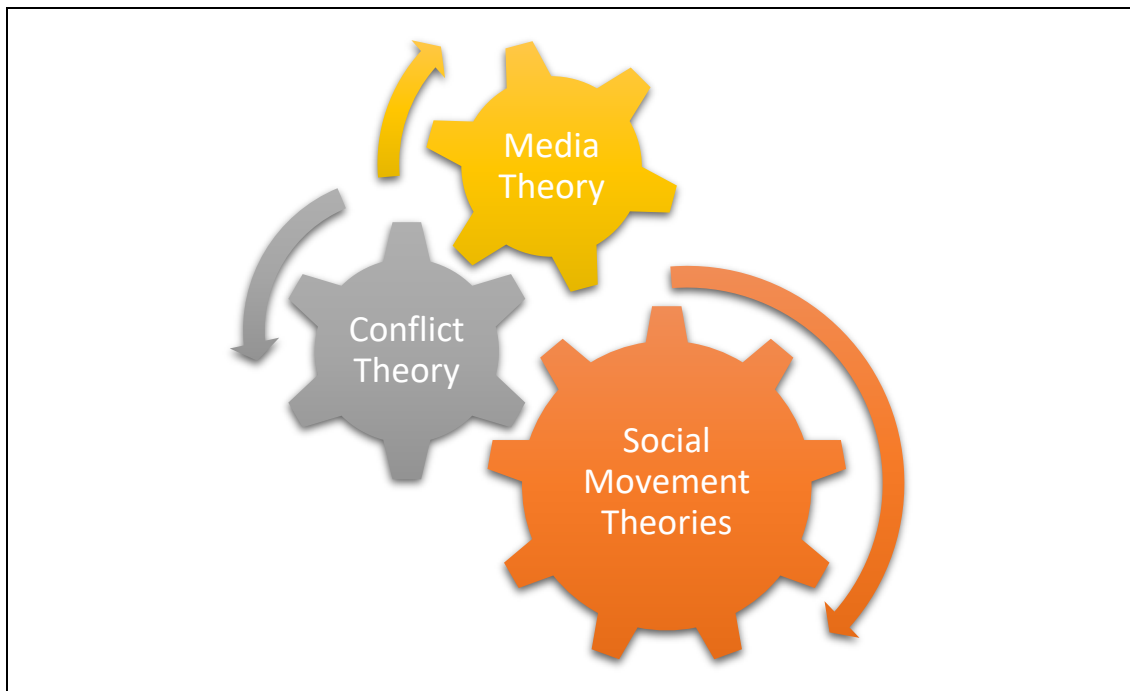
Starting with the original and basic version of the theoretical framework, Karatzogianni indicated the following parameters, which decode cyberconflict, or computer-mediated conflict (ibid. 88; Karatzogianni, 2015: 16-17):

1) *Environment of conflict and conflict mapping (real and virtual)* (ibid.): this focuses on the concept of 'networks connected horizontally and lacking a hierarchical centre (Deleuze and Guattari)' (ibid.), as well as on the structure of the internet and the alternative provision of an experience of governance, time, space, ideology, identity in contrast to surveillance, control, boundaries and apparatuses.

2) *Sociopolitical cyberconflict* (ibid.): this refers to the ICTs impact on mobilising structures, on framing processes, on political opportunity structure and hacktivism (ibid.).

3) *Ethnoreligious cyberconflict* (ibid.): this focuses on ethnic/religious affiliation, chauvinism and national identity, on discourses (inclusion-exclusion) and on conflict resolution.

4) *The internet as a medium* (ibid.): this point refers to the analysis of discourses, on control of information, on the political contest model among antagonists and the media effect on policy (strategic, tactical and representational).

Figure 2: Cyberconflict Theory – Four Parameters
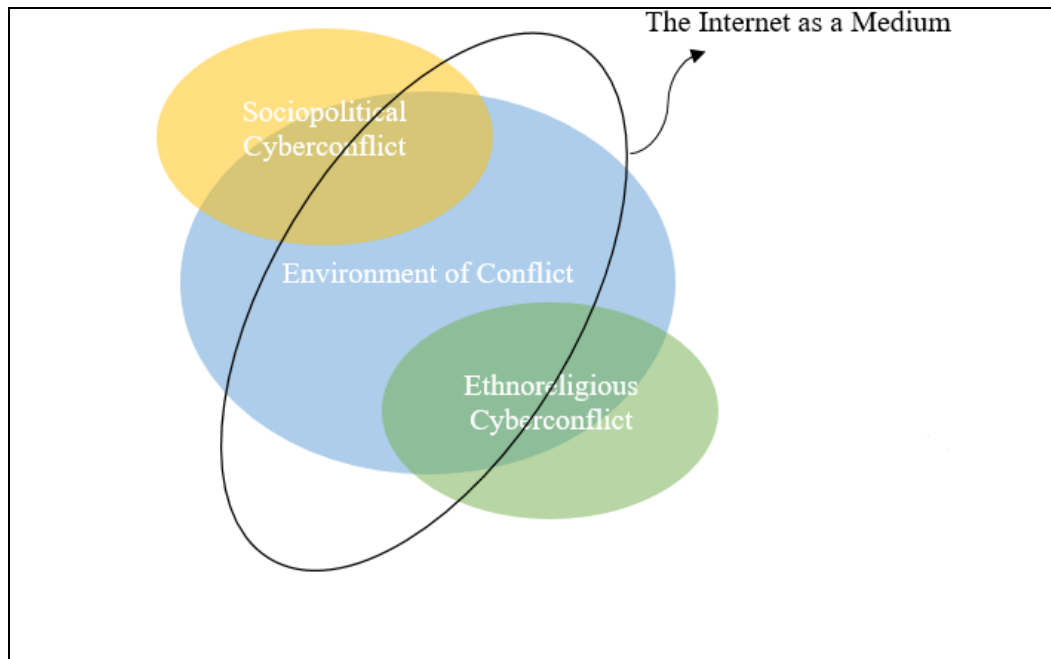
Through this theoretical lens, the internet is a postmodern medium (opening up a new space of flows and potentialities altogether), which nevertheless is used for the achievement of traditional modernist goals (e.g. democracy, power, participation, community, identity, etc.), mostly reproducing offline hierarchies (Karatzogianni, 2006).

The first area of focus points out the importance and the necessity for a detailed study of the environment of cyberconflict (Chapter 3). In the second area of focus in sociopolitical terms, cyberconflict is extensively concentrated on the debates and the theoretical considerations of social movement theories, including Resource Mobilisation Theory and New Social Movement Theory. Starting with the RMT, Karatzogianni (ibid. 134) suggested that the internet could be understood as a form of resource, and therefore, concentrating on three central factors of analysis as noticed by McAdam (1996: 2): '(1) the structures of political opportunities and constraints confronting the movements; (2)

the forms of organisation (informal as well as formal) available to insurgents; and (3) 'the collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action'. Therefore, according to Karatzogianni (2006) the examination of mobilising structures (participation, recruitment, tactics, goals), framing processes (issues, strategy, identity), as well as the concept of political opportunity structure (Zald, McCarthy and McAdam, 1996), develop an insight into the usage of digital media in contemporary social movements and collective actions (e.g. anti-capitalist, anti-globalisation, anti-austerity, etc.). These points are used to decode mainly the sociopolitical type of conflict, in which digital media are used to support social or political change. In contrast to this form of conflict, ethnoreligious cyberconflict examines the usage of digital media as a weapon, which is used either for propaganda or a means to support domination of one group/side over the other. In the examined case, there is not a strong case or a typical example of ethnoreligious conflict, as can be observed in other countries and case studies (e.g. Israel/Palestine, etc.). Still though, the rise of far-right, as observed lately in many european countries, merely falls under this category of conflict, focusing on issues related to ethnic/religious affiliation, chauvinism and national identity, as well as discourses of inclusion and exclusion.

Karatzogianni highlights the dual modality of cyberconflict, as rhizomatic and hierarchical (Karatzogianni, 2006: 88). Ethnoreligious formations tend to be more hierarchical relying on reactive affect with fixed and closed identities, even when they are networked, whilst sociopolitical formations are horizontal/rhizomatic relying on open fluid identities stemming from active desire for change (Karatzogianni and Robinson, 2013). In addition, Karatzogianni and Schandorf (2015) have analysed the revolutionary period of 2010–2012, focusing on the 'order of dissent', which can be used to locate and evaluate the order of concern of a collective action or a social movement, in national, transnational or global order. Therefore, this scheme adds an additional layer to the agent-structure problem in the analysis of cyberconflict, especially when this is located in a complex sociopolitical environment (e.g. global recession, EU crisis, debt crisis in Greece). The first order, the local order of dissent, concentrates on the basic human liberties and rights and such examples can be found in the case of an ethnic minority group's right to housing, health, education and so on (ibid.). The second order of dissent, the national, is focused on democracy, equality, the distribution of power and resources,

etc. and cases in which this order of dissent can be understood are the case of the EU crisis, concentrating on the national effect and protests against individual governments implementing EU anti-austerity policies. Elsewhere in the Arab Spring, national level protests demanding democratisation and the ousting of dictatorial and corrupt regimes are examples. The third order of dissent, the transnational, is focused on the failing of the capitalist order and is understood through examples such anti-Iraq war mobilisations, the anti-globalisation movement and later on the Occupy movement, (for example Karatzogianni, 2012). An important consideration with regard to the order of dissents concentrates on how different cases can be categorised and evaluated within more than one of those orders, pointing out the complex system and tensions at the interfaces of the local, national and transnational/ postnational.

Table 1: Orders of Dissent

Order of Dissent			Logic of Concern	Examples
Third: Transnational/ Global			The failing of the capitalist order as a whole and a recognition of post national or transnational issues and demands for a reform or radical change of capitalism to address issues of global inequality and poverty, as well as national financial and economic realities, such as unemployment, exploitation, corruption, unequal distribution of wealth, and so on	Occupy Movement 2011 Global Justice, anti-globalization movement (Seattle 1999 and onwards) Peace movement, Anti-Iraq war mobilisations 2003 Environmental movements Freedom of Information and anticensorship Anonymous
	Second: National		Democracy and equality of political participation, equal distribution of power and resources, freedom of speech and movement, and demands against censorship	EU crisis: Greece, Spain, Italy, Ireland Arab Spring: Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Sudan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Mauritania
		First: Local	Basic human liberties and rights of a universal kind, such as the rights to education, health, justice, and human rights, civil rights, minority struggles, group recognition, statehood, Succession	From demands for recognition, sovereignty, autonomy or statehood (South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Transistria, Palestine others) to indigenous struggles, to demands for equal rights by women (MENA region and elsewhere), gay rights (equal marriage for instance UK), ethnic minority group rights, digital rights, environmental rights, etc.

(Karatzogianni and Schandorf, 2015: 46)

Cyberconflict's social movement component is further discussed in great detail in the following section, in order to extend the framework to connective action, which will prove useful for the examination of social media's use in mobilisations.

2.2. Social Movement Theories (SMT)

'Social Movements' as a term is difficult to define as it is not limited or specific, but rather can be described as 'strings of more or less connected events, scattered across time and space' (Diani and McAdam, 2003: 1). The organisation, the patterns of communication and action, and interaction varies from centralised to decentralised, and from cooperative to hostile (ibid.). Individuals might participate as atomised individuals, sharing common values and ideas, budding collective actions and creating complicated 'webs of exchanges' (ibid.). 'Social movements are in other words, complex and highly heterogeneous network structures' (ibid.).

The French Philosopher Le Bon was among the first to concentrate on the theorising of collective actions and mobilisations, examining social unrest in France during the 1890s (Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2009: 18). Le Bon's approaches on collective action and mobilisation were reflected in breakdown theories, which perceived the 'participation in collective action as an unconventional, irrational type of behaviour' associated with the concept of contentious politics (ibid.). Later, most of the classical approaches to social movements were cultivated based on the notion of contentious politics (Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2006: 22). The history and the basic concepts of Social Movement Theory (SMT) gradually appeared by the end of the 1940s (Della Porta and Diani, 2006: 1). However, the dramatically sociopolitical transformations of the late 1960s and 1970s, 'the most vigorous areas of sociology' (Marx and Wood 1975, in Della Porta and Diani, 2006: 1), pointed to the necessity for intensive research in the field based on a synthetic and comparative approach ((Zald, McCarthy and McAdam, 1996).

A major theoretical debate here is raised by the contrasts between the European approach to the issue, which focuses on the identity-oriented paradigm and post-industrial

capitalism (SMT and New Social Movements theory), and the American approach, which concentrates on mobilising structures, the framing processes, the political opportunity and media (Resource Mobilization Theory). There are essential differences between the European and the US approach to collective actions and social movements, with the first concentrating on the linkage between new forms of social conflict and post-industrial capitalism, and the second one concentrating on resource mobilisation (Karatzogianni, 2006: 126). Alongside the differences between the European and the US perspectives on collective actions and social movements, Tilly (1973 in Melucci, 1980: 212) has pointed out that, in most of the theories, social movements emerge because of the breakdown of the social system, with the development of new interests, or because of the formation of solidarity and collective identity. However, in Melucci's words, most of the theories 'tell us *how* collective action is manifested but not *why*' (ibid. 212). Change – naturally or not – either as an external cause/variable or an internal one, leads to the breakdown or restructure of the social system, or to the development of new interest and so on, before, finally, resulting in the creation of social movements. Melucci explains that it is the notion of change, which, in most cases, is pre-supposed, and does not allow the examination of the real origin of the social movement through a more structural analysis, but leads to a diachronic analysis (ibid. 213).

Concentrating on the contrast between breakdown and solidarity models on collective actions and social movements, Melucci (ibid. 202) explains the distinction between these two, highlighting the basic conditions that diversify them:

> I define *Collective actions* in the strict sense as the *ensemble of various types of conflict-based behaviour in a social system. A collective action implies the existence of a struggle between two actors for the appropriation and orientation of social values and resource, each of the actors being characterised by a specific solidarity.*

Melucci explains that the above, the first condition, describes conflict-based collective actions. Then, he explains the second one. When the first and the second conditions are fulfilled then these define the social movements: 'Collective action also includes all the types of behaviour which transgress the norms that have been institutionalized in social

roles which go beyond the rules of the political system and/or which attack the structure of society's class relations' (ibid. 202).

The definition of social movements and collective actions is not only a complicated process but, in most cases, these concepts are used to describe specific cases or examples and therefore, they cannot define all social movements or collective actions successfully. According to Touraine, social movements can be understood focusing on conflict formed 'around social control of the main cultural patterns' (1985: 760). Crossley (2002: 2-9), suggests that the commonly shared characteristics of collective actions and movements could be used to define social movements. However, Crossley (ibid.) indicates that a major characteristic of movements is that all of them are understood as 'collective ventures', although the way that collective is defined should be considered (ibid.).

Some of the main definitions from the literature analysed by Crossley (2002) are as follow:

1. Blumer (1969: 99): 'Social movements can be viewed as collective enterprises seeking to establish a new order of life. They have their inception in a condition of unrest, and derive their motive power on the one hand, from dissatisfaction with the current form of life, and on the other hand, from wishes and hopes for a new system of living. The career of a social movement depicts the emergence of a new order of life.' (Crossley 2002: 3)

2. Eyerman and Jaminson1 (1991: 4): 'Social movements … best conceived of as temporary public spaces, as moments of collective creation that provide societies with ideas, identities and even ideals.' (Crossley 2002: 4)

3. Tarrow (1998: 2): 'Contentious Politics occurs when ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents … When backed by dense social networks and galvanised by culturally resonant, action-oriented symbols, contentious politics leads to sustained interaction with opponents, the result is social movement.' (Crossley, 2002: 4)

4. Della Porta and Diani (1996: 16): Social movements are
   1) informal networks, based on

2) shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilise about

3) conflictual issues, through

4) the frequent use of various forms of protests.

<div align="right">(Crossley 2002: 6)</div>

Blumer defined social movements as 'collective enterprises', emerging due to the shared interest/project of individuals seeking to establish a different form of life (Crossley, 2002: 3). Eyerman and Jaminson (1991) added two additional points to Blumer's approach (1969), and perceived social movements as a source of creativity which result in the creation of identities, ideas, etc., while they also make a reference to 'public spaces', which should be perceived as an equivalent reference to the notion of the 'public sphere' (cited in Crossley, 2002: 4). On the other hand, Tarrow (1998) indicates the distinctions between social movements and singular protest events, highlighting though the linkage between social movements and protests (cited in Crossley, 2002: 4.). Tarrow inserts the concept of '*social networks*', as well as concerns not only related to the content and causes of social movement but also related to the way that these emerge too. Moreover, Tarrow explains the creation of identities, ideas etc., as also suggested by Eyerman and Jamison, indicating that this point should be linked to the notion of struggle (ibid.). Della Porta and Danni expand on Tarrow's point about 'shared beliefs and solidarity' and additionally focus on the concept of networks, protests and conflict (ibid. 6-7); although, Tarrow recognises the issue of internal disagreements within social movements, parallel to a homogenised view of the movement via an external aspect. Finally, Crossley refers to Melucci's analysis and stresses the new social movements and the cultural extensions of the issue (ibid. 5).

Consequently, according to Crossley's points about the above definitions, social movements could be conceived as being 'collective enterprises' able to support the creation of ideas, identities and ideals. At the same time, social movements should be linked to the concept of the public sphere and to the concept of contentious politics. The formation of social networks and the minimum share of beliefs and solidarity among them have been recognised as some of the major characteristics of social movements.

Nevertheless, could these characteristics define every case of 'collective enterprise', and what are the additional arguments raised by such an examination? Opp (2009: 33-44) analyses some additional definitions of social movements, explaining how the definition of social movement could be fluid and based on abstract concepts, which are not always applicable in the real world, while the distinction between social movements and protests could be indistinguishable and overlapping. Opp analyses the definition of social movements, protests and other concepts from literature, examining the definitions of Lipsky,[1] Turner,[2] Gamson,[3] McCarthy and Zald,[4] Zald and Ash,[5] Toch,[6] Tarrow,[7] Jeckins

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[1] "'... *protest activity* is defined as a mode of political action oriented toward objection to one or more policies or conditions, characterized by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature, and undertaken to obtain rewards from political or economic systems while working within the system" (Lipsky 1968, italics not in the original).' (Opp 2009: 35)

[2] "'An *act of protest* includes the following elements: the action expresses a grievance, a conviction of wrong or injustice; the protestors are unable to correct the condition directly by their own efforts; the action is intended to draw attention to the grievances; the action is further meant to provoke ameliorative steps by some target group; and the protestors depend upon some combination of sympathy and fear to move the target group on their behalf" (Turner, 1969; italics not in the original).' (ibid.)

[3] 'A *challenging group* "meets two central criteria": "it must be seeking the mobilization of an unmobilized constituency," "its antagonist lies outside of its constituency" (Gamson, 1990: 14–17).' (ibid.)

[4] A: 'A "*social movement*" is "a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society" (McCarthy and Zald, 1977).' (ibid.); B: "A *social movement organization* is a complex, or formal organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals" (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; italics not in the original).' (ibid.); C: "'*Social movements* are voluntary collectivities that people support in order to effect changes in society. Using the broadest and most inclusive definition, a social movement includes all who in any form support the general ideas of the movement. Social movements contain social movement organization, the carrier organizations that consciously attempt to coordinate and mobilize supporters" (McCarthy and Zald 1973, italics not in the original).' (ibid.)

[5] "'A *social movement* is a purposive and collective attempt of a number of people to change individuals or societal institutions and structures" (Zald and Ash, 1966; italics not in the original.)' (ibid.)

[6] 'Social *movements* are "effort[s] by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem that they feel they have in common" (Toch, 1965: 5).' (ibid.)

[7] A: '[The term] *Social movement* "I reserve for those sequences of contentious politics that are based on underlying social networks and resonant collective action frames and which develop the capacity to maintain sustained challenges against powerful opponents" (Tarrow, 1998: 2).' (ibid.); B: '*Social movements* "are better defined as collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities" (Tarrow, 1998: 4).' (ibid.)

and Form[8] as well as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly[9] (ibid. 35). Opp highlights that, based on these definitions, protests are perceived as 'action or behaviour' while in the context of social movement theories, protests are being perceived as 'joint actions' (ibid. 34). Individuals act as part of joint actions, having at least a common goal/target (ibid.). However, these goals/targets are not achievable by the actors/members of the protests, and thereby, they put pressure on third parties. Furthermore, these actions are described as being 'unconventional' and 'irregular' (ibid. 35).

Based on the examination of the same definitions, Opp (ibid. 36-38) argues that social movements are conceived as being 'collectivities of individuals', yet different definitions refer to different kind of collectivities. While the definitions agree on the concept of 'collectivises of individuals', McCarthy and Zald perceive the social movement as a 'set of opinions and beliefs' (ibid. 36), inserting the concept of 'social movement organisation' (ibid.). Parallel to the concept of 'collectivities/individuals', social movements are also defined as 'organizations' or simplified as a 'number of people' who are involved in 'sequences of contentious politics', having a common goal (ibid.). Some suggest that the goal is 'to seek for mobilisation' or others that the goal is to solve a problem (ibid.). But, at the same time, they have an antagonist, which means that they are not able to change things alone, they need to pursue and influence someone else to bring about this change for them (i.e. third parties or antagonists 'outside the constituency').

While these definitions can create an insight into social movements, there are many issues for further investigation; the usage of different terms, the introduction of different concepts/ideas, as well as the multidimensional content and application of social movement theories, result in a variety of arguments among theorists, who fail to come up with a single universal definition of social movements. Opp, (ibid. 37) highlights

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[8]'"By *contentious politics* we mean: episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants. Roughly translated, the definition refers to collective political struggle" (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, 2001: 5; italics not in the original).' (ibid.)

[9]'"Social movements have traditionally been defined as organized efforts to bring about social change" (Jenkins and Form, 2005).' (ibid.)

Snow and Oliver's definition, which conceptualises social movements based on whether these include the following elements: 'some degree' of different things – 'changed oriented goals; some degree of organization; some degree of temporal continuity; some extra-institutional (e.g. protests in the streets) and institutional (e.g. political lobbying) activity' (ibid.). According to Snow, Soule and Kriesi (2004: 6) after the in-depth understanding of these elements, the spherical conceptualisation of social movement is possible, overlapping the difficulties as raised by the different definitions, the usage of different terms and the variety of arguments, as raised in the literature.

Melucci (1980) points out the necessity of a theoretical framework for the analysis of collective actions which would be able to link together actors, systems, class and conflict. Additionally, the conditions in which collective actions and social movements emerge are a significant point of consideration and research in sociology.

2.2.1. New Social Movement (NSM)

The European approach to understanding social movements, the New Social Movement, concentrated on the Marxist viewpoint, and highlighted that the 'preconditions of revolution' (Melucci, 1980: 199-201) determine the way that the collective action, which in most cases is underestimated, will turn to a class movement in the capitalist context. During the 1970s, this approach reassessed basic theoretical foundations identifying the 'crisis' as a mode of capitalist production This suggests a clear distinction between the analysis of the system and the actors creating additional theoretical difficulties for the understanding of social movements. Later, Melucci (ibid. 200) suggests that a Marxist approach to social movements should move towards an analysis of class and political action, instead of concentrating on a structural analysis, which focuses on class relations and the capitalist system.

NSM was enriched by borrowing elements from Melucci's approach on social movements and the concept of identity, as well as Tarrow's approach on the issue, giving an insight into the relationship between social movements and post-industrial society (Flynn, 2011: 88). In a simplified analysis, Flynn (ibid. 88-89) explains that social movements could be defined as 'a voluntary organisation of individuals who act in

concert to make or block a change'. Thus, collective actions or movements act serving the common interest/goal of the group/organisation and do not concentrate on individual interests. Collective actions and social movements come about mainly within open and democratic societies (ibid.), where the idea of social change exists as an acceptable concept and an achievable goal. In opposition to Flynn's approach, contemporary examples indicate that social movements emerge in different contexts and do not always result in social or political change.

NSM are straightforwardly linked to the post-industrial/post-materialistic society and the middle-class argument (Karatzogianni, 2006: 54-55). Therefore, their linkage to post-industrial capitalism (Melucci, 1980: 210), to globalisation (Castells, 2004; Fenton, 2007; Tarrow, 2011) and cosmopolitanism (Castells, 2004) are some of the major points to be debated. Some of the strongest critique of NSM raised by the questions relate to the genuineness of these movements/actions (Karatzogianni, 2006: 124). In other words, how new indeed these movements or actions are. Buechler sums up the strongest debates/concerns about NSM as follows:

1) 'The meaning and validity of designating certain movements as "new" and others (by implication) as "old."'
2) 'Whether new social movements are primarily or exclusively a defensive, reactive response to larger social forces or whether they can exhibit a proactive and progressive nature as well.'
3) 'The distinction between political and cultural movements and whether the more culturally oriented new social movements are inherently apolitical.'
4) 'The social base of the new social movements and whether this base can be defined in terms of social class.'

(Buechler 1995: 447)

Similar to the limitation of the social movement definition, NSM cannot be defined using a strict definition applied in every examined case of collective action, social movement or mobilisation. Instead, NSM should be understood via the examination of its basic characteristics and its application in different sociopolitical environments/contexts in which the examined cases emerge. Melucci suggests the following characteristics, which

provide an insight into NSM, and are commonly shared by contemporary collective actions, providing circumstantial explanation/description of the NSM's concept (1980: 219-222):

a) End of the separation between public and private spheres
b) Superposition of deviance and social movements
c) Movements which are not focused on the political system
d) Solidarity as an objective
e) Direct participation and rejection of representation

Melucci (ibid.) explains that these characteristics can be identified in different contemporary social movements, signifying NSM. However, there are specific issues, which arise based on each examined case, influencing the way that these characteristics can be developed and recognised each time. NSM refers to actions which 'displaced the old social movements of proletarian revolution associated with classical Marxism' (Buechler, 1995: 442). New social movements are fostered based on the concept of 'politics, ideology and culture' and therefore, collective actions and collective identity emerge for different reasons and in a different context than the old social movements (e.g. ethnicity, gender instead of class). However, contemporary cases as raised in the global recession context have highlighted that the context and the reasons by which new and old social movements might not be clearly distanced, bring the notion of the class into question. NMS links to the 'new middle class', concentrating on the 'Weberian' approach in which groups are created based on strategies of 'inclusion and exclusion' (Karatzogianni, 2006: 126). However, according to Kriesi's argument (1989), the idea of 'new middle class' and its linkage to social movements can be 'too narrow […] and too broad'. While, the working class supports 'unexpectedly' strong movements, the new middle class does not equally participate and support them (ibid. 130-132).

Buechler underlines that NSM is widely adopted by theorists for the analysis of contemporary examples, pointing out some of the most significant aspects/themes on the issue (1993: 442):

- NSM indicates the 'symbolic action in civil society or the cultural sphere as a major arena for collective action alongside instrumental action in the state or political sphere (Cohen, 1985; Melucci, 1989)';
- NSM highlights the 'importance of processes that promote autonomy and self-determination instead of strategies for maximising influence and power (Habermas, 1984–1987; Rucht, 1988)';
- NSM examines the 'post materialist values in much contemporary collective action, as opposed to conflicts over material resources (Dalton, Kuechler, and Burklin, 1990; Inglehart, 1990)';
- NSM's theorists often emphasise the 'fragile process of constructing collective identities and identifying group interests, instead of assuming that conflict groups and their interests are structurally determined (Melucci, 1989; Hunt, Benford and Snow, 2000; Johnston, Larana, and Gusfield, 1994; Klandermans 1994; Stoecker, 1995)';
- additionally, NSM points out the 'socially constructed nature of grievances and ideology, rather than assuming that they can be deduced from a group's structural location (Klandermans 1992; Johnston, Larana and Gusfield 1994)' (ibid.);
- finally, Buechler (ibid.) stresses that NSM identifies 'a variety of submerged, latent, and temporary networks that often undergird collective action, rather than assuming that centralised organisational forms are prerequisites for successful mobilisation (Melucci, 1989; Gusfield, 1994; Mueller, 1994)' (ibid.).

The linkage between 'new middle class' and NSM, indicates significant components of analysis, including the notion of 'autonomy', the 'cultural sphere' and 'identity' (Buechler, 1995: 446). These components are understood in linkage with the information media society, which dominates the '(post-) modern world' (ibid. 446).

By extending the 'new middle class' argument, Melucci (1980: 217) stresses that the examination of NSM should aim, among other things, to change the system of production which leads to the creation of 'new class conflict', indicating the structure and the features of the post-industrial and advanced societies (ibid.). NSM emerged in the post-industrial society aiming at a structural reform and not revolution (Flynn, 2011: 89). NSM suggests new forms of conflicts highlighting the importance of the notion of

identity, as shaped in the post-industrial system of production, and at the same time, in Melucci's words, 'the personal and social identity of individuals' is turned into the 'product of social action', which finally results in the emergence of new conflicts (1980: 217-218). Habermas notes that NSM conflicts are no longer related to 'material reproduction' but they focus on 'cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization' (Buechler, 1995: 445), explaining the displacing point of conflict.

Among the major critiques of NSM raised by the distinction between traditional/old social movement theory and NSM, as well as by the relationship between NSM and the movements which emerged after the beginning of the new millennium (Flynn, 2011: 96-97), a basic argument about NSM, as mentioned earlier, suggests that NSM and traditional/old social movement theory co-existed during the post-industrial society and there is no true difference or clear distinction between them (ibid.). Then, the concern which arose concentrated on the association of NSM and contemporary waves of movements and collective actions after the 2000s, starting from the anti-war and anti-globalisation movements, to the civil rights related movements, environmental movements or contemporary examples of anti-fascist movements, anti-austerity and anti-authoritarian movements.

Another important critique of NSM is that this approach does not focus on organisational and structural procedures/features of the movements and the analysis of the 'mechanics of collective action' (Karatzogianni, 2006: 132). Hence, due to the limitations of the NSM approach, Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) is suggested as an alternative or supplementary approach to the in-depth examination of social movements. RMT does not concentrate on the content or the context of social movements, but it provides an 'understanding of organization dilemma' as this is raised within contemporary examples of social movements (2006: 233).

2.2.2. Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT)

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) conceptualises social movement as 'a set of opinions and beliefs' in a population which 'represents preferences for promoting or preventing social change (Skelenburg and Klandermans, 2009: 24) and extensively

focuses on groups which 'overcome prevailing patterns of resource inequality' and act for 'social change goals' (Edward and McCarthy, 2004: 118). RMT concentrates on the notion of material and non-material resources, as a principle cause of change (ibid. 2004: 116-120). The resource types (moral, cultural, socio-organisational, human, material) and the 'pre-dominant-modes of access on resources' (movement, self-production, resource aggregation, resource appropriation, patronage) decode structural procedures of social movements, in regard to individuals and participation, or even groups/networks, etc. (ibid. 118). RMT understands the social movements as an extension of politics, and, as other forms of political struggles, suggests that social movements should be analysed based on the concept of conflict (Buechler, 1993: 218).

Some of the critiques of RMT indicate that while this approach successfully explains the 'social movement participation on the individual level', the theory underestimates 'the significance of grievances and ideology as determinants of participation in a social movement' (Klandermans, 1984: 584) and fails to examine both the meaning and orientation of social movements. Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009: 25-26) have pointed out that the 'vocabulary of economics', in combination with the underestimation of indigenous resources are some of the limitations of this approach.

The American sociologists perceived the concept of collective actions and social movements as an issue of collective behaviour (ibid.). The concept of collective behaviour does not emphasise class relations, but it concentrates on the analysis of different types of collective behaviour, 'whose goal is the restoration of equilibrium'. Turner and Killian formulated this concept, describing the 'short terms – as spontaneous actions' and thereby this approach to social movements could not be used for the examination of 'ongoing, organised and political forms of protests', mobilisations, etc. (Buechler, 1993: 218).

RMT examines the way in which groups 'overcome prevailing patterns of resource inequality' and act for 'social change goals' (Edward and McCarthy, 2004: 118). The

resource types,[10] the 'pre-dominant-modes of access on resources'[11] are basic factors of the RMT analysis, which develops an insight into the participation of atomised individuals or even of groups and networks, (ibid. 118). Karatzogianni (2006: 134) highlights that RMT had a pivotal impact on social movement theory; however, while RMT successfully explained the 'social movement participation on the individual level', important critiques of the theory point out that RMT underestimates 'the significance of grievances and ideology as determinants of participation in a social movement' (Klandermans, 1984: 584).

Cohen points out the following RMT features (Cohen, 1985: 675):

1) Social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict model of collective action.

2) There is no fundamental difference between institutional and non-institutional collective action.

3) Both entail conflicts of interest built into institutionalised power relations.

4) Collective action involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups.

5) Goals and grievances are permanent products of power relations and cannot account for the formation of movements.

6) This depends instead on changes in resources, organisation, and opportunities for collective action.

7) Success is evidenced by the recognition of the group as a political actor or by increased material benefits.

8) Mobilisation involves large-scale, special-purpose, bureaucratic, formal organisation.

While the above points suggest an insight into RMT, still this theoretical approach is criticised as being too narrow (Karatzogianni, 2006: 134). According to Melucci, RMT fails to examine both the meaning and the orientation of social movements, while

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[10] Resource types: moral, cultural, socio-organisational, human, material (Edward and McCarthy, 2004: 118). Different approaches to the issue describe different typologies of the issue. However, all of them are based on the same concept (2004: 144).

[11] Mode of access on resources: movement self-production, resource aggregation, resource appropriation, patronage (Edward and McCarthy, 2004: 118).

Touraine, suggests that RMT emphasises the economic rationality, which is raised by the independent examination of goals, social relations or actors (ibid.). Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009: 25-26) have pointed out that the 'vocabulary of economics', in combination with the underestimation of indigenous resources are some of the basic critiques of RMT. While there are many critiques relating to the limitations of RMT, this theoretical approach is extensively used for the analysis of contemporary social movements which have emerged in the information society context, understanding at least in the first instance the internet as a resource for mobilisation (Karatzogianni, 2006).

Thereby, if the internet is perceived as a type of resource, then the usage of RMT could provide the following three central factors of analysis as noticed by McAdam (1996: 2): (1) 'the structures of political opportunities and constraints confronting the movements'; (2) 'the forms of organization (informal as well as formal) available to insurgents'; and (3) 'the collective processes of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action'. Karatzogianni (2006: 136) highlights the above point too, suggesting that these factors could support the analysis of contemporary examples/cases (e.g. anti-capitalist and anti-globalisation movements, the 2008 recession's mobilisations, etc.) focusing on the contribution of internet technology to the emergence of social movements, mobilisations or collective actions.

Contemporary theoretical approaches to social movements (e.g. RMT, political process, the social phycology approach) are mainly 'structural and social paradigms' (Stekelenburg and Klandermas, 2009: 18), which analyse different aspects of the issue (e.g. resources, political aspects and so on). Stekelenburg and Klandermas (2009: 20) start their argument by pointing out the contrast between classical and contemporary theoretical approaches to social movements, as described below (ibid. 18).

Table 2: Theories of Participation and the Emergence of Social Movements

	Classical approaches	Contemporary approaches		
	Mass society collective behaviour	*Resource mobilization*	*Political process approach*	*Social constructivism approaches*
Why people protest	Grievances, discontent, anomie, class conflict	Resources, opportunities, social network efficiency	Political opportunities (cognitive liberation)	Social construction of reality: - (meaning) construction - identity - emotions - motivation
Who protest	Alienated, frustrated, disintegrated, manipulated, marginalized people	Well-organized, professional, resourceful social networks; embeddedness	Coalition between challengers/ political elites; embeddedness	Countercultural groups, identity groups; embeddedness
Forms of protest	Spontaneous, irrational, expressive, violent (panics, fashions, mobs, crime)	Rational, planned, instrumental (institutional politics, lobbying, interest groups)	Rational, instrumental, polity-oriented (elite contention lobbying, indigenous minorities, disruption i.e. sit-ins strike)	Ideological, expressive, identity-oriented (cultural and religious organisations, self-help groups, alternative lifestyles)

(Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2009: 18)

Then, Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009) create an overview of the basic approaches to the analysis as these have emerged during the last sixty years both in Europe and in the US; highlighting the singularity of each examined case, based on context and on the physical/historical environment in which each mobilisation movement has emerged. Finally, Stekelenburg and Klandermans suggest that the most recent, and, probably, the future approaches to social movements should be based on the 'synergizing structural and social constructivistic approaches' (ibid. 43).

Highlighting the differences between classical and contemporary approaches to social movements, Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2009) indicate that a significant feature of the social constructivist approaches is that they can vary to a great extent. Social

constructivistic approaches have four key themes: construction of the meaning, identity, emotions and motivation. These together with a comparative studies analysis, focused on the sociopolitical context, would be able to provide a circumstantial theoretical framework for the analysis of different cases of mobilisation (ibid. 34-34). However, the critique of the social constructivistic approaches concentrate on the fact that these approaches 'run the risk of fragmentation and de-contextualization' (ibid. 35) and in most cases, they are applied in a different context, in different ways and based on the examined case's characteristics. However, this approach could be conceived as being based on a more socio-psychological axis than McAdam's approach, which could potentially be used in a complementary way with structural-based theories.

An insight into a social movement, concentrating on the central approaches of both old and new social movement theories, highlights the multidimensional nature of social movement theories. The analysis of contemporary cases of social movements could be achieved by focusing on different aspects of the issue, while a major consideration raised by the contemporary cases of collective actions, mobilisations and eventually, social movements illustrates the contribution of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). While the contribution of technology in social movements is not a new phenomenon, the frequency, the scale and the dispersion, by which movements are dominated by ICT's features are significant. Therefore, while the influence of ICT is a factual element of contemporary mobilisations or movements, the way that these elements influence the growth and nature of the mobilisation should be the subject of an in-depth investigation.

Contemporary analysis of social movements concentrates on the in-depth understanding of mobilising structures, framing processes and the concept of political opportunities (McAdam et al., 1996). Karatzogianni (2006) suggests that a comprehensive theoretical framework which supports the examination of digital media in social movements, collective action, as well as social or political turmoil, should not solely focus on media theories but should combine principles from both conflict theory and social movement theory (both NSM and RMT).

2.2.3. Collective vs Connective Actions: Networks

Concentrating on contemporary social movements, especially as these appear during the global recession against political, social or economic oppression, Castells (2015) discusses the notion of networked social movements, pointing out the importance of context. Castells (ibid) analyses cases both from the EU and US, from Brazil to Turkey and Chile, including examples such as the Occupy movement, the Indignados or the Arab Spring. The most commonly shared characteristic among these examples is the crisis of the political system and its legitimacy, as well as, corruption (ibid. 222). After a brief examination of the cause characteristics of these examples, then, concentrating on the rise of the movements, the next common characteristic relates to the usage of digital media, which contributes to the development of an autonomous communicative capacity and communicative networks. In this new communicative capacity, digital social networks and wireless communication are suggested as being equally important as the internet, having a strong impact on the way that contemporary movements evolve. Digital media overcomes the limitations of time and space, while at the same time changing the organisational procedure of movements too. Digital media contributes to the successful organisation of contemporary social movements, which in most cases, manages to isolate political parties, unions and other similar institutions, targeting them as part of the problem and at a distance from the movements' struggles (Bennett, 2012).

In contrast to previous examples of social movements, in which traditional media had an important impact on the communication process of the movement internally and externally, digital media rapidly changed that process. Digital media provides the opportunity for participation to a wider population, while communication including processes of recruitment, organisation and representation changes are transformed. Thus, in contemporary social movements, the communication process is shaped by the younger population which not only has access to the internet but is also familiarised enough with this technology and able to reject the existing social order (ibid. 223). The social technology supports the public engagement and the personalised action, while users expand the communication process to their personal networks too (ibid.).

Following the debates which arose in the context of the 1960s and the discussion on new social movements and the notion of personalised politics, Bennett and Segerberg (2012)

have brought forward some of these considerations, situating the discussion in the context of the global economic crisis and neoliberalism, especially as these were shaped by the digital media technologies. Bennett (2012) focuses on the notion of personalised politics, highlighting the importance of diversity and networks, while Bennett and Segerberg (2012) identify three major conditions based on which personalised politics emerge:

> An ethos of diversity and inclusiveness defined by tolerance for different viewpoints and even different issues linked across loosely bounded political networks. The rise of crowd-sourced inclusive *personal action frames* (e.g., 'We are the 99%') that lower the barriers to identification. These easily personalised frames contrast with more conventional collective action frames (e.g., 'Eat the rich') that may require more socialisation and brokerage to propagate in large numbers. Participation is importantly channelled through often dense social networks over which people can share their own stories and concerns—the pervasive use of social technology enables individuals to become important catalysts of collective action processes as they activate their own social networks. (Bennett, 2012: 22)

The origins of the personalised politics are traced in the financial crisis of the 1970s and the neoliberal regime, which influence production, consumption, labour or even politics. Bennett (2012) points out here that neoliberalism influenced everything; from the global economy and markets to daily personal life. While focusing on the idea of individualism and fragmentation, this could be considered to be a postmodern approach; still, the notion of personalised politics develops an insight into the complex interrelationship between digital media, social movements and politics. The individualised collective action settles new patterns of political consumerism, supporting the establishment of 'more entrepreneurial and less centrally manageable relations' between individuals and civic organisations (ibid. 27), changing the communication processes of the formation of collectivities. This is the point that Bennett and Segerberg introduce as the concept of connective action (ibid.).

The logic of connective action is concentrated on the individuals' self-interest and the participation in e contentious politics, suggesting that the motivation for participation

depends on the need for personal expression and therefore, the engagement arises by sharing this expression across social networks and by extension linking participants with protest networks (ibid. 28). Bennett explains that this concept is linked to Castells and his work on networks, as this process results in the emergence of collectivities, which are understood as multi-layered networks, having no hierarchical organisation. In a network lens, Bennett (ibid.) points out that at this stage, communication is something more than the exchange of messages, because it can transform organisational processes.

Tarrow (2014) strongly criticiss Bennett and Segerberg's discussion on the logic of action, mainly focusing on the conservative and utopian approaches to digital media and the debate on digital media potentiality; how new are the digital media? Will digital media revolutionise every aspect and structure of society? These questions have cultivated a well-established and much-analysed debate (Coleman and Blumler, 2009; Morozov, 2012; Tsatsou 2014), which has a philosophical content and spectrum of analysis. Tarrow suggests that, indeed, digital and especially social media contribute to contemporary social movements and activism, in a similar way though as previous technology and different forms of media did in the past, 'sharing the work of mobilizing and organizing contention, and, in some cases, do more of this work than formal organizations do' (2014: 468). Bennett's (2014) response to Tarrow's critics is that previous technologies were linked to already existing organisations of all sorts, and the content of communication depended on and was controlled by them. In contrast, what is happening now is that organisations emerge as the 'outcomes of patterns of communication-technology use' (ibid. 470). At the same time, Bennett further explains the logic of connective action, highlighting the notion of Durkheim's anomie (ibid.), which here indicates the individual's distance from traditional society as shaped in post-industrial society.

Bennett and Segerberg (2012) cultivate the concept of connective action as opposed to classic collective action, as a framework by which to investigate the organisational dynamics of contemporary contentious politics, highlighting the contribution of digital media. This concept suggests that the political content can be converted from a general framework into a more personalised framework (ibid.). In contrast to traditional organisations models, the individuals here are able to reinterpret and recreate meaning in

their social media networks (ibid.). Additionally, personal communication technologies give the users the opportunity to 'share cognitive resources and diffuse them across trusted social networks without formal ties or commitment to organisations or other forms of group membership' (Anduiza, Cristancho and Sabucedo, 2013: 753). While in traditional resource mobilisation theory organisation has a central role, Anduiza highlights that in Bennett's connective action, this has changed:

> While collective action on a large scale depends on brokered organizations 'bearing the burden of facilitating cooperation', connective action networks 'self-organize' without central or 'lead' organizational actors, using technologies as important organizational agents (ibid. 753).

Therefore, the examination of digital and especially social media could provide an insight into the change and the evolution of organisational dynamics, of the framing processes and finally the struggle for political change. While the importance of online social networks is already indicated, at the same time, the conceptualisation of the internet should be focused both on the internet as a space of conflict (Karatzogianni, 2006), which is having a new communicative capacity (Castells, 2015) as well as the internet as a 'network of networks'. Castells highlights the linkage between technology, history and society, pointing out that from the industrial age we have proceeded to the information age (2000). This results in the transformation of the community-based structure now transformed into a network-based structure (Castells, 201). While Castells extensively analyses the notion and the significance of networks, Tsatsou (2014) highlights van Dijk's (2008) critics, concentrating on the importance of the traditional debates about the issue, as regards the offline world and the distinction between online and offline.

Networks can not only be understood through many different examples but Brieger goes back to Marx and Montesquieu, explaining that the network metaphor has a long tradition too (2004: 505-506): 'society is not merely an aggregate of individuals; it is the sum of the relations in which these individuals stand to one another' (Marx [1857] 1956:96 in Brieger, 2004: 505). In networks, individuals or edges and nodes have a significant importance. Cooley discusses the social or sociological pragmatism which refers to the self-consciousness within which an individual is understood as the 'point of intersection

of an indefinite number of lines representing social groups, having as many arcs passing through him as there are groups' (Cooley [1902] 1964: 184 in Brieger 2004: 505). This is also relevant to Radcliff-Brown's notion of social structure, which, as Brieger explains, describes the complex social relations arising around each individual or node (2004: 506). Digital media and online data provide the opportunity for the examination of the abstract notion of social structure and networks through the usage of sophisticated computer programs and software. Visualisation of networks and online data support the development of an insight into the social structure and social networks, through contemporary innovative research approaches and methods.

Passy (2003) points out that social networks are important to the process of individual participation in social movement and play a crucial role in the emergence of identities. Hensby (2015) draws on Olson (1965), Jasper (1997) and Melucci (1996) pointing out that, indeed, contemporary research is much focused on participation, concentrating on the understanding of individual decision-making, moral and emotional engagement as well as the emergence and maintenance of collective identities. In this context, participation in collective action is understood as an identification process of the individuals with the notion of collective, based on common identity and values. This procedure is reinforced by social networks, which support the formation of common political consciousness and an ideological space that individuals will identify with (Passy, 2013). Then, individuals will participate in both formal and informal networks, online or offline, and will be part of interactive structures, contributing to the framing processes, the formation of identities, as well as to the emergence of political consciousness (ibid.). In a more in-depth understanding, Hensby concentrates on Crossley's discussion of 'activist habitus', which highlights that the sustained engagement with movements and participation has its roots in personal networks and background, starting with family and the social networks built in adult life (Hensby, 2015: 97).

Social networks, including online networks, support the participation of individuals with collective action (Passy, 2003), but most importantly, support the convention of political consciousness into action. Networks are having a mediating role supportive of the framing and mobilisation processes through which action occurs. What Passy points out

here is that individuals who are having many ties with a movement or network are more likely to actively participate in the movement or network as well; the network is having a 'structural-connection function' before the individual be part of the movement (ibid. 24). Nonetheless, there are many different important points in the complex procedure through which individuals will decide to be part of the collective and participate in a movement. The rationalistic approach to understanding this process uses sophisticated models able to decode the individual decision-making process as a behaviour, among the universal human attributes (ibid. 25). In contrast, the structuralist approach concentrates on the enabling and restricting character of structural factors on human behaviour (ibid.).

On the other hand, Passy (ibid.) suggests that Marwell, Oliver and Teixeira (1985) critical mass theory indicates the linkage between the social network and the decisional model (ibid.) and therefore, it stresses the importance of social networks, describing the decision-shaping function. For Passy, a social network defines the final stage of individual participation, shaping the individual's preferences and perceptions; this determines the decision-making process and to an extent, the individual's participation in collective action (ibid. 27). This process not only defines the pro-participation process of the individual, but it brings to the fore the notion of structure and agent, and up to a point, the structuralistic and rationalistic approach to the issue (ibid.).

At a later stage and among the most contemporary considerations, what is discussed is the emergence of political consciousness and the way that this transforms into participation and, most importantly, into action. This point linked to online radicalisation, and the debates on the issue as they appear from the 'war on terror' context and onwards. The most indicative examples here can be found in ethnoreligious-driven polarisation and its different manifestations, e.g. ISIS, far-right movements and so on. Other considerations on the issue are related to the notion of radicalisation per se, as well as the notion of extremism; the discussion of de-radicalisation includes debates on surveillance, freedom of speech and human rights. This latter debate falls outside the scope of the Greek case to a certain extent. However, this is going to be elaborated further in the chapter outlining the socio-political context.

2.3. Digital Media Theory

The third element of the cyberconflict toolkit requires the use of elements of new media/digital media theory. This is where we turn to next. The internet was developed during the 1960s as an experimental network to connect remote computers (Tsatsou, 2014), while the first analogue computer, the Differential Analyser, appeared a few decades earlier, in the late 1920s (Naughton, 1999: 54). The internet can be understood as the culmination of the technological growth of almost two centuries, including different media formats (McChesney, 2013). The evolution of the internet from the days of Usenet to smartphones and social media was long (Hafner and Lyon, 1998; Ryan, 2010; McChesney, 2013), raising strong debates on its impact on every aspect of contemporary society.

The 20th century was characterised by the rapid changes in the mediascape (Coleman and Blumler, 2009), with the internet providing the opportunity for communication both to mass audiences and individuals, who can now communicate without knowing each other (ibid.). This new mediascape provides new public spaces, virtual spaces which promised the emergence of more democratic structures. However, according to Coleman and Blumler (2009), the problem of this concept is that instead of concentrating on the relationship between citizens and politics, the internet, and especially the concept of e-democracy, is understood as a non-dependent or non-contextualised procedure. In the 1980s and 1990s, the debates on the growth of the internet concentrated on an optimistic perspective and ambiguity relating to its potential influence on the democratisation of communications and censorship, which according to McChesney were unthinkable at that time (Fuchs, 2013: 96-97).

Apparently, up to a point, new technology and digital media has challenged the traditional media structures of communication and the media system, which were structured following the principles of globalisation, constructing a global commercial market dominated by a few media conglomerates (McChesney, Wood and Foster, 1998: 12-15). Thus, the already existing debate relates to the necessity of a more democratic media system enriched and escalated by the growth of the internet and later digital media. Later, the political economy of communication concentrated on democracy and its

multidimensional linkages to the media, while the notion of the public sphere came under question as well. In this context, the political economy of communication should not only foster critiques on the mainstream media system, which is perceived as being an element of globalisation but should cultivate a framework in which the media will directly serve the 'democratic function' (ibid. 8). McChesney explained that for the first time in history, genuine democracy seems to be possible (ibid.).

In contrast to the ambiguous predictions relating to the internet's potentiality though, the internet hasn't managed to support the establishment of so-called open government, the end of corruption, inequality and conflict with hierarchical capitalist powers (ibid. 96-97). Instead, McChesney draws on Curran's argument which points out that the internet hasn't managed to influence capitalism, but the opposite, highlighting the capitalist colonisation of the internet. While the internet developed as a non-commercial institution, later, it contributed to the emergence of even closer and monopolistic markets, governmental corruption, the private sphere and to the enormous and profound expansion of contemporary capitalism (ibid.). Therefore, in opposition to so-called cyber-utopianism, Morozov (2012) strongly criticises the way that the internet could improve contemporary society and support democratisation and suggests that the concept of cyber-utopianism and internet-centrism should be abandoned, and replaced by so-called cyber-realism (ibid.). Morozov explains that instead of trying to answer the abstract question 'How do we think the Internet changes closed societies?' (ibid. 319), a more realistic and measurable question should concentrate on how the internet might be able to affect specific policies, in specific contexts. Therefore, according to Morozov, technology should not be understood as the solution to political and social problems, promoting freedom or democratisation, but instead, such issues should be understood within the traditional debates. At the same time, a critical analysis of media and especially the internet should be situated in a historical and social context, and not examined in transcendental or ahistorical contexts (ibid. 319).

At the same time, in juxtaposition to the capitalistic colonisation of the internet, the notion of globalisation should be at issue too. The internet indicates a potentiality relating to the multiple usages that this could have, supporting bottom-up communication, activism and social movements. In a similar way, globalisation has a significant impact

on cultures and identities (Kegley and Blanton, 2009: 322-323), while brining under consideration concepts such as space, time, or even individualism. Nonetheless, Stiglitz (2002) points out that that the notion of globalisation has become controversial, highlighting the contrast between the perspective and its actual application and effects. The optimistic perspective on globalisation and neoliberal theory concentrates on the cultural overlap between geopolitical boundaries and concepts such as 'national identity', creating the so-called 'global citizen' (Kegley and Blanton, 2009: 322). This approach illustrates some of the advantages of globalisation, in terms of prosperity, financial growth, international aid and de-isolation of the developed world as some of the benefits of globalisation (Stiglitz, 2002).

However, globalisation in juxtaposition to the evolution of the internet, hasn't brought the promised growth and economic prosperity but instead has escalated inequality (ibid.). Instead, globalisation has highlighted that the common interest among people is not strong enough to expound homogenised environments; people will protect their sovereign independence, creating competition and resulting in the division of the world into wealthy/stable countries and poorer/fragile countries (Kegley and Blanton, 2009), with the West dominating this relationship (Stiglitz, 2002). The internet emerged from and accelerated globalisation, and it was exploited as offering a brave new world: a cherry on the cake of globalisation. Yet, the internet already from the Zapatistas in the mid-1990s contributed to the emergence of an anti-globalisation and anti-capitalist front. This does not mean that digital media should be understood as a tool able to automatically result in a 'better and radically new world' (Fuchs, 2013: 285). Contemporary examples indicate that digital information communication technology can be extensively used in the formation and coordination of social movements, supporting at the same time communicational and organisational processes. This late 1990s discussion settles around the notions of cyberactivism, cyberprotest or online activism (ibid.).

The internet, online mobilisation and radicalisation or even extremism, extensively discussed after 2008 and the global recession, is an enormous crisis following the second world economic crisis of the 1970s (Fuchs, 2008). Already since the 1970s' crisis, the role of the state and the pattern of society has been transformed from a so-called post-Fordist society and the Keynesian state replaced by the neoliberal state (Žižek, 2012).

While different schools and paradigms describe this historical moment focusing on various secondary points and debates, an important point for this discussion is the way that the relationship and balance between state and capital has changed, resulting in a potential and uncontrolled influence of the markets on society. After the 1970s' crisis, the state stopped acting as an intervening institution within the capitalistic structure but transformed into an antagonistic and competitive neoliberal state (ibid.). However, this new condition shaped by the contemporary social practices and struggles (Fuchs, 2008: 108) had a strong impact on the rise of the neoliberal state and society. Thus, the usage of digital media in the emergence of contemporary social movements is a strong point of consideration.

Focusing on the 2008 crisis, Fuchs (2013: 308) draws on Graeber (2013) explaining that, among others, what neoliberalism achieved in this phase was to break the linkage between productivity and wages, resulting in phenomena such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy Movement, the UK riots, the Spanish indignados and the Greek indignados or even Breivik's case and the rise of the far right (Žižek, 2012). At this point, Žižek explains that an effective approach for understanding the crisis is not by concentrating on the capital, but, referencing to Badiou, by concentrating on democratic illusion, which limits the possibilities for radical transformations in the capitalist structure (ibid. 87). While the social practices and struggles are suggested as being able to influence and shape the emergence of the neoliberal state and society, what is observed by the examples emerging after 2008 is that contemporary social movements and struggles were characterised by an abstract and fragmented ideological frame, without suggesting an actual alternative. Žižek (2012) discusses the 'zero level' protests, which in most cases, are described by violence that is used as a means of expression, without entailing meaning or any kind of alternative suggestion and without involving specific demands. This could be relevant to the December Riots in Greece, which while started as an expression of discontent, demanding end of police violence and justice for Grigoropoulos, soon the extend and the characteristics of the riots overshadow the original demands of the protests. Therefore, the way that the riots unfolded, in some occasions were misleading regards to the original demands and goals, and overshadowed by violence. According to Žižek, these limitations were fulfilled by religion, which used to produce meaning and suggest an alternative form of violence (ibid.).

According to Žižek, globalisation should be understood as the mechanics and structure that has de-totalised meaning, formulating truth-without meaning, which is the only truth within the capitalist and globalised structure (ibid. 55). The political economy of so-called post-Fordism, or advanced capitalism, is characterised by the attempt to create alternative discourses and a fragmented, postmodernist culture (Wood, 1995), in which the contemporary Western left emerged. In this fragmented and postmodernist culture, the totalising knowledge is not only impossible but also undesirable, and consequently so is politics (ibid.); this results in the inevitable confrontation with capitalism, as the most totalising system which, though, cannot be confronted without totalising knowledge (ibid. 2). Later, this relationship is reassessed and Žižek (2012) notes that the Western left indeed re-discovered capitalism as a problem, concentrating on struggles and subtopics raised from contemporary capitalism and can be understood as being more fragmented; as Žižek puts it the 'class-struggle essentialism' for the plurality of anti-racist, feminist, and other struggles, 'capitalism is now clearly re-emerging as the name of the problem' (ibid. 17). As is pointed out here, the conflict is concentrated directly between the non-society and society, 'those who have nothing to lose and those who have everything to lose' (ibid. 60).

The usage of the digital media in this conflict is decisive. Fuchs has highlighted that social technology supports the establishment of offline and online relationships, as well as the, emergence of non-hierarchical protest networks (2013: 324). The internet features support both the globalisation of movements and at the same time, facilitate the emergence of counter-public spheres indicating cyberspace as a new battlefield or space of conflict (Karatzogianni, 2006). Starting from the anti-globalisation movement and the pre-social media era, up to the Occupy movement and the Arab Spring, the internet has demonstrated its multiple usages and the globalised effect on movements. For Žižek, the spread of digital media usage is linked to the contemporary crisis, contributing both to the expansion of globalisation as well as the struggle against it (2012).

Fuchs points out that while the internet is suggested as being a space of conflict, a medium of communication able to facilitate social movements and revolution, still the fundamental requirement for these to emerge is the material basis and the objective

conditions and contradictions, based on which the necessity for collective action arises (ibid.). Even in the case in which these conditions are realised, Žižek (ibid.) explains that the media mechanism confines the radical potentiality of contemporary movements and revolutions, and therefore contemporary movements examined within the global recession context should be situated in the central antagonism of contemporary capitalism (ibid. 1). Nonetheless, the internet indicates the necessity of humanising technology, pointing out the potentiality of the commons, highlighting the importance of the artificial commons in juxtaposition to the natural ones (Fuchs, 2008:108).

Lauk (2014) has characterised the global recession as the 'triple crisis of western capitalism', focusing on democracy, banking and currency. Greece came to international attention as a significant example of the global recession, concentrating both on the crisis impact at the national level and the multidimensional character of the crisis' impact at a European level (Mavroudeas, 2015:1). At the same time, the period of global recession, characterised by the wave of mobilisations and protests, indicated the significant and multidimensional contribution of ICTs to the formation of contemporary social movements.

The contemporary digital era, in contrast to the traditional paradigms and the academic disciplines, is characterised by blurred disciplines and genres, which borrows intellectual traditions from different areas and does not follow the traditional strict boundaries (Lincoln, 2004: 52-57). The ontological and the epistemological concerns of the study of digital media in the Greek crisis have been extensively discussed in chapter three and identified within the critical theory paradigm. Fuchs (2011: 17-19) has described critical theory as the 'analysis and questioning of domination, inequality, societal problems, exploitation in order to advance social struggles and the liberation from domination, so that a domination less, co-operative, participatory society can emerge', while Harvey concentrates on 'a mode of investigation and inquiry that can uncover the deep structure of capitalism and suggest alternative value systems based on radically different kinds of social and material relations' (2010; cited in Fuchs, 2011: 20). Through a more Marxist approach, critical theory is 'radical, which means that it questions the root causes of domination and that it is a critique of domination and, therefore, of dominative societies' (Fuchs, 2011: 20). In that sense, critical theory is described as 'intellectual class struggle'

(ibid. 14) and as a materialistic approach, which tends to decode social phenomena based on the idea of 'resource distribution and social struggles' (ibid. 21).

In this materialistic approach, media and information are described 'neither as purely subjective nor as purely objective, but as attributes of matter' (ibid. 98-99). What is discussed here is that information can only be discussed in terms of 'subject-object dialectic' (ibid.), while it is also highlighted that the information is contradictory, highlighting the way that in society 'antagonism of capitalism' is embedded (ibid.). Media, both digital and offline, act as a mirror for societal problems, while at the same time suggesting solutions too (ibid. 99). Taking into consideration the importance of digital media, especially in the latest global recession as well as in other crisis periods, the study of digital media in Greece is situated in the above framework, examining the interaction linkage between online conflict and the offline world. In this context, the thesis intends to also situate the Greek case in the global 'taxonomy' of contemporary movements and their linkage to ICTs (Stekelenburg and Klandermans, 2009; Della Porta and Diani, 2006).

After the understanding of the environment of the conflict as described above, the examination of different types of conflict (sociopolitical/ethnoreligious) will explore the debates of the crisis and how they have transformed and manifested online and offline during the crisis era. This will develop an insight into the evolution of the anti-/pro-austerity discourse and its transformation into an anti-/pro-governmental discourse, before, finally, being transfigured into an anti-/pro-European discourse. This will lead to the study of how digital media has challenged, or not, the dominant system and discourse, both focusing on politics and media processes, evaluating the contribution of digital media to the democratic function in contrast to crisis limitations and the global recession. The examination of digital media usage must concentrate firstly on the individual and the processes of participation, then on collective actions (collective identities, ideology, communities) and finally on conflict and its linkage to the offline world (politics, offline media). This will lead to an understanding of the impact of digital media on political polarisation and radical politics, alongside the foundation of collective actions, movements and changes in sociopolitical cohesion.

3. Cyberconflict Environment: The Historical Sociopolitical Background of Greece

Starting with the Greek political scene, the review concentrates on the mainstream political parties as these formed after the fall of dictatorship and before the crisis outburst (3.1.1), while later the review focuses on the impact of the crisis on political formations (3.1.2). Then, the review concentrates on the non-parliamentary politics and focuses on the background/origins of two of the most significant social movements (students and labour) (3.2.1), on the non-parliamentary left (3.2.2) and the non-parliamentary right (3.2.3). Next, the literature review of the historical and sociopolitical background of Greece is completed focusing on the evolution of the political economy of the media industry and digital communications in Greece (3.3). This is accomplished with a review of traditional media, focusing on the early days of radio and television (3.3.2), on the crisis impact in the media environment (3.3.3) and on the problem of ownership (3.3.4). Then, the review focuses on the development of digital media in Greece (3.3.5; 3.3.6) and the association of digital media to contemporary social movements and activism in the Greek context (3.3.7).

3.1. Mainstream Politics and Political Parties

> Although Greece is not a Constitutional Monarchy, historians of the future would probably benefit from the terminology used in this type of state in order to describe Greek politics of the last half century.
>
> E. Dinas (2010: 389)

3.1.1. Political Parties: From Metapolitefsi to the Greek Crisis, 1974–2009

After the so-called December Riots (2008), which are later discussed in detail, Fouskas (2009) suggests the end of the Third Hellenic Republic, after the fall of the Junta (Metapolitefsi). While this seems to be an ambitious perspective on the impact of the

December Riots on the Greek political scene, the Greek crisis, which began almost simultaneously to the December Riots, restructured fundamental structures of the Greek societal and political environment.

A discussion of the Greek crisis and the impact on the sociopolitical structure of Greece could not be developed without firstly going back to some of the most significant points in contemporary Greek history. Starting with the Greek Junta (1967–1974), the Metapolitefsi (fall of the Junta), which means the transition to multi-party democracy has acted as a political reference for 'generations of politicians, voters and young people' (Kassimeris, 2005: 745), shaping political identities up to the present day (Asimakoulas, 2009: 1-3).

The fall of the dictatorship was inaugural to the establishment of a new political context which was characterised by a three-bloc structure (Lyrintzis, 2007: 242-243). While the origins of this three-block structure can only be understood by focusing on the pre-dictatorship period, still, its development after the fall of the Junta determines the Greek political system until the crisis outbreak and the restructuring of the political environment. This three-block structure, as developed after 1974, was built based on the axis of the Left-Right spectrum, following the tradition of the first decades of the 20th century (ibid. 243).

In 1974 and after the fall of the dictatorship, C. Karamanlis was called from exile to lead Greece into Democracy (Pappas, 2008: 1124). Karamanlis, who represented the Right bloc, tried to create a pluralist order (ibid.), which was later expressed by the newly established party New Democracy (ND). In an attempt to democratise the Greek political environment, the Communist Party (KKE), which, after the civil war and during 1950s–1960s was banned, was recognised as a legitimate force representing the Left bloc, possessing 10% of the votes (Lyritzis, 2007: 243, Pappas, 2008: 1124,). In the same year, the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) was founded by A. Papandreou, son of the centrist politician G. Papandreou's who had already served three times as a Prime Minister (Siani-Davies and Katsikas, 2009). PASOK was founded as a radical-Marxist party and managed to win state power in 1981 representing the Centre-Left (Pappas, 2008: 1126), becoming a protagonist in the Greek political scene in the years to follow.

There were several attempts to found different political parties, which intended to either fill the ideological gap between the existing parties, or to situate themselves on the edges of the political spectrum, expressing more radical political views. However, only SYNASPISMOS, a leftist party, which later came to the forefront of Greek politics, was a viable attempt with around 3% of the votes, before transforming into SYNASPISMOS (3.2; 6.4). The fall of the dictatorship, only a few decades after the civil war, provided the opportunity and the necessity not only for reform but for the establishment of a new sociopolitical reality as well. Aside from negligible breaks, PASOK (1981–89, 1993–2004) alongside ND (1974–81, 1990–92, 2004–09) alternated in state power until 2012.

During the period 1974–2004, Greece became the 10th member of the European Common Market. The country adopted a simpler version of the Greek language in education and administration, solving the so-called language question, which overlapped with the discrimination and the stereotypes raised by civil war, and adopted the European currency in 2001. As a result, a country of emigrants, such as Greece, turned into a country of immigration (Petmezas, n.d.).

While the fall of dictatorship designated a fundamental political formation, another important formation started in the mid-1990s and was signed by the new leadership in both ND and PASOK (Pappas and Dinas, 2006). In 1996, A. Papandreou reassigned from the PASOK leadership and was replaced by C. Semites (ibid. 481). In the same year, after the elections of 1996 and the defeat of ND, the party's leadership passed to K. Karamanlis, nephew of the ND founder, C. Karamanlis. C. Semites, who became the leader of PASOK, might not have been a charismatic political figure, but he was a technocrat, well known for his Modernisation vision as regards the country's future. In contrast, K. Karamanlis' profile was constructed based on the image of the young politician whose intention was to re-establish the ND's political identity and re-unite the party, leading the ND in power again. While the leadership changes in both the two antagonist political parties in Greece pointed out a new era of Greek politics, Pappas and Dinas (2006) concentrated on the five major changes in Greek public opinion at that time, as these were analysed in-depth by Loulis:

(a) a marked decline of statism, most notably in the belief that economic growth should not be left entirely to the state; (b) the ascendancy of political pragmatism over the radicalism and ideologization that had prevailed in the past; (c) the growth of the centre vote and the dramatic reduction in voters placing themselves on the left; (d) widespread disillusionment with politics, which resulted in the tendency of the electorate to vote, not for the 'best' party, but for the 'least bad'; and (e) high vote volatility, which severed past electoral alliances and caused significant shifts in political allegiances from one election to the next.

(cited in Pappas and Dinas, 2006: 483)

This new era of the Greek politics, should be understood as the point of transition to the political programs of 'neo-liberalism and financialization (globalization)', which, in the case of Greece, illustrated the problematic and unsuccessful adaptation of such programs by the 'periphery' of Europe (Fouskas and Dimoulas, 2012). Already since the early 1990s, the Greek political system had changed orientation and concentrated on the deliberation of the markets as well as on the privatisation of banks and companies. This process was later fulfilled and completed under the Semites' neo-revisionist PASOK, during 1996–2004 (Michael-Matsas, 2010).

The most crowning moment of this new era period, which at the same time signed its end, came a decade later, after the 2004 elections and the Olympic Games. The year 2004 was a significant year for Greece. The completion of the Olympic Games which cost millions of Euros, was conceived a huge success in terms of governmental goals; at the same time, the parliamentary elections indicated that 'PASOK's Monopoly Ends' (Kassimeris, 2004). The socialist party, which, at that point, was in power for nineteen out of twenty-two years of the multi-party democracy and the fall of the Junta, was blamed for the 'spiralling prices, persistent unemployment and perceived corruption within the governmental party' (ibid. 243).

C. Semites passed PASOK's headship to G. Papandreou, son of the PASOK's founder, who, those days, was serving as a Minister of Foreign Affairs, just before the elections of 2004. This denoted the beginning of PASOK's crisis era (Kassimeris, 2004). G.

Papandreou, who was strongly criticised for his US citizenship and the lack of Greekness (ibid. 249), followed the Semites success recipe. However, he didn't manage to unite the party, or to create a new political vision and inspire the new generation of voters (ibid. 945). PASOK had a tradition of establishing new political identities and the invention of new or innovative political visions, and this was the main element that brought the socialist party into power for only a few years after its foundation, during the 1980s. Back then, PASOK managed to overlap the 'old divisions between conservatives and liberals, communists and anti-communists' and created a new conceptualisation of the 'right wing and anti-right-wing forces'; it presented itself as the 'third road to socialism', managing to stand for all the 'non-privileged' Greeks (Lyrintzis, 2007: 246). From A. Papandreou's calling for 'change' (Αλλαγή), PASOK moved to C. Semites' 'retrofit' (Εκσυγχρονισμός) and ended with G. Papandreou, who was not represented or characterised by any motto able to be adopted and supported by voters. In contrast, the phrase 'Money Exists' (The Guardian, 2011) might have brought the party to power after the 2009 elections (Pappas, 2014), but at the same, it was the main slogan which was later related to the outbreak of the crisis and the collapse of PASOK. An indicative incident relating to the connotations of this slogan within the crisis context, was the lawsuit of a citizen against G. Papandreou, for misleading his voters (Mandrou, 2017); while this was a quaint or even populist-oriented incident, still it clearly indicates the dispute within public opinion about Papandreou's 'Money Exists'.

In the 2004 Parliamentary Elections, K. Karamanlis and ND were elected with 45.4% of the total vote. In juxtaposition to the new era of PASOK (Kassimeris, 2004), a new era for ND began. The changes between the two antagonists' party dynamics were also translated into ideological and political changes which resulted in the emergence of ideological spaces/gaps that not only became noticeable in the crisis context but were filled by new political parties too. Indeed, ND under K. Karamanlis' headship was extremely different from the ND, as shown by the Mitsotakis' period of 1990–93 (ibid. 951). While ND was searching for a new political identity from 1993 (Lyrintzis, 2007: 245), the party managed to appeal to a 'broad cross-section of voters' (Kassimeris, 2004), by adopting a not so strictly neo-liberal, right-wing rhetoric only after 2004. This rapidly changed in the crisis context when ND moved from the centre-right rhetoric to a more right-wing populist position. At that point, in 2004, ND was a party promising to

'reconstruct the state, to fight the corruption as well as the rising, of the prices' (Gemenis, 2008: 95-96), successfully following PASOK's modernisation example (Lyrintzis, 2007: 246), which started as a radical left party but eventually moved to a more centre-right position on the traditional political axis.

Following this strategy, ND which remained a conservative party, came into power under K. Karamanlis' leadership; he became the youngest Prime Minister in Greece at the age of 47 (Kassimeris, 2004: 950). In the 2004 elections, the same year as the Olympic Games and the European Parliament Elections, ND was re-elected for the first time after 1993 and therefore, enjoyed an 'unprecedented honeymoon period' (Dinas, 2008: 601). At the same time, PASOK, which was in power for almost two decades, was conceived as being responsible for most of the issues occurring in the first period of the new government (Dinas, 2008). Nonetheless, the disaffection of ND's attempt to reform the organisation of Greek universities, as well as the corruption-related political scandals, had already brought under consideration the issue of early elections (ibid. 601-602), before 2007 and the outbreak of the wildfires.

In August 2007, the outbreak of wildfires across Greece resulted in one of the most dramatic environmental catastrophes of contemporary Greek history and the death of 70 people. K. Karamanlis' statements, describing the wildfire issue as an asymmetric threat supporting conscious strategic plan which intended to harm not only the government but the country, pointed out the extent of the political crisis as it emerged, linking the wildfires with rhetoric commonly used for terrorism related issues (ibid. 603).

In September 2007, ND was finally re-elected with 41.8 % of the votes, after the shortest pre-election period in decades and with a new electoral system (Gemenis, 2008: 605). The 2007 election results indicated the weaknesses of the two antagonist political parties, ND and PASOK, which were no longer able to maintain the already existing two-party scheme (Gemenis, 2008). Neither ND nor PASOK had the same dynamic as in previous elections and therefore, the potentiality for the rise of smaller parties became obvious. The Coalition of Left, Ecology and Movements (SYNASPISMOS) converted to the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA), and A. Alavanos passed the presidency to A. Tsipras (ibid. 96). SYRIZA managed to gain 5.7% of the votes, from the 3.2% of the

votes that SYNASPISMOS gained in the elections of 2000 and 2004. KKE, the Communist Party gained 8.1 % of the votes in contrast to the 5.9% of the votes in the elections of 2004, and the 5.5% of the votes in the elections of 2000. LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally), a far-right populist party, which constantly denied its far-right orientation but maintains its nationalistic rhetoric, gained 3.8% of the votes in contrast to 2.19% of the votes in 2004.

In 2009, the outbreak of the global recession had already strongly influenced the Greek political and social context, while financial and other governmental scandals indicated that the viability of the government was doubtable. Tsalikidis and the Vodafone case, which refers to the wiretapping of high-ranking public servants and politicians, including the Prime Minister (Galpin, 2006, Bamford, 2015; Petropoulos, 2015), the suicide attempt of the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Culture (Moustaka, 2008) and the Siemens' scandal (Pappas, 2010; TVXS, 2011) were only some of the most striking scandals of the period, before the Grigoropoulos case and the so-called December Riots (Karamichas, 2009), which led to the 2009 elections. PASOK came to power with its legendary 'Money Exists' slogan of A. Papandreou (The Guardian, 2011), illustrating once again that the political environment as shaped since 1974 was about to change. While the dispute between the two antagonist parties was clear, the potentiality and the rise of the smaller parties could not be interpreted as a true political change, but rather as the expression of disaffection with PASOK and ND policies.

3.1.2. Mainstream Politics and Political Parties in the Greek Crisis: Elections 2012

After the elections of 2009, the issue of crisis rapidly emerged. PASOK came to power and realised that the 'projected fiscal deficit was going to be more than double' compared to what ND had estimated (Katsikas, 2012: 50). Due to the estimations of the public debt, the competitiveness limitations, and the Greek credit ratings the Greek financial system was shown not to be viable, with Greece becoming unable to 'access funding from the financial markets' (ibid.). Under G. Papandreou, Greece asked for a loan from the European States and the International Momentary Fund (IMF). Greece signed a bailout agreement for three years (ibid.) through which the country accepted supervision from the so-called Troika (IMF, European Commission and the European Central Bank-ECB)

on the adoption of the 'comprehensive policy programme (memorandum)' (ibid.). This was just the beginning of what later became known as the 'Greek crisis', an important example of the EU austerity politics of the last decade. At the same time, the Dubai crisis in 2009 had already indicated the 'symptoms of the globally propagated disease' and the 'Greek tragedy' which was about to follow (Michael-Matsas, 2010: 460).

After the chaotic progress of the crisis, at the national and European level, the three-year bailout agreement was followed by many other agreements and memoranda, which resulted in the collapse of the social and political fabric and structures. G. Papandreou announced his resignation in November 2011. PASOK, ND and LAOS formed a 'government of national unity', led by P. Papademos, former head of the Bank of Greece (Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013: 4). This governmental scheme didn't change policy on the memorandum and the austerity agreements and remained in power until the double elections of 2012, which took place in May and June, marking the shortest period between elections since 1974 (ibid. 2013).

The first round of the 2012 elections, demonstrated the breakdown of the traditional governmental two-party scheme, PASOK and ND, which altogether gained less than 32% of the votes. SYRIZA gained 16.8%, the second highest percentage of votes, while Golden Dawn, a neo-Nazi party, gained 10.6% of votes, entering the Greek parliament for the first time. After the May elections, the creation of a coalition government was not possible and therefore, Greece entered a six-week pre-election period, leading to the second round of elections in June 2012. The dominant political debate as shaped by the mainstream parties and the mainstream media at that time, concentrated on the theory of extreme politics, focusing on the rise of SYRIZA and Golden Dawn. Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou (ibid. 6) highlighted this point, focusing on Hollande's exclusive interview, which was presented four days before the elections of June 2012, on one of the most mainstream Greek TV Channels, MEGA Channel. In this interview, Hollande, who at the time, served as President of France, pointed out that he was speaking as a 'friend of Greece' (Smith, 2012), expressing his concerns and warning that 'if the impression is given that the Greeks want to move away from the commitments that were taken and abandon all prospects of revival, then there will be countries in the Eurozone

that will want to end the presence of Greece in the Eurozone' (ibid.; Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013: 6-7).

There were strong criticisms raise by the Hollande statement, both at a national and European level, which concentrated on the respect of national sovereignty and the meaning of elections in democratic societies (ibid.). The outcome of the June elections confirmed to the EU that Greece was going to comply EU and Troika's demands, giving a vote to the mainstream political parties, which supported the memorandum. ND gained 29.6 % of the votes, PASOK 12.28% and together with DIMAR, which gained 6.25% created a coalition government. At the same time, SYRIZA became the main opposition party (26.9%), and Golden dawn gained 18 seats in the parliament (6.9%).

Admittedly, the 2012 elections indicated the end of the political era, which started after 1974 and at the same time, it was pointed out that 'the legitimacy of the political system was seriously damaged' (Lyrintzis, 2011: 22). The Greek crisis, which started as a financial one, had now converted into a political, and consequently, into a social crisis. The collapse of the political parties, including the political and ideological identities, which developed after 1974 and remained constant for decades, resulted in the segregation of political and social structures. Society was struggling to respond to the crisis, and at the same time, the new political environment did not manage to generate any substantive political debate or vision as regards the future of the new sociopolitical environment. In this context, the rise of the far-right and Golden Dawn in Greece, as well as, the rise of far-right groups in other EU countries, indicated the strong impact of austerity politics on the fragile European democratic society. The global recession, especially as it emerged in the EU context, indicated a new era of extreme politics, highlighting the danger raised by conservative and extreme politics in financial and sociopolitical terms, reminding the EU that in periods of great recession the rise of far-right and conservative politics, as well as, the rise of extreme politics, is still a real threat.

Table 3: Results of the Greek Parliamentary Elections 2000–2012

Party	2000		2004		2007		2009		May 2012		June 2012	
	Vote %	Seats	Vote %	Seats	Vote %	Seats	Vote %	Seats	Vote %	Seats	Vote %	Seats
PASOK	43,79	158	40,55	116	30,10	102	43,92	160	13,18	41	12,28	33
ND	42,74	125	45,36	166	41,84	152	33,47	91	18,85	108	29,66	129
KKE	5,52	11	5,90	12	8,15	22	7,54	21	8,48	26	4,50	12
SYN /	3,20	6	3.26	6								
SYRIZA					5,04	14	4,60	13	16,78	52	26,89	71
DIKKI	1,79	0										
LAOS			2,19	0	3,80	10						
AN.EL.									10,61	33		
CH. AY (Golden Dawn)									6,97	21	6,92	18
DIMAR									6,11	19	6,25	17

(Ministry of Interior, ypes.gr, n.d.)

3.2. Social Movements, Far Right and the Left

3.2.1. The Evolution of the Student and Labour Movement in Greece

The history of the Greek student movement began in the late 19th century. Only six years after the foundation of the first Greek university, in 1843, academia showed itself to be a place of strong politicisation and social struggles (Psacharopoulos and Kazamias, 1980: 128-129). At the beginning of the 20th Century, the student movement had a conservative orientation, with students protesting both against new policies and the adoption of the simplest version of the Greek language (ibid.). The Metaxas fascist dictatorship crushed most of the student organisations, which were only re-created after the civil war, during 1950–60s, with one of its most significant moments being the Lambrakis affair (1980: 129). The student movement's contribution to the fall of the Junta (1973) was significant. The fall of the Junta and the Metapolitefsi were characterised by the promise of change, while the transition to multi-party democracy was marked by the monumental uprising, which was overshadowed by the student movement and the university occupations.

The occupation of the Athens University Law School and the Athens Polytechnic lasted for three days, and began as part of the student protests against the 'authoritarianism of the educational system' (Kassimeris, 2005: 746), before turning to a general political revolt against the dictatorship. The Greek student movement and its role in 1973 could be examined in juxtaposition to other movements, such as those in Chile and Italy (ibid. 746-748). At the same time, French May '68 ideals were an aspiration, influencing the social and student movements, which were struggling for social and political change, parallel to the cultural revolution of those days (ibid.). The Greek uprising of 1973 developed an anti-authorial rhetoric, rejecting the political system, because it was seen as built on values, ideas and concepts, all originating in the attempt to re-establish the state after the civil war. Rigos (2007) explains that, during 1973, the student movement became the 'sole vehicle of collective expression of solidarity and public revulsion against oppression, injustice and limited freedom, gaining for itself autonomous political maturity and universal popular recognition' (cited in Karamichas, 2007: 749).

The Metapolitefsi pointed out that the student movement had a significant impact on contemporary political identities as shaped after the fall of the Junta, influencing the Greek political landscape to the present time. However, the student movement's vision for the establishment of a new republic and the expectations of movement supporters and participants were not fulfilled and efficiently represented by any political parties and the policies of the multi-party democracy after the uprising (ibid. 745). Various activist groups formed during the dictatorship and represented the revolutionary Left, in order to fill this ideological and political gap.

Maoist, Trotskyist or Anarchist groups were some of the groups, which remained active after the dictatorship and were associated with the European Movement (ibid. 751), focusing on political reform and democratisation. The political pluralism that developed after 1974 supported not only the development of extra-parliamentary and revolutionary left groups, but also resulted in the development of neo-fascist groups Such groups focused mainly on terrorist acts and campaigns, with one of the most noteworthy and common examples including cinema bombings (ibid.).

The Greek Labour Movement

Both the left wing and non-fascist groups founded in that period, emerged parallel or in confluence with the student movement. In 1974, the labour movement, which already had a long tradition in Greece, alongside the student movement, equally contributed to the uprising, shaping the post-Junta political environment. The origins of the Greek Labour Movement can be found in the late 19th century and early 20th century, when strikes took place in different urban centres across Greece, including Lavrio (1883, 1887, 1896, 1907), Volos (1909–1911), Piraeus (1910), Thessaloniki (1914, 1936) and Serifos (1916) (Lavdas, 1997: 69; Panourgiá, 2009: 39). While each of these strikes was occasionally successful and their contribution to the movement is noteworthy, still, the movement was not well organised and actions were not efficiently coordinated (ibid.). In 1918, and after the cycles of Syros strikes started in 1879, the 'General Confederation of Workers of Greece' (GSEE) was founded, signalling a new era for the labour movement, which developed at a distance from the European example (Ioannou, 1999).

Both the student and the labour movement were shaped according to the historical background of Greece and deeply influenced by civil war, Occupation and the dictatorship. After the civil war, the social and political conflict was raised by the contrast between communism – anti-communism, transmuted to fanaticism and sociopolitical division (Kassimeris, 2013), which lasted for decades. Governmental policies and control over this issue were various, having a strong impact both on the student and labour movements, which in most of the cases, were associated with left-wing oriented groups. During dictatorship and the Metapolitefsi, the labour movement strongly associated with the student movement, supporting democratisation. While both the student and the labour movement have been characterised by violent conflicts with the police and the state, the incidents at the Athens Polytechnic – National Technical University (Polytechneio) were a momentous example for both the two movements, standing against state oppression and violence. This uprising ended up with the violent intervention of the army, which resulted in many casualties and, eventually, a change of regime (Psacharopoulos and Kazamias, 1980). The state's determination to control politicised spaces and the communist peril, associated the left-wing political identity to the danger of unemployment, political persecution or even physical torture.

Ioannou (1999) examined the Greek labour movement focusing on five periods, following the social and political turmoil of contemporary Greek history. The first period began with the Syros strikes and the foundation of GSEE (1879–1918). The second period is set to the duration of time between the creation of GSEE and the end of Metaxas' dictatorship (1919–1940); the third period ran parallel to WWII, the Occupation and the civil war (1940–1949) and the fourth period encompassed the end of civil war and the end of dictatorship (1950–1974). Finally, according to Ioannou, the fifth period started with the end of dictatorship and is still in progress now. However, considering that Ioannou's study was written before the Greek crisis of 2008, it would be reasonable to perceive the period after 2008 as a new period in the Greek labour movement. The significant changes in both working conditions and the extremely high percentages of unemployment bring to light additional questions about the role of the movement and its dynamic in the crisis context.

3.2.2.   The Extra-Parliamentary Left and Revolutionary Groups

The 1973 uprising was a struggle for democratisation and political modernisation, which created the proper conditions for the emergence of a radical communist utopianism, which reinforced debates on 'class, social structure and revolutionary strategy' (Kassimeris, 2013: 134). At the same time, the uprising was a turning point for the conception of political identities, ideologies and parties, creating the grounds for political fermentations which were later associated with the rise of radical politics, including examples of revolutionary left and far-right groups, both intensively active during that period. After the civil war, the attempt to create an anti-communist state (ibid. 133) was intense and, this resulted in political discrimination against the Left, even after the fall of the dictatorship. During that period, Greece followed the Western Europe example, with the extra-parliamentary left and different revolutionary groups intensively active, resulting in the most active political-oriented terrorist movement on a global scale (Kassimeris, 2004: 260). In the opposite approach, during the same period, the far-right was strengthened as well, in a way reminiscent of the political debates and conflict raised during and after WWII.

The dictatorship can be understood as an era of intense political violence both by the state and left-wing and right-wing extra-parliamentary groups. Violence among sub-state groups and the state, alongside the environment of political instability, contributed to the emergence of revolutionary and extra-parliamentary groups (Xenakis, 2012), suggesting a political and social alternative, in which violence was both inevitable and justified (Kassimeris, 2005: 748). During the first years of Metapolitefsi, more than 95 revolutionary and resistance groups were active (Kassimeris, 2013: 135), while until 2007, more than 250 such groups have claimed responsibility for various acts (Karyotis, 2007).

After the fall of the dictatorship and in opposition to the government attempt to create an anti-communist state, left politics became a strong political trend, reinforcing the political polarisation between Left and Right, which had a long historical tradition. The inadequate representation of the Left in parliament further contributed to the rise of the extra-parliamentary Left as well as anarchist and revolutionary groups (Xenakis, 2012). The communist party's position on this political trend did not support the creation of a strong unified movement (ibid.). KKE strongly criticised the Athens Polytechnic occupation, as having limited capabilities and potentiality and being organised by naive students (Kassimeris, 2013b: 15). At the same time, KKE accused the various extra-parliamentary left groups as of being provocateurs, strongly associated with the Right (Xenakis, 2012: 441). This approach pointed out the distance between KKE and the new radical-left wave, as well as the distance between what later became parliamentary and the extra-parliamentary left.

Some of the most influential groups, which were active until recently, were the 17November (Revolutionary Organization 17 November/ 17N) and ELA (Revolutionary Popular Struggle), which were characterised as Marxist-Leninists and started their activities in 1975 (Kassimeris, 2013b). having a rich record of activities. Another interesting example of anti-dictatorship and revolutionary groups, which supported the legitimacy of the armed struggle, is the case of PAK (Pan-Hellenic Liberation Movements), which later transformed to PASOK, one of the two governmental parties for decades (ibid. 440). These groups were founded after the fall of the dictatorship and understood Metapolitefsi as a trick, a 'democratic façade' (ibid. 135), or even a 'dynastic

change of the regime' (Kassimeris, 2013b: 64). These groups formed as a response to the inefficient way that systemic actors and institutions, which came to power after the fall of the dictatorship, tried and failed to reform the state according to the uprising's ideals.

While these groups emerged in the national political context, they soon linked their actions to the international political context and social movements. Following the political utopianism of those days, the extra-parliamentary left and revolutionary groups justified their actions as 'a logical and inevitable political consequence of national and constitutional processes' (Kassimeris, 2004: 261), rationalising the usage of violence as a response to the 'right wing pressure' and 'a vital instrument of the social war against bourgeois democracy' (ibid. 262). At the same time, such groups identify themselves as part of the anti-capitalist struggle, or as 17November puts it, the struggle against the 'American military imperialism', which had a significant impact globally (Kassimeris, 2013b: 25).

At the beginning, 17November activities had a symbolic meaning, focusing on the symbolic enemy, and were in line with the common social interest. This was a successful strategy, as a large part of the Greek society understood 17November as being close to the 'Robin Hood' stereotype (Nomikos, 2007: 67-68), struggling for justice and the common good. During the 1990s, this stereotype was deconstructed after the Bakoyannis assassination, ending the moral legitimation of 17November. Most of the revolutionary groups' actions resulted in many causalities and side effects. After the mid-1990s, many of the groups ended their activities or got arrested, changing the extra-parliamentary left landscape. In 1995, ELA, also associated with the 1May group, ended its activities, while in 2003, six arrests were made in relation to the group (Xenakis, 2012: 442-43). In 2002, the arrest of Savvas Xiros, led to the end of 17November and the arrest of nineteen group members. During the Olympic Games in Athens (2004), the political pressure raised by the trials was significant, having a strong impact on the prosecution of the cases (ibid. 443).

While the above discussion does not constitute an in-depth review of the extra-parliamentary left in Greece, still it succeeds in developing an insight into how different political parties, movements and groups historically developed, supporting the

understanding of the contemporary political landscape. Therefore, the way that the state historically treated these groups as well as the relationship to the media, are some of the points that should be under examination. Nomikos divides the way that the examined groups have been perceived and treated into three periods/categories:

a) 1974–1989: the rise of the Greek leftish terrorism, which was characterised by the failure of the political elites to recognise the roots, the level and the significance of the terrorist threat.

b) 1989–1999: this period was defined by the politicisation of terrorism as well as the inclusion of the issue in the party politics debate.

c) 1999–onwards: this period was characterised by the impact of the security services on terrorism.

(Nomikos, 2007:66)

While this categorisation explains the way that such groups have been perceived and treated by political elites and the state, Xenakis (2012) makes a different categorisation based on generations, dividing such groups into two categories, the old and the new generation of revolutionary groups, or terrorists (1974–2002 and 2002 onwards).

Even if the extra-parliamentary left and revolutionary groups – or even terrorist groups– were created with a different structure to the other European ones, the general movement was not independent from the European and global incidents. The incident of 9/11 in the US, the Olympic Games in Athens, the anti-globalisation protests and 9/11 changed the connotation of terms like terrorism, threat and security, not only in the international context but in Greece as well, having a strong impact on the Greek security agenda (Nomikos, 2007: 72-73). In the Greek case, the abstract conception of terrorism shaped American-Greek international relations, and Greek membership of the EU. During the Olympic Games, security became a high priority issue and the arrests of ELA and 17November were, not surprisingly, perceived as a great success by others. The new Greek anti-terrorism law and the cooperation between Greek and foreign police experts on terrorism contributed to the safe and successful organisation of the Olympic Games. Due to the Olympic Games, surveillance programs, including the NSA Athens-affair case, as regards the Vodafone wiretapping of politicians and the Greek Prime Minister,

which resulted in the Tsalikidis murder (Galpin, 2006; Bamford, 2015; Petropoulos, 2015), were only some of the cases which illustrated the way that terrorism may not necessarily be tackled, but instead, used for the adoption of controversial policies, in the Greek context.

At the same time, the way that the media treated extra-parliamentary and revolutionary groups is another interesting point of consideration. While this relationship changed throughout the different phases and decades in which these groups were active, the media were extensively used as a communicative channel with society. For decades, traditional media and especially the press were the main tool for communication with the public, through which such groups presented their ideas, published manifestos, and claimed responsibility for attacks and actions. The relationship between the media and extra-parliamentary, revolutionary and terrorist groups, in Greece is structured on a completely different rationale, in comparison to most European countries. The Greek state had several attempts on controlling this relationship, however, the media used both by revolutionary groups and the state. The emerge of new and social media dramatically changes the dynamic of the relationship between media and extra-parliamentary groups, revolutionary and activist groups.

While many contemporary political groups and initiatives have some strong ideological linkages, common concerns and inspiration and ideas, focusing on democratisation, justice and so on, still it should be considered whether such groups manage to express all these in a more effective and influential way in the crisis context. The last generation of revolutionary and extra-parliamentary groups were marked and reinforced by the so-called December riots, in 2008. Kassimeris (2013b) explains that this generation of groups didn't develop concentrated on the left, following the national tradition and debates, but instead linked in with stronger ideological and political references to international movements, including the anti-capitalist and anti-war movement. Revolutionary Struggle (RS), which was founded around 2003, and the CCF (Conspiracy of Cells of Fire), which was founded after 2008, are the most notable groups of the contemporary period. Following the previous generation's paradigm, the December riots and the Grigoropoulos case had an equivalent impact on the movement, as the Kaltezas case did during the 1980s (ibid.).

In this generation of activists, the struggle against capitalism, imperialism and so on was updated according to the neoliberalism and the context of global recession. The 'New World Order to Terrorism International' manifesto by RS, published in 2004, developed closely along the lines of the 17November ideals, justifying violence as a medium of struggle and change against a variety of issues, including 'the Greek political establishment', 'globalization', '9/11', 'the US-led war on terror', 'the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan', 'the Arab-Israeli conflict', as well as the 'US hegemonic plans in the Balkans' (Kassimeris, 2013b: 78). RS critically discussed the democratic illusion and the sociopolitical structures which were expected to lead to great poverty, unemployment, inequality and social exclusion (2013b: 80).

RS developed a noteworthy record of attacks and action during the 2000s. One of the most notable RS attacks took place in 2006, targeting an ND' MP acting as Minister of Culture, G. Voulgarakis. This act was justified after Voulgarakis contributed to the development of a new era of 'Terrorism and mass surveillance' (2004), which began with counter-terrorism legislation and surveillance (ibid.). At the same time, Voulgarakis was also involved in the abduction and torture of 28 Pakistani immigrants by Greek intelligence, while he was also responsible for the questioning of 5,000 immigrants in a two-month period, following the London bombing and the British authorities fear for Al-Qaeda sympathisers (ibid.).

One of the most notable moments of the CCF and the contemporary generation of revolutionary groups was related to the so-called Velvento robbery, which lead to the arrest of N. Romanos and four other anarchists, in their early 20s (To Vima International, 2014). While Romanos and the arrested anarchists were not proved to be, indeed, members of the CCF, still the mass media strongly focused on their association with the organisation. Romanos was arrested only six years after witnessing Grigoropoulos' death and, as in the case of Grigoropoulos, the considerations and critics included the middle-class argument and the association of Romanos with different political organisations. At the same time, the police brutality inflicted on Romanos and the other arrested anarchists was strongly criticised in both mainstream and online media. After the suspects' arrest, Police not only beat them but also published photoshopped mugshots of the suspects,

publishing the case but trying to disguise their injuries (Smith, 2013b). This incident arose in the crisis context, after the rise of Golden Dawn and under the right-wing Dendias, who then served as Minister of Public Order (ibid.), in 2013. During that period, both ND and Samaras policies, as well as Dendias, were strongly criticised for their tolerance of the Golden Dawn's violent campaigns, while the party was proved to have strongly infiltrated the police (Hope, 2013), with more than 50% of uniformed officers voting for the party (Lampropoulos, 2012; Phillips, n.d.).

3.2.3. The Evolution of the Far-right in Greece: From Metaxas Dictatorship to Golden Dawn

Similar to extra-parliamentary and revolutionary groups of the left, the efficient use of terms such as far-right, extreme-right, radical or ultra-right is arguable, with strong debates in the literature (Tsiras, 2012). In the Greek context, the term 'right' was used during the 1920s, without denoting a specific ideology, but instead, it just expressed opposition to the left (ibid.).

During the inter-war years and following the European example, Greece was searching for a third way, between neoliberalism and Marxism (ibid.). During the late 1920s, the National Union of Greece (Εθνική Ένωση Ελλάδος) was founded in Thessaloniki and became one of the most noteworthy and active fascist organisations of the period (ibid. 75). Thessaloniki was an urban centre with various ethnic groups and was marked by strong class and ideological turmoil; Federation, which later transformed to KKE was founded in the same period (ibid.). On 8th of May 1936, the tobacco workers strike in Thessaloniki soon spread to other professions and sectors (Panourgiá, 2009: 39). The demonstration ended on the 11th of May, with the support of the army, leaving twelve dead and many injured (ibid.). While the state and the police brutality was legendary, most of the demonstrators' demands were satisfied with the establishment of the eight-hour working day, the foundation of a state-system pension and medical coverage (ibid.). KKE did not manage to take advantage, and control the events, but Metaxas was favoured by the demonstrations.

The Metaxas dictatorship overshadowed the fascist, far-right groups and organisations, and under the ideals of the german 'kultur', which refers to the late 19th century' German conceptualisation of ancient Greece, concentrated on the re-organisation of Greece and the foundation of the 'Third Hellenic Republic' or the 'New Greek Republic' (ibid. 75-77). Tsiras explains that, up to the present time, that period is still a reference point for right-wing groups, and is understood as a moment of glory for both the far-right and right groups and parties (2011). During WWII, the triple occupation of Greece by Germany, Italy and Bulgaria, found many collaborators, members of the right-wing spectrum, expressing their affinity with fascism and Nazism (ibid.). During the occupation, the far-right idealised the idea of the Great Greece; far-right wing and collaborationist military organisations such as Security Battalions (Tagmata Asfaleias) and Organization Chi (X) were very active during occupation (ibid.), while they had a significant impact in the Dekemvriana and the Battle of Athens, in 1944.

The Battle of Athens, Dekemvriana, was an event with noteworthy impact both in terms of national unity as well as international relations and political coalitions of that era (Vulliamy and Smith, 2014). After the occupation, the influence of the resistance movement, which was dominated by the National Liberation Front (EAM) and the Communist Party, was continually growing (ibid.). This was in opposition to Britain's plan, Britain still being in conflict with Germany, which wanted to restore the pro-war political conditions bringing the king back to power (ibid.). Therefore, during the demonstration on the 3rd of December 1944, Britain, alongside local Nazi collaborators, decided to open fire against demonstrators and EAM members, sowing the seeds for the outbreak of the civil war and the rise of the far-right in Greece (ibid.).

Dekemvriana, were followed by a period of White Terror (Panourgiá, 2009: 78-80; Tsiras, 2011:79) and the civil war. During the so-called White Terror, extreme policing and surveillance practices as well as the formation of the National Guard (Ethnofylaki) (Panourgiá, 2009: 78) took place. White Terror came about in opposition to the Red Terror, which referred to the Communist Peril, while after the Treaty of Varkiza and the disarmament of the left, the right-wing groups started forming the first political parties, which obtained a position in the parliament (Tsiras, 2011). While the KKE was still banned, some of the most noteworthy far-right wing parties of that period were the Chi

(X) Party and the National Political Union, which comprised smaller far-right groups and parties, as well as the National Rally, led by Papagos (ibid. 79). Papagos was already a representative political figure of right-wing politics before the end of the civil war, whose ideology after the war focused on political oblivion, bringing and maintaining the right-wing parties into power until 1963, attracting all the far-right wing support of the previous decades (ibid.). After the end of the civil war, the enemy continued being on the left and in favour of communism (Panourgiá, 2009; Tsiras, 2011). Papagos founded KYP, an equivalent to CIA, whose mission was to be involved with international espionage acts, and in the end, together with the CIA, strongly influenced Greek politics (Panourgiá, 2009: 122). The outcome of such procedures was the establishment of the so called Parakratos (para-state) (ibid.), which was a shadow far-right state, operating next to the formal one (Tsiras, 2011: 83).

In 1967, colonel members of the Chi (X) organisation and the Tagmata Asfaleias established the dictatorship (Panourgiá, 2009). The years of dictatorship were characterised by political and social violence, with the conflict between the left and the right, evolving in the same pattern as in the previous decades. In 1974, Karamanlis, who spend years in Paris, came back from exile deeply influenced by De Gaulle, lead a government of national unity and tried to divide the far-right and the centre-right ideology and policies, with his party attempting to represent the second – the centre-right (Tsiras, 2011). However, while Karamanlis' party concentrated on the centre-right of the political spectrum, in the following decades his party was strongly associated with the far-right.

Neo-fascist groups began terrorist campaigns with a series of bomb explosions and other attacks designed to create a climate of tension and instability. Most of the neo-fascists and far-right groups of that era were associated with political crimes, including the Panagoulis case, bombings or even attacks on migrants (Theofilopoulos, 2008:116). Some of the most noteworthy groups of that era included the National Alignment (Εθνική Παράταξις- ΕΠ), the United Nationalist Movement (Ενιαίο Εθνικιστικό Κίνημα - EN.E.K.) as well as the National Student Novelty (Εθνική Φοιτητική Πρωτοπορία) and National Political Union (Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωσις (ΕΠΕΝ) (ibid.).

During the 1980s, many neo-fascist organisations associated with sports and more especially football, with one of the first examples being the Panathinaikon Nazi-Organization (Ναζιστική Οργάνωση Παναθηναϊκών Οπαδών - ΝΟΠΟ) and the Ypovrixios (Υποβρύχιος) associated with the Olympiakos football Club (ibid.). In the following decades and especially in the crisis context, Greek football was to be, be in several cases, related to the far-right. Golden Dawn was founded in the 1980s but only became active after 1993 with the demonstrations about the so-called Macedonia Issue, while during the same decade, the far-right LAOS, filled the political gap which rose when New Democracy re-identified as a centre wing party (Ellinas, 2014). In the crisis context, Golden Dawn entered the Greek Parliament, while LAOS collapsed. However, many LAOS MPs joined New Democracy and obtained high governmental positions, while New Democracy re-evaluated the political space between the centre-right and the far-right.

After 2008 and the outbreak of the crisis resulted to a sociopolitical turmoil which characterized by political debates on the crisis per se, ideological and political conflict, as well as the struggle for change. However, the rise of the far-right indicated another area of conflict dominated by ethnoreligious characteristics (Karatzogianni, 2006). The rise of far-right and the nationalistic discourse, altogether with the austerity/anti-austerity debate blurred the boundaries of sociopolitical conflict, which here was enriched with elements of ethnic or religious content/conflict (discourse of inclusion/exclusion, racist discourse and national identity, etc.). In the Greek crisis context, the sociopolitical conflict has been transformed by and has adopted ethnoreligious characteristics, and vice versa. At the same time, the way that this is observed offline and online is a point, which will later be examined, focusing on empirical data. An in-depth examination though requires an understanding of the origins of these two types of conflict and their interrelation, both before and during the crisis. This has been provided in this chapter.

3.3. The Greek Mediascape: Traditional Media

The first decade of the 21st century was characterised by the adoption of the technological revolution, which supported the development of media in Greece. While

the development of the press has already a long tradition, the development of the Greek media sector, concentrating on broadcasting, begins in the late 1930s. A milestone in the development of the sector was the broadcasting deregulation and privatisation which took place in 1989, while the period after deregulation indicated the vulnerabilities of the sector, as the political sphere became hostage to media ownership by elites and corporate interests.

3.3.1. The Early Days of Radio and Television

One of the first and most significant characteristics of the Greek media sector is its association with politics, which has been noted since the early days of the Greek media sector when both television and radio were used as the 'arms of the state' (Papathanassopoulos, 1997: 352). During the early 1920s, the Greek government was not delighted with the idea of the public development of the radio; however, until 1926 the Ministry of Navy and the Union of the Greek Amateur Wireless Operators were in charge of regulating the broadcasting of the new medium by legislating a license for owners of each radio receiver (Zaharopoulos, 2002). In 1923, the first experimental makeshift radio was broadcast in Greece (ibid.). It is indicative, that in contrast to the UK, where in the same year, the British audience already included more than two million auditors, in Greece there were only 200 auditors who could afford to pay the fee listening only to foreign stations (Kounenaki, 1995: 3).

S. Eleftheriou,[12] Ch. Tsigiridis[13] and Professor K. Petropoulos[14] were some of the leading figures of the first ventures into the foundation of regular radio stations (Kathimerini, 1995: 8-9). While even before 1928, there were some noteworthy attempts at radio

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[12] Stefanos Eleftheriou studied Electrical Engineering in Switzerland and returned to Greece in 1920. Such qualifications though were considered rare in the Athens of the '20s. Eleftheriou is characterised as being the most important person to contribute to the development of radio in Greece. He worked at the Ministry of Navy and later worked with Ch. Tsigiridis (Kathimerini 31/12/1995, p.8-9).

[13] Christos Tsigiridis went to Germany to study Electrical Engineering but he didn't work in the field until returning to Greece, in 1925(ibid.). According to Kathimerini (Kounenaki, 1995) it is not clear whether Tsigiridis had already broadcasted from amateur radio before the establishment of the radio station in 1928.

[14] K. Petropoulos, Professor in Physics, was a leading figure in the establishment of a radio station in Greece. He wrote many journals and articles trying to inform society regarding the concept of radio and he had also done important research in the field (ibid.).

broadcasting,[15] the first regular radio station was founded in 1928, in Thessaloniki by Ch. Tsigiridis, with the first broadcast program having only two auditors (Mpintelas, 2009). This station was one of the first in the Balkans and broadcast for more than twenty years (Kounenaki, 1995: 3).

During the period 1928–1936, interest in the new medium was intense. Until 1930, there were two radio magazines publicising the programs of European radio stations[16], while newspapers started to have columns focusing on radio as well (ibid. 9). In Greece, a noteworthy attempt was the Radio of Piraeus, which among others, broadcasted election results during the inter-war period (Kounenaki, 1995). At the same time, the first 'pirate' radio stations had started operating too (ibid. 11).

In 1936, Metaxas' dictatorship took advantage of technology and established a state broadcasting system (Zaharopoulos, 2002). Greece was one of the last European countries to have a broadcasting system; it was not established until 1938. The first program broadcasted by the radio station of Athens was represented as a national celebration, in 1938, by George II of Greece (Mpintelas, 2009). Metaxas perceived radio not only as a matter of national pride but also as an important tool by which Greek society could be 'educated', through national propaganda programs[17] (Zaharopoulos, 2002). The early days of the Greek media sector and the development of Radio in Greece were marked by the intensive interest of technological equipment supplier companies. Both British and German companies pushed for the project (Kounenaki, 1995: 10-11). I.

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[15] The School (college) of Megara with the support of Prof. Petropoulos, Prof. Chondros, Eleftheriou and others, created the Union of the Greek Amateur Wireless Operators. There were two or three different ventures related to the radio by this School. Actually, in an amateur lab called 'Megaron', under Prof. Petropoulos, they managed to construct a radio and they broadcast, but most importantly they managed to listen to other European radio stations (ibid.). Prof. Petropoulos had already presented material related to the construction/operation of radio at the University of Athens. Another notworthy attempt at a radio venture was the case of Volos, a small city where the high school teacher of physics G. Kontogeorgiou, broadcast creating an amateur radio station in his house. After the interference of a police operation he was only allowed to construct/repair and sell radios (31/12/1995: 9).

[16] In those days, the most popular European radio stations were the Radio of Budapest and the Radio of Bari, which broadcast daily programs in Greek but conceived having propagandistic aspirations (Kounenaki, 1995: 9).

[17] The regular program of the first Greek national station consisted of news and music from the station's national orchestra and choirs (Zaharopoulos, 2002).

Voulpiotis[18] who was involved in the trade of equipment for many other projects of the state (e.g. telecommunications, etc.), arranged to cooperate with Siemens' subsidiary Telefunken (Papadimitriou, 2013).

On the 27th of March 1941, the radio station of Athens announced the German invasion of Greece, with the well-known phrase, 'this radio will no longer be Greek' (Mpintelas, 2009). During the war, the only radio station allowed to broadcast was the radio station of Athens, under strong censorship rules (Zaharopoulos, 2002), although many auditors continued to stay tuned to European stations and especially the radio station of London (Mpintelas, 2009). After the war, the Greek state founded the Hellenic Radio Foundation (EIR) according to a new legal framework (Zaharopoulos, 2002). During the civil war, there were many stations founded by the armed forces, while the US Pentagon assisted in the establishment of the Central Radio Station for the Greek Armed Forces in 1949 (ibid.). Later the US pentagon supported the government with the foundation of two more radio stations whose aim was to inform society about the 'Communist peril' (ibid.). These stations also transmitted the 'Voice of America', while broadcasting a Greek government program as well (ibid.).

In 1952, EIR established a new service called 'Second Program', and two years later, in 1954, established the 'Third Program'[19] (ibid.). EIR was broadcast under strong censorship, although, among the staff of the stations were important figures of the arts, such as the Nobel Prize winner Elytis. The political stability of that period contributed to the further development of radio industry in Greece and, as Zaharopoulos explains, in 1961, there were already five private radio stations, twelve EIR stations and twelve stations of the Armed Forces (ibid.). During the Colonels' dictatorship, which started in 1967, the EIR building was seized by the military and was forced to broadcast the program of the Armed Forces Channels (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 118). In 1968, the military services created the Armed Forces Information Service (YENED), which

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[18] Decades later Voulpiotis was accused of links with the Nazis and his role during the war was examined, while he was also accused of involvement in the first case of state corruption and Siemens (Papadimitriou, 2013). Almost a century later, another scandal of corruption between the Greek state and Siemens would end in court too (ibid.).
[19] The First Program of EIR focused on broadcasting news, educational programs or programs related to fine arts and it didn't broadcast any advertisements (Zaharopoulos, 2002). The Second Program was more commercial, broadcasting popular music, while the Third Program broadcast classical music and programs related to the arts (ibid.).

controlled the Armed Forces Channels, and in 1970, EIR transformed into EIRT (Hellenic Radio-Television Foundation) (2009: 119). To fully control and censor EIRT, the Junta replaced the five-member board of EIR with army generals (ibid.). In 1969, the Colonels' dictatorship founded the first national television channel[20] and the state-run EIR started broadcasting regular television programs (ibid.).

3.3.2. Media after the Fall of the Dictatorship

The fall of the dictatorship in 1974 was followed by changes to the Constitution (1975), which defined the role and nature of public television and radio, transforming EIRT to ERT (Hellenic Radio Television) (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 119). Under the new regulations, television and radio should be 'under the immediate control of the state' and should be 'assured in consideration to the social mission and the cultural development of the country' through the objective transmission of information, news, literature and art' (ibid.). Furthermore, the legal framework those days made clear that any commercial broadcasting in Greece would be perceived as being illegal (ibid.). In 1978, the government decided to merge the YENED with ERT and in 1982, YENED was transformed to ET-2, while ERT was transformed to ET-1 (ibid. 119).

The socialist government of PASOK and its concept of modernisation and 'change' were not translated into significant changes in the media sector. In 1987, ERT was recognised as a public company based on the example of the BBC, having two television channels and six radio stations. In 1989, the third channel or ERT, the ET-3, started to broadcast based in northern Greece (Papathanassopoulos, 1990: 393). In the same year, the changes in the legal framework relating to media allowed the creation of private radio stations, creating the ground and the proper conditions for the deregulation and privatisation of television too (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 120). Before the elections of 1989, the government set up an inter-parliamentary commission responsible for analysing the feasibility of the private television stations (Papathanassopoulos, 1990: 394).

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[20] The first television program was an experimental program which intended to advertise the products of the Thessaloniki's International Fair (ibid.).

After the elections of 1989, the concept of the 'free market' dominated the political landscape completing the full deregulation and privatisation of the media sector. This though was a late response to the European development of the media industry (Petrakis, 1999). The coalition government of New Democracy and Coalition of the left changed the legal framework and allowed the development of commercial TV stations, while at the same time founding the National Broadcasting Council (NBC), an institution that will help the state to control and regulate the commercial media sector (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997).

The privatisation of the media sector was a turning point for Greek society and the Greek political environment. However, the deregulation of media was conducted based on an insufficient legal framework and even nowadays the legislation relating to the media is not clearly enacted. Petrakis (1999) suggests that the development of the Greek media sector has many similarities with the media in Italy, as these developed a decade earlier during the 1970s and 1980s, while he also suggests some similarities with the Turkish media sector too, highlighting that the market principles, which were not taken into consideration, have resulted in a chaotic media market in Greece.

In the following decade, the media market which consisted of two television channels and four radio channels turned to an overcrowded market of 160 private channels and 1,200 radio stations, while the press developed in a similar way (Papathanassopoulos, 1999). Greece has quite a limited media market and therefore a reasonable debate was concentrated on the motivations of the investors and entrepreneurs entering the media market after deregulation. Among others, the insufficient legal framework based on which the private media developed, didn't regulate focused on the issue of licences and ownership. The background of the public media sector, as well as the inaccurate regulation upon which the private media developed, indicated notable limitations and dilutions about the potentiality of media features. Public television was marked by political patronage (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 124), while the deregulation by the state's monopoly of media was shaped by political circumstances and private groups' pressure, creating an 'ill-planned' deregulation[21] (Papathanassopoulos, 1990: 396). At the same

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[21] However, the audience positively accepted the changes in the media sector and this is indicated by the fact that one of the first private channels, Mega Channel, has attracted 36% of the audience in contrast to

time, the radio, the newspapers and the press developed under the same concept as television[22] (Sims, 2003: 213). Up to the present day, the issue of ownership and its relationship to the sociopolitical structures of Greece has been a thorny politico-economic issue. After the end of the state's monopoly on media, the sector was monopolised by businessmen or well-financed investors (Kelly, Mazzoleni and McQuail, 2004: 92), who in most of the cases, were related to the most integral industries of the Greek economy (e.g. shipping, etc.). Whether this helped, or not with the democratisation of media, or pluralism, should be a question not only with regard to the development of media in Greece but, additionally, in relation to the contemporary media sector as well.

After the deregulation of media and the development of an ill-planned sector, the Greek government had several attempts at regulating the sector; in 2001, the Greek government decided to close 70 radio stations in Athens[23]; in 2013, it decided on the closure of ERT, while in 2016, it organised a licence auction too. In most cases, these attempts were also accompanied by or contributed to various political conflicts and goals, while in most cases these bumbling attempts failed, pointing out the vulnerable relationship between the media and the state, as well as questions of corruption. The development of the internet in juxtaposition to the outbreak of the Greek crisis dramatically affected the media sector. The ERT case is an indicative example of the impact of austerity on the media sector, as well as an interesting case which illustrates the multiple usage and

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ET-1 with 26% and ET-2 with 11% in the first week of its broadcasting (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 124). The first wave of private TV stations (e.g. Mega Channel, Ant1, Skai) earned 77%–79% of the market share, while at the same time all the three TV stations (ET-1, ET-2, and ET-3) of the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation, which belong to the public sector, could not claim more than 7%–9% (Petrakis, 1999). In 1996, private television claimed 95% of the audience and 95% of the advertising revenue (Doulkeri and Terzakis, 1997: 124) indicating the necessity for structural changes in public television.

[22] Sims, analysing the development of radio, explains that the media market could accommodate only a certain number of radio stations, and similarly, newspapers, TV stations or magazines and the creation of such an overcrowded market was not translated into pluralism, nor did it allow for the development of pluralism either (Sims, 2003: 213).

[23] In 2001, approximately 100 radio stations were broadcasting in Athens, many of which were operating without licenses. Due to the opening of the new airport in Athens, the Greek government decided to shut down 70 radio stations, with special police teams and SWAT teams supporting the procedure (Sims, 2003: 202). Researches suggest that this occasion could have been a starting point for the re-organisation of the chaotic media market, but, in contrast, the outcome of this procedure was to emerge from a new game, with a new balance in the relationship between politicians and media investors (ibid. 203). Additionally, while the issue of pluralism has been constantly debated in Greek media history, the closure of more than half the radio stations in Athens, was a shock both for pluralism and freedom of expression; 'pluralism is not something that comes from God; it is something that one has to earn and work at to create and preserve' (Kalafti interview; Sims, 2003: 203).

impact of the internet too. Similarly, to other countries, the development of the internet in Greece had a typical impact on the traditional mass media, shrinking the already existing market and creating a new one. This procedure was also influenced by the unique characteristics of the Greek mediascape as this was shaped by the relationship between investors, politicians and the market characteristics. In 2013, the financial and political crisis had already influenced every business sector and the market, while the internet had started demonstrating multiple usages that this medium could have, within the Greek crisis context (e.g. independent media initiatives, etc.).

At the same time, while the crisis was at its peak, the ND government was working on the development of a 'success story' narration (Enikos.gr, 2013). In this context, the closure of the public broadcast corporation was announced as a brave political decision against corruption, or as Kedikoglou, the spokesman and deputy-minister responsible for the media, put it, against a 'typical example of unique lack of transparency' and 'haven of waste' (Iosifidis, 2013). The sudden and violent closure of the public broadcasting corporation was understood focusing on the symbolism of the political decision to shut down the ERT as well as on the impact of austerity on the country (Simcox, 2013). Civil society and political groups responded to ERT's closure spontaneously and filled the gap immediately after the announcement of the closure both online and offline. Solidarity networks at national and international level, supported the organisation of events at the ERT courtyard, while independent media initiatives as well as the mainstream institutions, such as EBU, continued broadcasting online months after the closure (Clarke, Huliaras and Sotiropoulos, 2016). ND founded NERIT, replacing ERT (Iosifidis and Boucas, 2015). NERIT broadcasted parallel to the ex-ERT employees, who occupied the headquarters and continued to broadcast online with the support of EBU and different alternative Greek online media initiatives (e.g. websites, newsportals, etc) until they were evicted by riot police (Nikolaidis, 2017). Later, even from a different location ERT kept broadcasting, adapting social movements practices (Iosifidis and Boucas, 2015). During that period. SYRIZA, who then was the political opposition did not recognise NERIT and strongly supported the ERT ex-employees' initiative (ibid.). In 2015, with months after coming to power, April 2015, SYRIZA re-opened ERT, merging it with NERIT (ibid.) The closure of ERT was seeing as having a significant impact on media pluralism, and as a result in 2015 Greece was among the two lowest EU countries ranked in the

World Press Freedom, while during the so-called crisis Greece lost 56 places in total, (Nikolaidis, 2017).

3.3.3. Greek Media Ownership

The Greek media sector was enlarged based on private interest, which was strongly associated with politics and the state, indicating both the vulnerabilities of the mainstream media as well as corruption. Investors and businessman, including shipping tycoons, were strategically involved in the media sector as a method of gaining political and economic power (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997). Researchers concentrated on the mapping of the Greek media ownership creating a matrix of actors involved in all the major business sectors (ibid.; Sims, 2003; Smyrnaios, 2010; 2013). The fast-changing media market does not allow the accurate mapping of organisations and actors; however, even with modest changes, the spine remains the same. Before the rapid outburst of the debt crisis, which supported the emergence of the media sector crisis, changes in the media market included new ventures (e.g. new magazines, etc.), or the rearrangement of the distribution of the media market (e.g. percentages of TV station ownership, etc.) to the same investors.

During the mid-1990s and before the crisis, media ownership dominated by five conglomerates and media investors: Vardinoyannis Group, Lambrakis Press Organization, Tegopoulos Group, Bobolas Group, Alafouzos Group, Kyriakou Group (see appendix, Table 56 xxx). Other important shareholders of that period were Kalogritsas (Proti newspaper), Pournara (Tilerama Magazine) and other ship-owners (ibid.). Most of the investors in the commercial media sectors were associated with the most vital sectors of the Greek economy, including shipping and construction. The issue of cross-ownership has come under question and criticism, since the early stages of the growth of the Greek Media sector and there have been several attempts at the foundation of a regulatory framework which will protect media from turning into a tool of political pressure (Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997).

Before the outbreak of the crisis, the cross-ownership of the media was shaped as follows:

Figure 3: Media Groups and Ownership
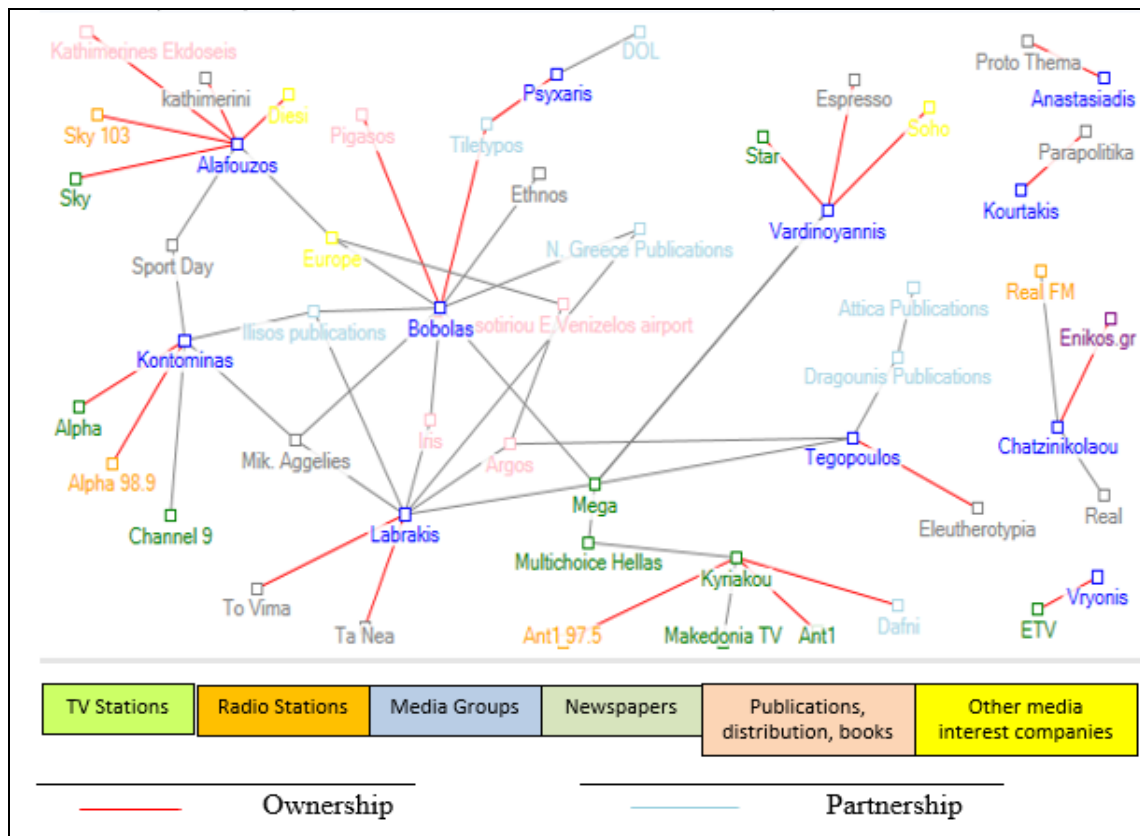
(Adaptation from Smyrnaios, 2010; see Appendix, Figure 36)

The mapping of the media ownership is an ongoing process, following the rapid changes in the sector. After the first attempt of 2010, Smyrnaios updated the media ownership mapping (2013), including basic changes as they occurred during the crisis (See Appendix, Figure 36). Smyrnaios (2013), pointing out the differences between 2010 and 2013, highlights that there have not been many significant changes in the media sector and ownership during the period 2008–2013. Since the early days of media privatisation, in 1989, until now, the media sector is monopolised by a specific group of investors and media groups, who are associated with some of the most important industrial sectors of the Greek economy, while, in most cases their media-related activities are maintained as a medium of political pressure. At the same time, Smyrnaios (ibid.) highlights that the new media investors have adjusted to the existing structures and associations, maintaining the corrupted media – state environment. A comparison between the 2008 to 2013 mapping, indicates that in the first phase of the crisis, media investors from the shipping industry were not dramatically affected by the crisis and in many cases

advanced their media investments[24] (ibid.). Another interesting point is that media investments tend also to be family businesses, with the first generation originally investing in traditional media and the second generation, the successors, focusing on digital and online media.

In 2016, the SYRIZA - AN.EL. coalition government tried to regulate the broadcasting sector concentrating on the legal/regulatory framework under which the TV licences should be distributed. After a long discussion regards to the number of the licences would viable to be distributed, the government launched a broadcast licence auction for four licences (Sweney, 2016). The proposed media law proposed transparency of the media sector and ownership, which dominated by shipowners and a construction mogul, as well as a profit of over £210m (ibid.). Among the various stages through which this auction completed was the review of media conglomerates, and its association with public and private interests, including sports, as well as a detailed review of the loans received by banks, before and during the crisis. However, this considered to be a very controversial procedure, which later deemed unconstitutional, with the highest court blocking the proposed media law (Financial Times, 2016). In January 2018, SYRIZA continued the attempt of regulating the broadcasting sector and the National Council for Radio and Television (NCRT) accepted applications from six media groups (Reuters, 2018).

The crisis context strongly affected the media sector, by bringing to the spotlight vulnerabilities and limitations which existed for decades but now resulted to a crisis of the media sector. The transition of the mainstream/traditional mediascape to the digital media environment indicated new opportunities for communication and the opportunity for the re-identification of the relationship between media and society and the state. Thus, it is important to examine the way that new/online media appeared and were associated with the sociopolitical structures in Greece, especially as these shapes after 2008 and the development of digital communications.

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[24] During the first phase of the crisis, until 2013, four of the main media investors, Kouris, Giannikos, Lavrentiadis, and Kiriakidis' legal problems related to their media activity, with some of them spending months in jail or custody (Smyrnaios, 2013).

3.4. The Greek Digital Media Development

3.4.1. The Development of New and Online Media

The vulnerabilities and limitations of the Greek mediascape, including power relations between media, big business and politics, as presented above (3.3), weakened trust to traditional media. During the crisis, the Greek media sector shrank, the reliability of the traditional media was further disputed, while at the same time, the growth of digital media communication completely re-organised the media environment. The evolution of Greek digital communication followed the EU example, which was diversified by the special characteristics and the limitations raised by the Greek context. Since the early days of the growth of digital media communications in Greece, the association of the new medium to the political and social turmoil was significant, with some of the first examples appearing with the usage of political blogging and sms in 2007 (short message service) (Mylona, 2008), while, later, social media was used as new 'political weapons' (Mylona, 2014). Digital communications supported traditional forms of activism (Mowbray, 2010; Vatikiotis, 2011) and contributed to the emergence of contemporary manifestations of activism, such as cyber-activism (Karamichas, 2009; Tsaliki, 2010). The wave of protest and social movements, which emerged during the global recession, pointed out the significant contribution of digital media within the development of contemporary social movements. The case of Greece should be examined in the context of the global recession, as shaped after 2008 (Manolopoulos, 2011) and the usage of digital media in the social and political turmoil, should also be understood within the context of the contemporary wave of movements and protest (e.g. M15, Occupy Movement).

According to the Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, in 2017 Greece was the country with the highest rates of trust in social media for news, and also, the country with the lowest confidence in traditional media (Newman et al., 2017). Therefore, while traditional media limitations and vulnerabilities already discussed (3.3.), at this stage it is necessary to give an insight on how digital media communications developed in Greece. In the following section, the digital media communication's evolution from 2005 until now is discussed (3.4.2.), and at the same time, some of the most significant examples which illustrated the impact of digital media on social and political structures are also provided (3.4.3.).

3.4.2.   The Evolution of Digital Communications 2002–2015

The National Statistical Service of Greece (EL.STAT.) and the Observatory for Digital Greece (ODG) extensively researched the growth of the internet in Greece and compared the Greek case to digital communications in Europe. According to EL.STAT., the growth of the internet and the usage of computers in Greece rapidly increased during the period 2002 to 2015 (EL.STAT., 2014: 3).

Table 4: Internet Access & Computer Usage in Greece 2002–2015
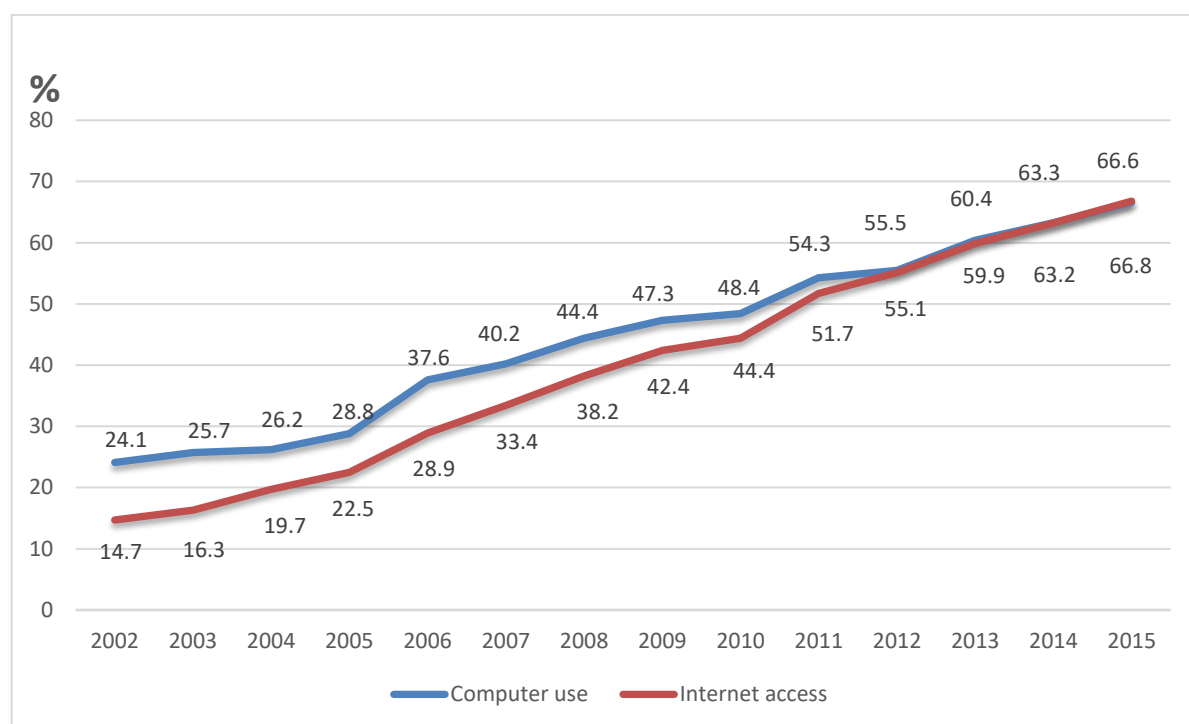
(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2014: 3)

The above diagram indicates that the population aged 16–74, who used a computer, rose from 24.1% in 2002 to 66.6% in 2015, while, at the same time, the internet access rose from 14.7% in 2002 to 66.8% in 2015. The rapid growth of the internet and computer access as observed after 2007–2008, is highly linked to the escalation of the digital media market in Greece, the growth of broadband services, as well as the changes in cost, which until 2007 was significantly high.

Table 5: Household/ Internet Access & Broadband Connections in Greece 2004–2012
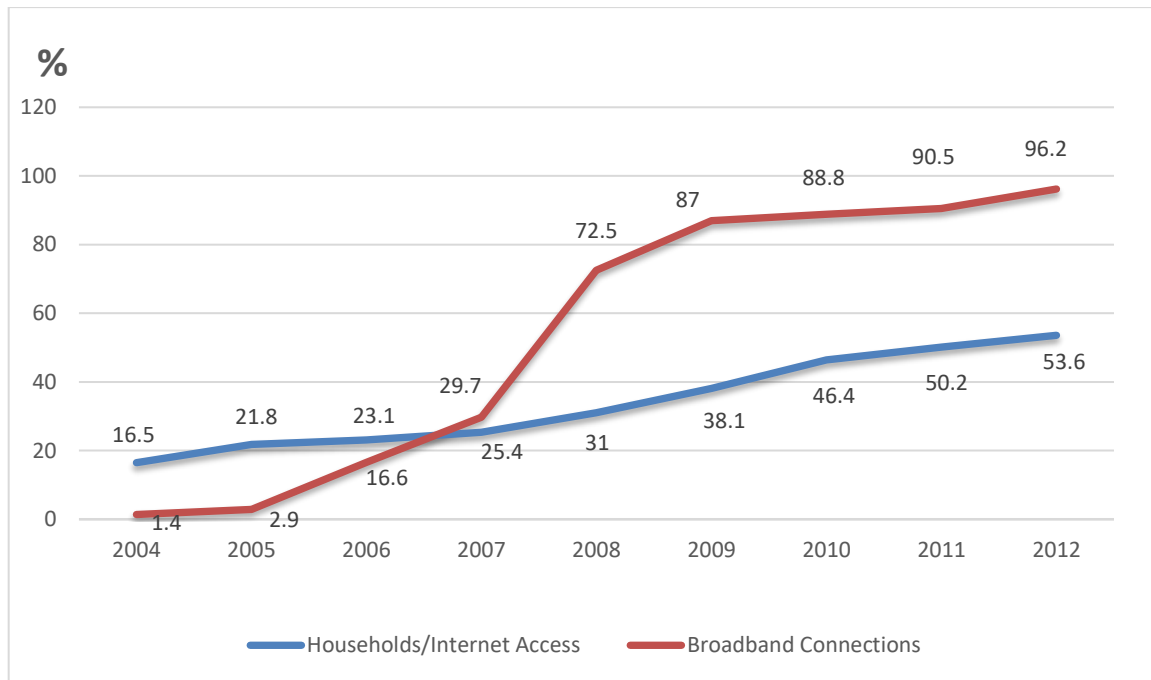
Parallel to the dispute of traditional media (3.2.), the rapid increase in broadband connections after 2008 contributed to the emergence of a new type of organisation of protests and mobilisations, as observed in the so-called Wildfire protests in 2007 and the December riots of 2008. While this is not a Greek phenomenon, digital media usage in the Greek case should be understood taking into consideration the cultural and sociopolitical characteristics as well as the market characteristics and limitations (e.g. legal framework, etc.) (3.2). According to Maniadakis and Kountrias (2006), there are two major limitations on the evolution of digital media; the first one focuses on the users and the second one on the broadband providers. Some of the main disadvantages on the growth of broadband were as a result of the limited population using the internet before 2008, the high cost of broadband infrastructures and internet connections, as well as the limited access to broadband services and infrastructures (ibid.). On the other hand, similar to the traditional media (3.2.), the disadvantages, which were raised by the provider's limitations, were related to the insufficient regulatory framework, to the oligopolistic media market and its margins, to the deficient support provided by the

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Hellenic Telecommunications Organization (OTE) and the geographical characteristics of Greece (ibid.). Many of these disadvantages and limitations were overcome, contributing to the rapid evolution of broadband after 2008.

During 2002–2013 there were significant changes both in traditional media (3.2), the field of digital communications and the relationship between Greek society and technology, although these changes were not parallel or equal to the changes and the expansion of the EU example. According to the Digital Agenda of the European Commission the relationship between Greece and the EU referring to internet connection per household is described in the following diagram:

Table 6: Percentage of Households with Internet Access at Home: EU – Greece
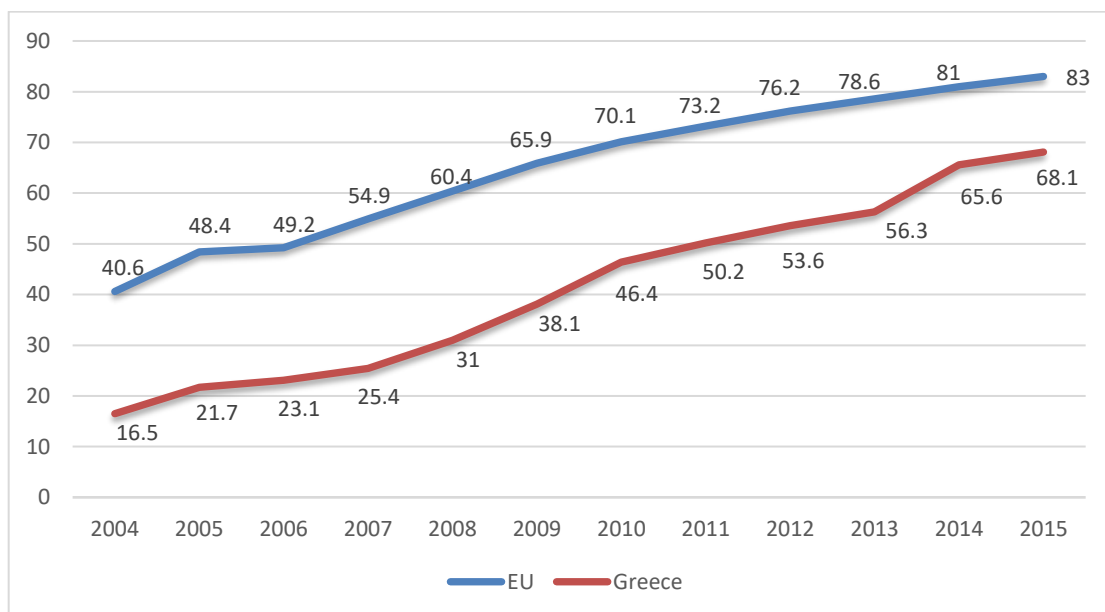
(Data by EU Commission, Digital Agenda for Europe, 2017; Eurostat, n.d.)

Despite the technological gap between the EU and Greece, the digital communications in Greece grew by replicating the concept and structure of the EU example. However, an insight into the evolution of digital media in Greece should focus on the users' profiles, characteristics and the impact on the internet usage, both concentrating on Greece and in contrast to the EU.

According to EL.STAT. (2010, 2013) the population aged 16–74, using the internet during the period 2008–2013, was comprised of 56.4% of female and 63.5% of male users. During the period 2005–2008 the population using the internet was comprised of 37% of female and 51% of male users. (Observatory for Digital Greece - ODG, 2010: 19). In the Greek case, similarly to the EU case, there are not significant sex differences in the usage of the internet. However, an interesting point here is the increase in female users between 2008 and2009, and the change in male users between 2009 and2013.

Table 7: Female and Male Internet Users: 2008, 2009, 2013 (Greece)
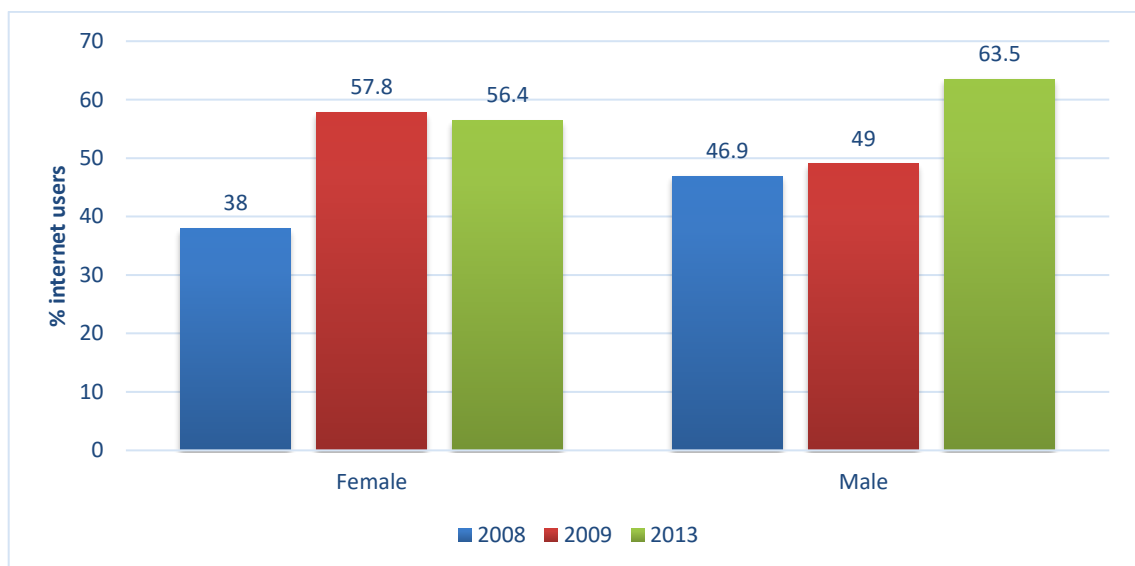
(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2010; 2015; Observatory for Digital Greece - ODG, 2010)

Age is another important factor regarding the usage of the internet and social engagement. It is indicative that in 2015, while 96.3% of the population aged 16–24 used the internet, the correlated statistic for the population aged 65–74 was only 12.5%. At the same time, alongside age, education is another important factor which contributes to the so-called 'e-exclusion' or the digital divide gap (EL.STAT., 2013; 2015: 5).

Table 8: Internet Usage/ Ages (Greece)
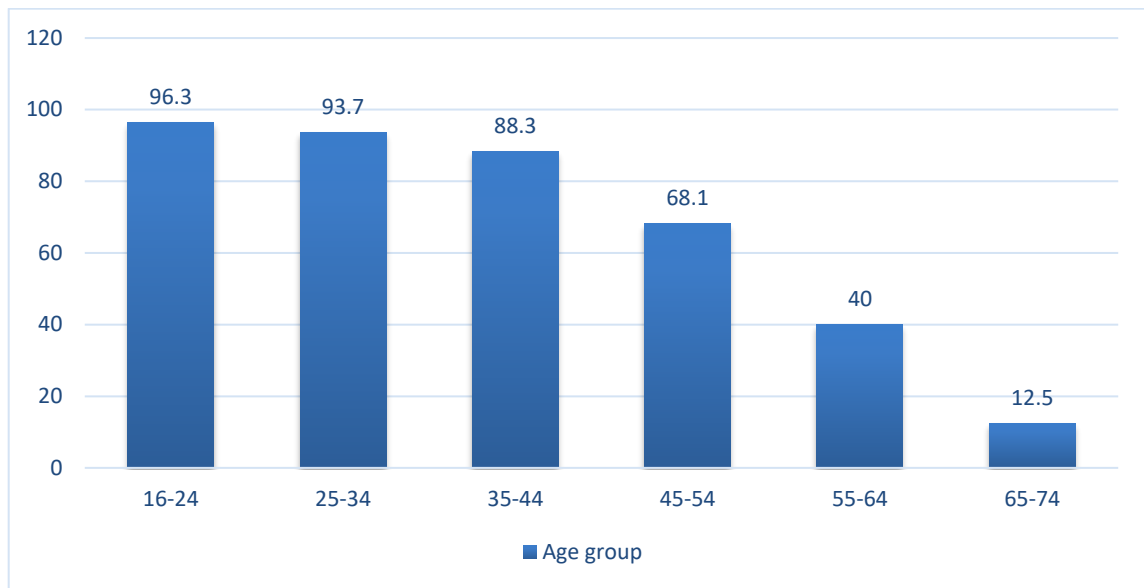
(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2015)

Table 9: Education & Internet Usage (Greece)
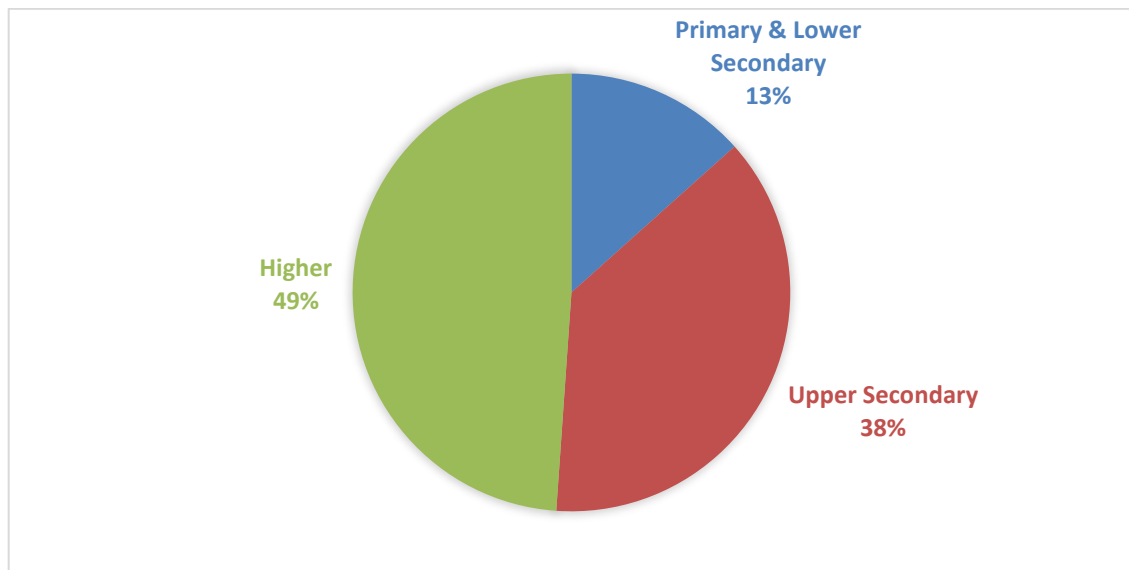
(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2014: 4)

Most of the users, regardless of gender, age or education, use the internet on a daily basis. Considering the characteristics or the inequalities among different profiles/groups of

users, it is impressive that when users choose to experiment and use the internet technology, they tend to adopt it into their daily routine.

Table 10: Frequency – Internet Usage/Age Groups (Greece)
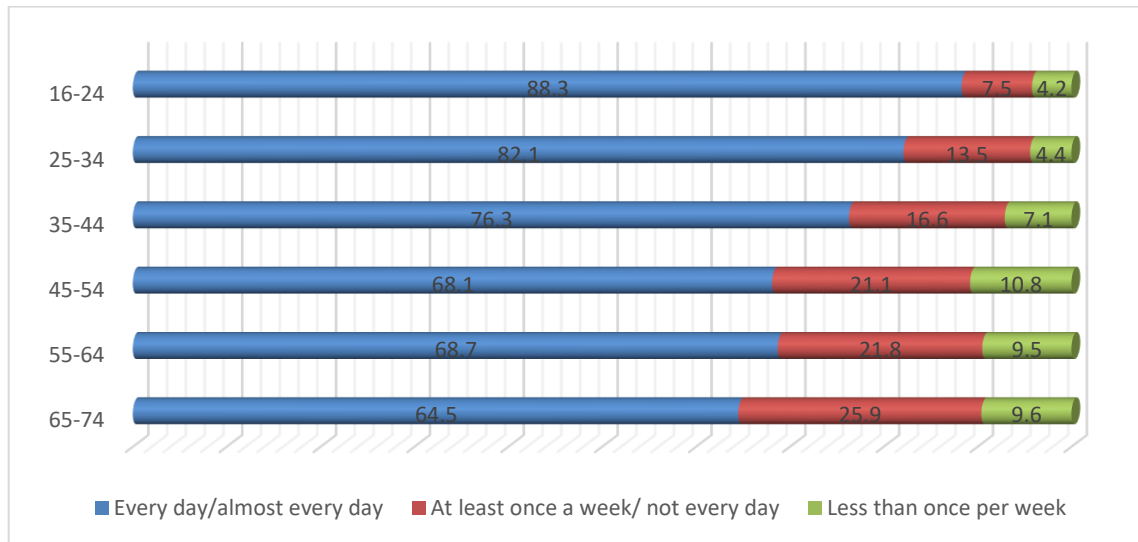
Age	Every day/almost every day	At least once a week/ not every day	Less than once per week
16-24	88.3	7.5	4.2
25-34	82.1	13.5	4.4
35-44	76.3	16.6	7.1
45-54	68.1	21.1	10.8
55-64	68.7	21.8	9.5
65-74	64.5	25.9	9.6

In 2013 more than 3 out of 4 users had low or average skills related to internet technology (EL.STAT., 2013: 8), while there was a balanced relationship between gender and internet skills. Additionally, it is noticed that there is a balanced relationship when comparing the EU and the Greek case and the impact on the users' profile characteristics (Observatory for Digital Greece - ODG, 2010). Other important factors which influence internet usage and the users' profiles include income rating and the working sector.

As regards the users' skills and the internet, almost all the users are able to search online for information (98%) while most of the users can send emails and attach files (74.1%), participate in chat rooms and social media (61.1%) and use services such as Skype (53.8%) (EL. STAT, 2013). Fewer users choose to use peer-to-peer services for movies or music (18.3%), to create websites (11.8%), upload photographs, movies or music (38.6%) and manage privacy settings on browsers (21.9%) (ibid. 7-8). Data from 2015 indicates that 85% of the users accessed the internet to read newspapers and magazines, while 80% of the users accessed the internet to search for information about products and

services (EL.STAT., 2015: 9). The next most important reason why users go online is to access social media platforms (65.7%) and to send emails (77.1%) (ibid.).

The technological advancements, such as the invention of smartphones, tablets and so on, provide further opportunities for internet access, highlighting the social aspects and the potentiality of internet features. Accordingly, users used the internet for communication reasons, using various methods and technological advantages[25] (ibid. 6). The internet access using mobile devices during the period 2010–2015, changed as follows (ibid. 5):

Table 11: Internet Access Using Mobile Devices 2010 – 2015
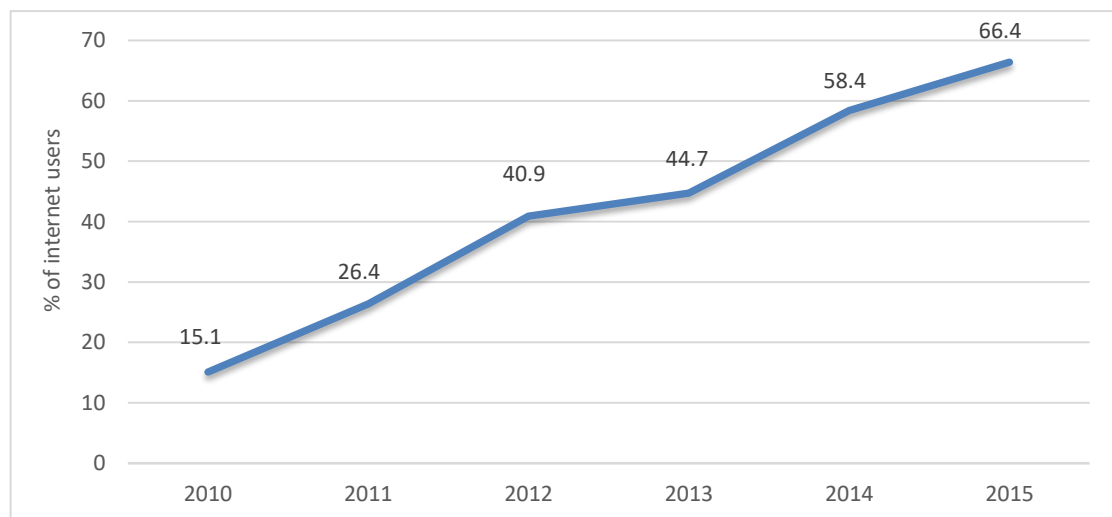
(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2015)

After the invention of the World Wide Web (WWW) in 1991, web 2.0, characterised by the evolution of social media platforms (Dijck, 2013: 5), emerged. In the late 1990s and

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[25]- Search information for products and services 80.4%
- Reading online news in websites, newspapers, magazines 85.4%
- Email 77.1%
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) 65.7%
- Search information related to health issues, diseases, diet, etc. 55.7%
- Online communication using webcam (Skype, etc.) 44%
- Usage of services related to traveling and hotels 31.2%
- Searching or applying for job 26.6%
- Downloading software (not including games) 22.2%
- Online banking 20.8%
- Sale products (e-bay, etc.) 5.1%

early 2000s the first social media platforms were founded. Among the firsts platforms was Blogger in 1999 and Wikipedia in 2001 (ibid. 7). Onwards, Myspace in 2003, Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005 and Twitter in 2006 shaped the social web and the ecosystem of connectivity as it is known today (ibid).

While there is limited research relating to the popularity of social media platforms in Greece, research by EL.STAT. (2015) and the E-business research Centre, Athens University of Economics and Research (ELTRUN, 2014; Fraidaki and Pramatari, 2013) indicate some interesting point regarding the popularity and characteristics of social media platforms. The popularity of social media platforms in 2012–2013 evolved as indicated by Table 14.

Table 12: Social Media Platforms Usage (2012–2013)
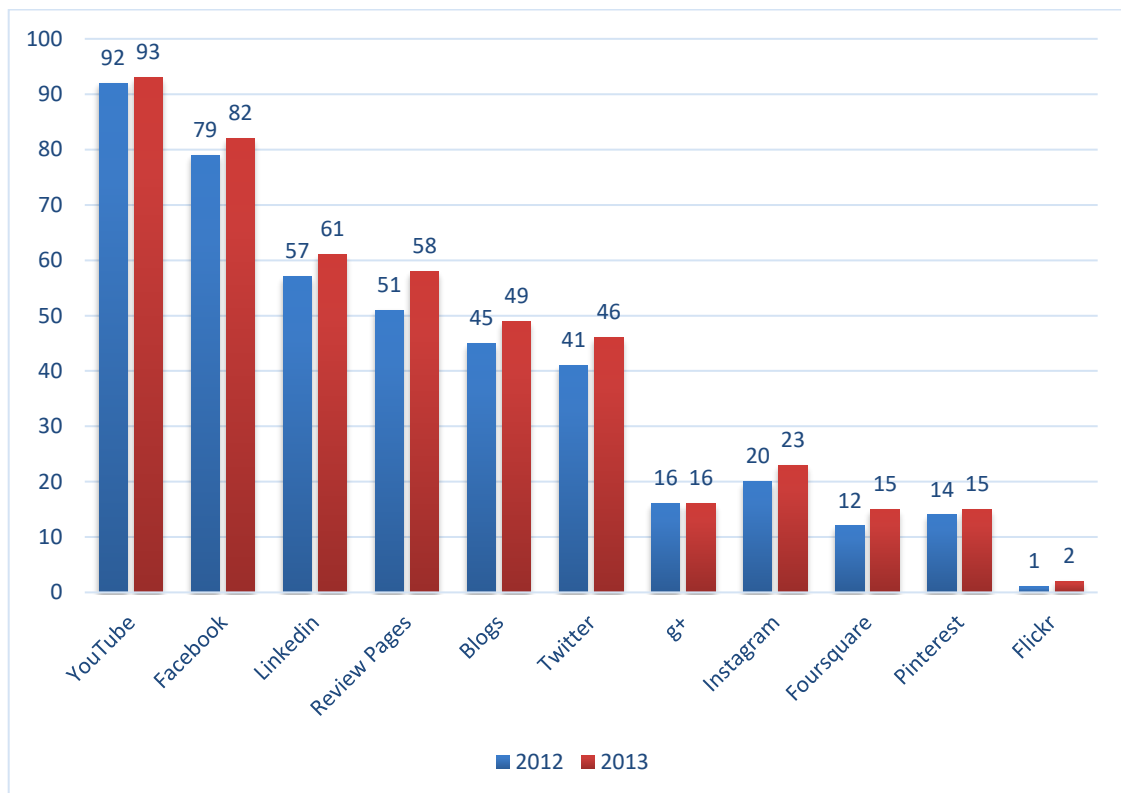
(ELTRUN, 2014)

In 2012, the online population using Facebook is estimated to have been 77.29% or 3,898,360 unique users (Fraidaki and Pramatari, 2013), while the Twitter unique users

are estimated to have been 210,000, later rising to 503,975 (ibid.). Social media platforms were used mainly by people of young ages, reflecting the issue of the digital divide and the adoption of technology by the younger population.

Table 13: Participation in Social Media Platforms, 2015 – % of the General Public
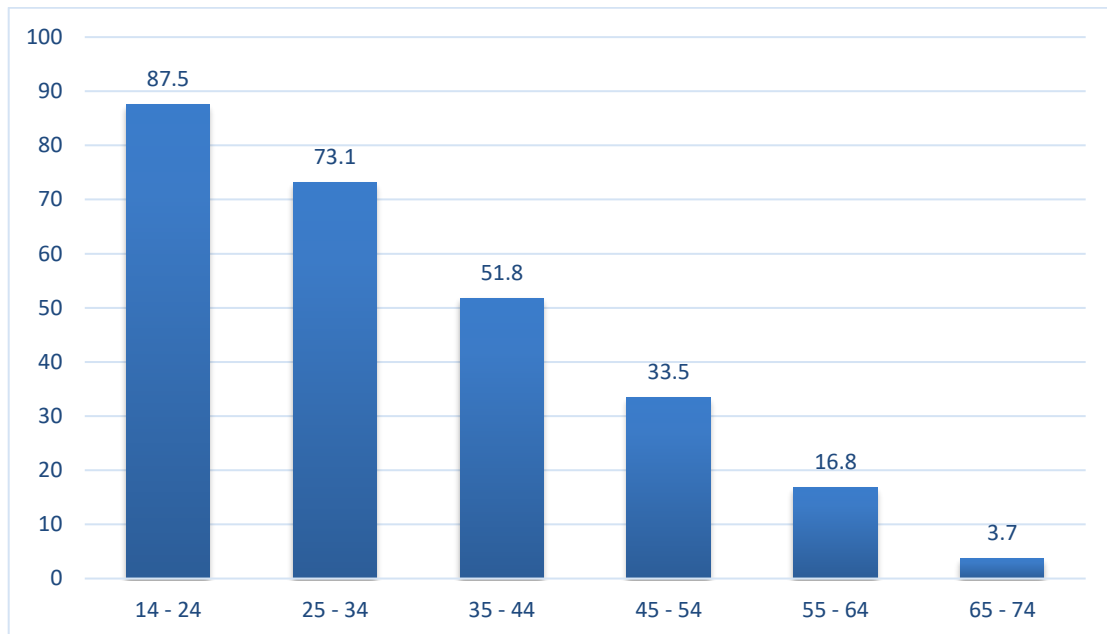
(EL.STAT. 2015:6)

Following the internet usage trends, social media usage was shaped according to the factors of age, gender, education, and so on. The interesting point though is that these factors seem to have had a stronger impact on social media platforms in comparison to internet usage.

Table 14: Education & Social Media 2012
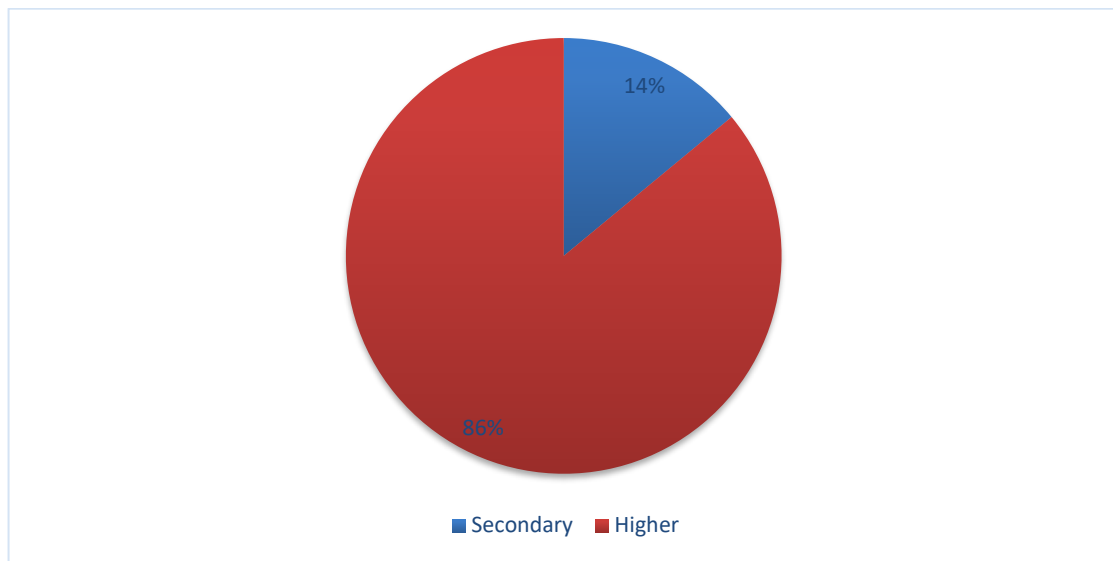
14%

86%

■ Secondary ■ Higher

(Data by EL.STAT. - National Statistical Service of Greece - Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2013)

In 2012, social media platforms were used mainly by users with a higher education. YouTube, Facebook and Twitter were the most popular social media platforms in Greece during June to December 2013, with users having used at least one of these platforms during the examined period (FocusBari, 2015).

Table 15: Usage of at least one Social Media Platform during June – December 2013
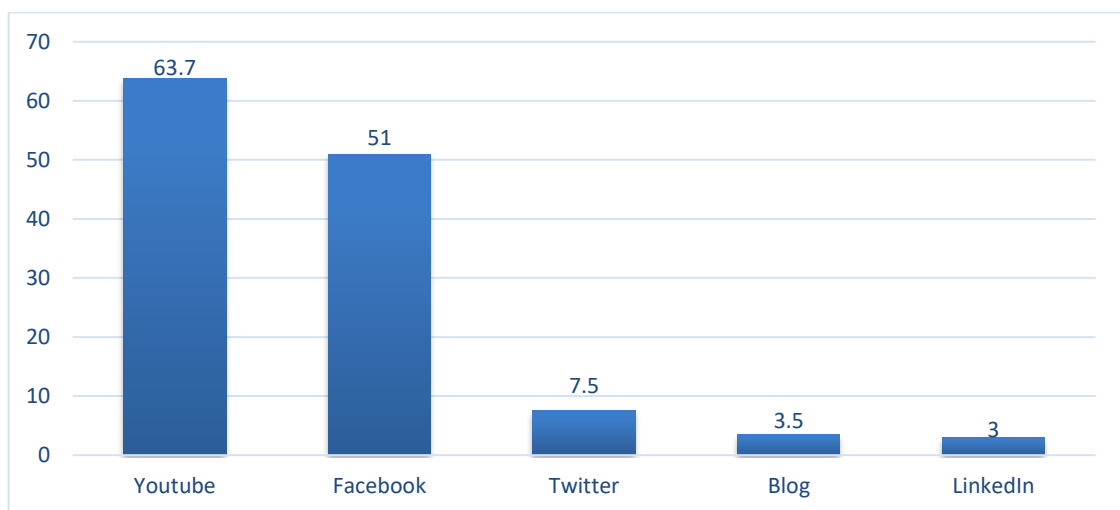
(FocusBari, 2015)

As regard the users' profiles, there is a balanced relationship between participation in social media platforms and gender, with men being slightly more active. Users with a higher education were double users with only primary education. The age is an important characteristic, while the technological gap is again an important point of consideration, with 96.4% of the social media platforms users being between 13 and 24 years old and only 34.1% of the participants being between 45 and 70 years old. Social media platforms are more popular in the urban areas of Greece in contrast to rural areas. In more detail, users' profiles can be described as follows:

Table 16: Users Profiles – Usage of at least one Social Media Platforms in the Last Six Months (6–12/2013)
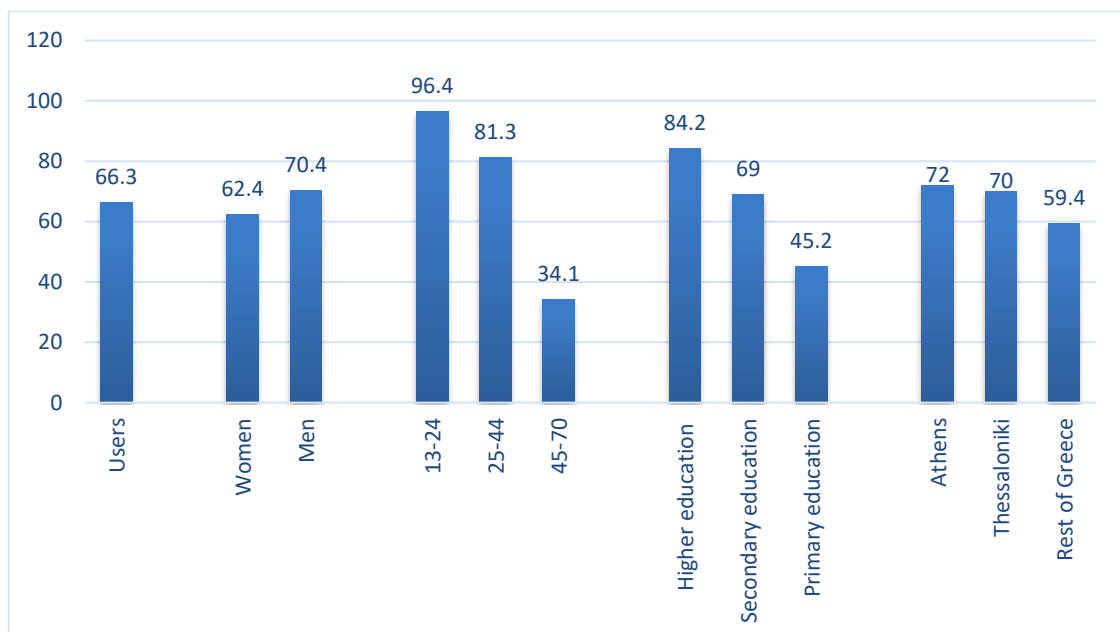
At the same time, each social media platform attracted users with different characteristics. Starting with YouTube, users tended to be both male (52.7%) and female (47.3%), in the age range 25–44 (48.5%), living in Athens (48.1%). These characteristics are justified recognising that YouTube was among the first social media platforms to

become popular in Greece, accessible via other social media platforms too. While the age group 13–24 became the most active group in the usage of social media platforms, the group 25–44 is very familiarised with YouTube, as this was one of the first social media platforms, which became popular in Greece, while this was the first generation of users that used social media. An interesting point of consideration is the geographical characteristics and differences between Athens and other urban centres.

Table 17: YouTube 2013 Greek Users' Profiles
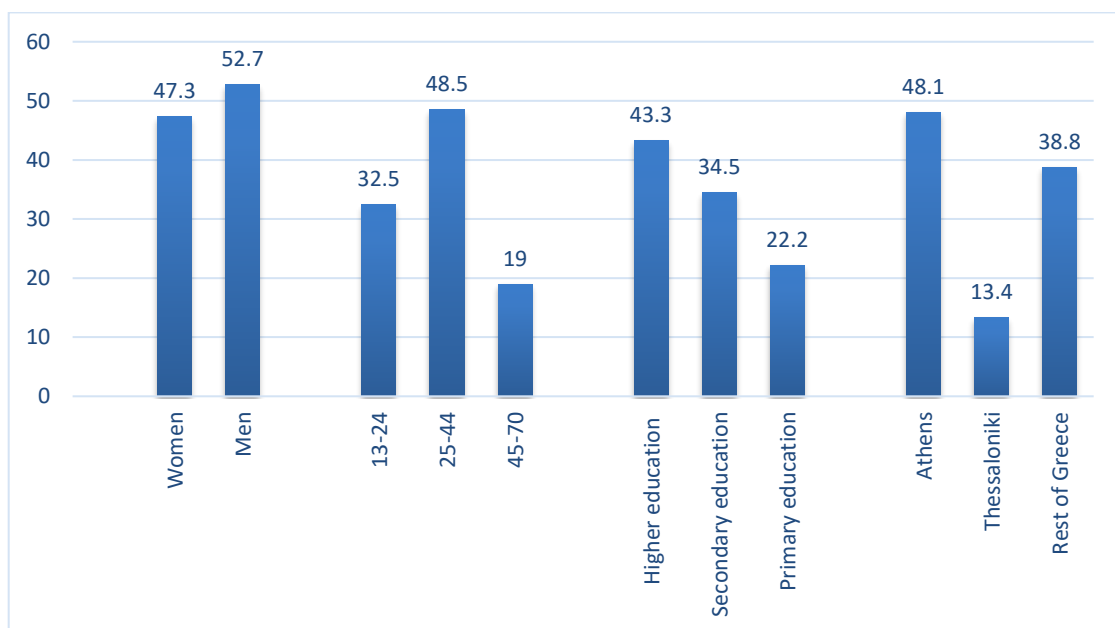
(FocusBari, 2015)

The average Facebook user was male (52.2%) or female (47.8%), in the age group 25–44 (48.6%), with secondary (33.8%) or higher (41.2%) education, living in Athens (48.3%). Once again, the low usage of the platform in other urban centres is interesting, following the YouTube example, as well as the global trends regarding Facebook usage.

Table 18: Facebook 2013, Greek Users Profiles

Bar chart showing percentages: Women 47.8, Men 52.2, 13-24 37.3, 25-44 48.6, 45-70 14.1, Higher education 41.2, Secondary education 33.8, Primary education 24.9, Athens 48.3, Thessaloniki 12.9, Rest of Greece 38.8

The average user of Twitter was male (69.6%), in the age range 13–24 (40.4%) or in the age range 25–44 (37.3%), with higher education (55.7%) and living in Athens (61.4%). An interesting point here is that this platform indicated a balanced usage by different age groups.

Table 19: Twitter 2013, Greek Users Profiles

Bar chart showing percentages: Women 30.4, Men 69.6, 13-24 40.4, 25-44 37.3, 45-70 22.3, Higher education 55.7, Secondary education 28.2, Primary education 16, Athens 61.4, Thessaloniki 13.8, Rest of Greece 24.8
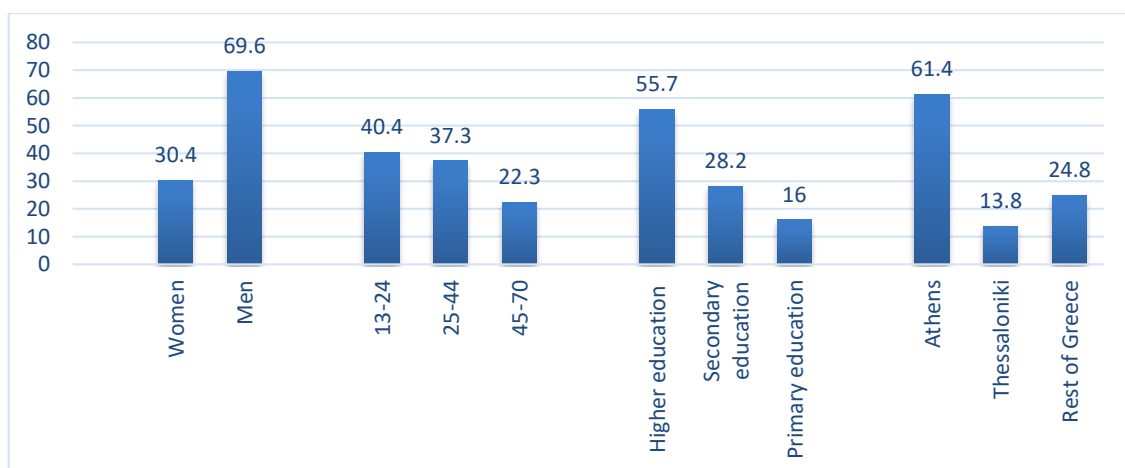
Blogs were among the first media platforms which became popular in Greece. The multiple usages of blogs for professional, personal or educational purposes justified the relationship between age groups and blog usage, while this relationship is also justified by the linkage between other social media platforms and the usage of blogs too.

Table 20: Blogs 2013, Greek Users' profiles
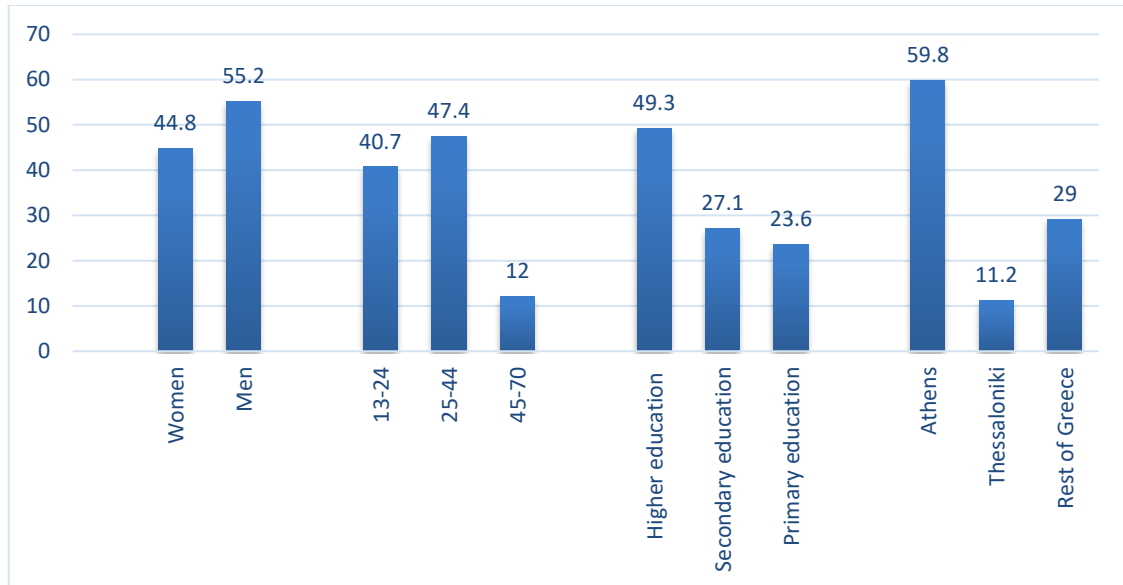
LinkedIn is a social media platform, which is used mainly for professional or business purposes. Therefore, it is not impressive that the users are mainly between 25 and 44 (67.1%), with higher education (87.4%), living in Athens (75.7%).

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Table 21: LinkedIn 2013, Greek Users Profiles
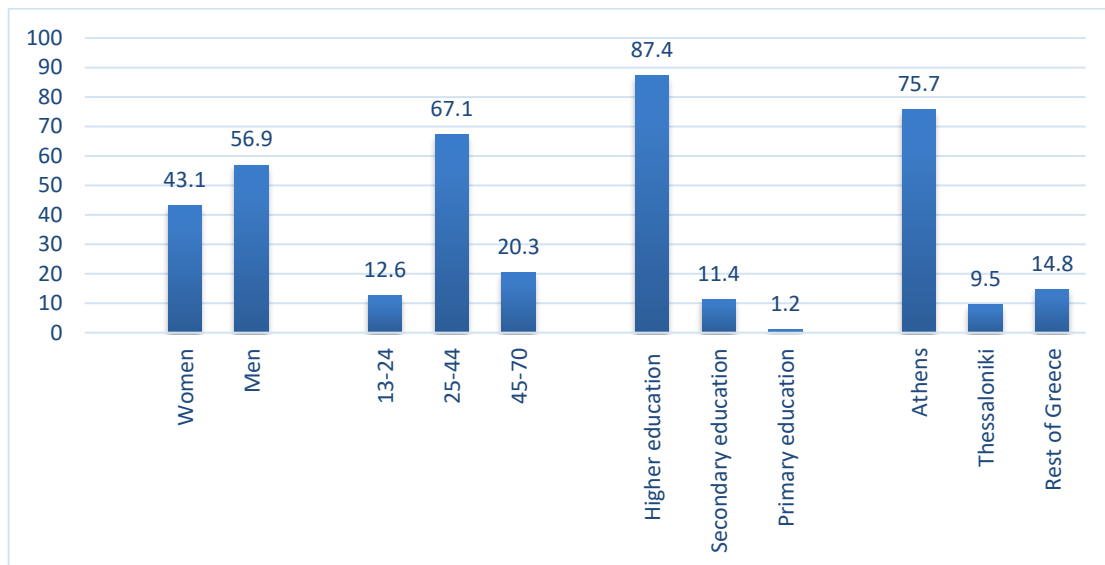
The digital communications in Greece evolved later than those in the EU; however, Greece adopted digital media communication in a very similar way, indicating similar characteristics in terms of the online participation and the users' profiles. These characteristics should be understood both in comparison to the EU as well as situated in the Greek social and political context and the broader Greek media environment. This would be an interesting discussion, although at this stage, after reviewing the basic characteristics of the evolution of digital media in Greece, an important point here is to understand the way that digital media is associated with the Greek political environment and the emergence of contemporary social movements.

3.4.3. Digital Communications, Digital Activism and Greek Political Environment: The 2007 Mobilisations

The growth of digital media provided a new tool for political communication, providing direct and interactive communication in the minimum cost (Mylona, 2008: 284). In Greece, parties of the left were among the first which used this new tool in Greece. SYNASPISMOS, later transformed into SYRIZA, created a website in 1997, while PASOK followed in 1999. ND was one of the first political parties which was supported

by professionals for both the creation and the updating of its website and online communication (Mylona, 2008). Until the 2000 elections, only 16 out of the 35 participating political parties operated websites, while most of the politicians participating in the elections were not familiar with internet technology (ibid.).

In 2004, political parties adopted the Short Messages Service (SMS) technology, supporting their political campaigns for the European Parliament Elections (ibid. 292). Mylona (2008) explains that while internet technology and the usage of websites provides an opportunity for interaction, SMS provides a one-direction communication and does not support the creation of dialogue and therefore, political parties were more sceptical about its usage. While the issues of participation and interaction were already under investigation, the digital divide at this point is very relevant taking into consideration who used online media during the early 2000s in Greece and, most importantly, who voted during that period. In contrast, the usage of online media by different age groups and for different political purposes indicated the potentiality of the medium on the emergence of contemporary social movements and collective action in the Greek context. The digital communications in Greece provided an important alternative for political engagement, outdistanced by the limitations having risen due to the characteristics of the political and mediascape in Greece.

The example of the 2007 mobilisations, following the wildfires in Parnitha and across Greece, indicated the potentiality of online media in the Greek context. As Tsaliki noted, this was the first time in Greece that parallel to the formal political culture, an informal one emerged and was expressed online (2010: 154). During that period, the media environment was characterised by a 'low standard of political dialogue' (ibid. 153) which resulted in limited programmes having political content and the rapid increase of the so-called 'celebrity culture' and shows (ibid.). The 2007 mobilisations, which emerged due to environmental issues (Karamichas, 2009), pointed out that online media were indeed able to provide a parallel space of political engagement which also had a strong impact on the formation of the public sphere, online and offline. In these circumstances[26], the

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[26] Focusing on citizens' participation in NGOs, Karamichas (2007: 524) emphasises the singularity of the Greek case, explaining that the quantitative indicators (e.g. membership of NGO or civic associations) do not effectively reflect the informal civic society, which is constituted by spontaneous and radical actions in times of crisis. At the same time, the political representation of environmentalism is not intensive and in most cases, it has a minor position on political agendas.

mobilisations of 2007 have a significant importance concentrating both on online media as well as on the re-determination of the concept of environmentalism in relation to society and politics. In Karamichas' words, during that period, 'a new societal approach to the environmental issue' (ibid. 525) emerged.

Already before the 2007 wildfire mobilisations, some of the first protests with an environmental interest had taken place earlier in the same year, when local authorities and citizens mobilised against business operations in the coastal zone of Athens (Helliniko and Moschato), demanding free access to the area (ibid. 526). Mainstream media concentrated on the issue, contributing to a public debate with environmental and sociopolitical characteristics, when a fire broke out on mount Parnitha, a national park in Athens, on 26th of June. The catastrophe of Parnitha was described as 'one of the worst environmental national disasters' (BBC News, 2007). Parnitha lost 80% of its fauna and flora (Tsaliki, 2010:155), which included 10,500 acres of forest land (Karamichas, 2007: 528). A few days later (2–3/6/2007) an SMS started to circulate among citizens of Athens and soon transferred to the web and the online community, through blogs, emails and social media (Tsaliki, 2010: 155): 'On Sunday 8 July, let's all gather outside the Parliament and demand the immediate reforestation of Parnitha. No more charred land. Do not stay "uninvolved".'

The way that this 'mobile protest' started is unclear. According to the press, an anonymous 25-year-old started it off, by sending an SMS to his friends (Tsaliki, 2010), while, for others, the protest was called by a post on some blogs and it continued to be circulated through SMS and emails (Karamichas, 2007: 528). The mobilisations began with a preparatory meeting, which was organised by bloggers, in Syntagma Square, discussing how the SMS created a 'snowball effect' both online and offline (Tsaliki, 2010: 154-55). This was a new phenomenon and the first case in which the new and online technology was significant, resulting in the organisation of two street protests in the city centre of Athens. In the first protest, there were between 5,000 and 10,000 protestors (Karamichas 2007: 528) gathered in Syntagma Square who peacefully protested for a common interest, 'regardless of age, social class, or political orientation' (Tsaliki, 2010: 155). After Parnitha, wildfires broke out across several rural areas of Greece, including the Peloponnese, Euboea and others, destroying 'more than 1 million

hectares of forests and arable land, along with thousands of buildings leaving some 77-people dead' and thousands homeless (Michaletos, n.d.). The wildfire of 2007 resulted in a national disaster, which dramatically damaged the 'social, economic and environmental life of the country for years to come' (Tsaliki, 2010: 156).

Similarly, to the Parnitha protests, a new message started circulating among citizens through new and online technology: 'You let Greece burn to the ground, why?' (ibid.). The blog 'anadasosi', which was intensively active and supported the 2007 mobilisations, created a post/message calling for a new protest (ibid.). An online poster encouraged the online community to forward the message through SMS, blogs, emails, via website banners or even offline, by printing and passing it around. The participation in this protest is estimated to have approached 10,000 people (ibid.).

The aftermath of these protests was that the potentiality of new and online technology had been illustrated, highlighting the opportunity for participation and autonomous public engagement, while at the same time, the mainstream media vulnerabilities were pointed out too. The protests of 2007 were organised independently and not by political parties and the only common characteristic of the protestors was their interest in the environmental disaster. The incidents following the protests of 2007 could not be considered as being straightforwardly related to each other in terms of causes, motivation or general context. However, the usage of new/online media and their features, as well as the different usages that these had each time, create an insight into the potentiality of the medium per se and its influence on the ideology, organisation, mobilisation, political opportunity structure, media representations and the evolution of online conflict.

After providing an in-depth understanding of the historical political context and the political economy of media and communications in Greece, the thesis proceeds to analyses the key platforms for Greek mobilisations during the period 2008-2015. Although this might seem an excessive and long chapter, without it, it would have been impossible for me to be able to grapple with the historical and political continuities evident in the polarised hybrid (digital and offline) environment of this period.

4.   Methodology

This chapter offers a rationale for the research design, the sampling rationale in terms of timeline and empirical cases, as well as the analytical and computational tools based on which the examination of the selected online platforms have developed. A more detailed discussion of the research methods and techniques used for the examined platforms is provided at the beginning of discussion about the relevant platform (5.3; 6.2; 7.1). Finally, a timeline of the evolution of the crisis and social media in Greece is provided.

The study of digital media in the Greek case begins with a review of the sociopolitical and historical background of Greece (Chapter 3). Then, the study concentrates on the identification of sociopolitical and ethnoreligious cyberconflict/turmoil as observed online and then in association with the offline world. The identification and the analysis of these two types of online conflict/turmoil developed via the collection and the analysis of online data from various digital and social media platforms (Indymedia, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter), comprising the empirical part of the research (Chapters 5–7). The different characteristics of the online data collected from different platforms (Indymedia, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter) didn't allow the usage of one tool of data collection and one analytical approach. Therefore, the research formulated and exploited a complex research design. The collection and the analysis of the online data was conducted using different analytical tools as well as various software and apps.

The study of digital media on the Greek crisis era will be conducted through the analysis of the anti-austerity movement, which is comprised of different sub-cases and themes. The year 2008 was a significant moment both in terms of the evolution of social movements and the expansion of digital media in Greece, signifying the beginning of the global recession. Therefore, the study concentrated on the early phase of the crisis 2008–2012, which was characterised by street politics and the mobilisations, and then it focused on the period between 2012 and 2015, which was characterised by the restructuring of the political system, the rise of the Golden Dawn and the SYRIZA era (referendum, double elections of 2015), leading, chronologically, to the refugee crisis which adapted the already existing sociopolitical debates. These phases studied by the collection and the analysis of online material concentrating on anti-austerity mobilisations (radical politics, austerity and street politics), were straightforwardly related to solidarity networks and

initiatives. The empirical analysis of cyberconflict was conducted based on the examination of networks and discourse and conducted using application and software both for the collection, the analysis and the visualisation of the data, using Netvizz, NodeXL, and Gephi.

The collection of the data began with the examination of Indymedia and YouTube, while later developing a focus both on Facebook and Twitter, the two most popular social media platforms in Greece. The examination of Indymedia and YouTube provided the base for an understanding of the already existing sociopolitical debates before the rapid growth of the crisis. Then, online networks (Facebook) and discourse (Twitter) indicated social relations and structures, online coalitions, dominant actors/sets of actors and meanings, as well as, additional relationships which will link the online conflict to the offline.

Thematic (Indymedia, YouTube) and Semantic (Twitter) analysis supported the examination of meaning and discourse, while Social Network Analysis (SNA) is suggested as an efficient approach for the analysis and the investigation of 'kinship patterns, community structure, interlocking directorships and so forth' (Scott, 2000: 2). SNA provides a 'precise way to define important social concepts, a theoretical alternative to the assumption of independent social actors, and a framework for testing theories about structured social relationships' (Wasserman, 1994: 17). While Facebook suggests a more organised procedure in terms of organisation and communication, Twitter develops an insight into the way that discourse bursts forth in a more spontaneous way, moulding more open networks, and its examination is completed through an understanding of the evolution of networks, hashtags and meanings (Gerbaudo, 2012). After the understanding of networks and online relations, as well as the content of these networks in terms of discourse, then it will be possible to clearly map the cyberconflict (sociopolitical, ethnoreligious) as it developed in the Greek crisis context.

After the analysis of the corpus, the internet as a medium was then evaluated, focusing both on its significant characteristics and its contribution to the examined events, answering the research questions (1.2; 1.3) and completing the cyberconflict study of the

case of Greece (Chapter 3; 8) elaborating the theoretical framework of cyberconflict, the study began with the sociopolitical and historical background of Greece.

The research aimed only to apply an already existing theoretical framework, carrying through an analysis of the Greek case, but instead, this project developed as an evaluation of how digital research methods might be possible but also might contribute to the application of the theoretical framework of cyberconflict. The project developed based on the idea of discourse and networks, as these can be identified and discussed focusing on different platforms. While this project does not provide the opportunity to include an extensive discussion of every possible usage of online data for identification of networks and discourse, examining all the existing digital media platforms, it still manages to provide schemes of research which can be used for the development of more specialised projects. Cyberconflict in this project is not understood through the users' perspectives or primarily by focusing on literature, but instead, is identified and analysed through focus on the actual online material produced by users. As will be discussed at the end of this project, this was not only among the most important virtues of the project, at the same time, it was among its limitations.

4.1. Digital Research Methods

With the growth of internet, digital research methods became a very popular tool for social science researchers, building upon the established modes of social science research. At the same time, digital research methods provided multiple options on researching the internet, concentrating, among others, on media, culture and politics. Web-surveys, online interviews and focus groups, ethnographic approaches were some of the most dominant methods that illustrated the potentiality of digital research methods, in the early days of internet (Snee et al., 2016). The development of social media revolutionized communication and pointed out the use and impact of internet in the everyday life. At the same time, social media provided the opportunity to users to produce content and interact in a direct, real-time, way. At this stage, the potentiality of digital research methods on researching these new and very complex online communication systems, as the multi-platforms embedded in the Internet and everyday practices. That

created new demands on research, and research methods, which now should be able to map the relation between the online and offline space by analyzing various and new forms of data (ibid.3).

Concentrating on the above, the adaptation of digital research methods on this research, was a very innovative and challenging procedure. Looking back on the literature there were many researches that discussed the Greek digital media and online media platforms in Greece (Karamichas, 2007; Mylona, 2008; Milioni, 2009; Kyriakopoulos, 2010; Theocharis, 2011; Papagiannis, Coursaris and Bourlakis, 2012; Afouxenidis, 2014;) , but only lately, researches started to use more contemporary approaches looking on networks' dynamics and discourse (Vatikiotis, 2011; Tsaliki, 2012; Theocharis, Lowe and Van Deth, 2014; Samatas 2015; Smyrnaios, 2015; Siapera and Veikou, 2016). Therefore, for this study the use of digital research methods will support a different approach on understanding the digital media in Greece. In this venture, digital research methods used for all the examined platforms and periods, looking on networks and discourse, mapping the linkage between the online and offline space. However, as Rogers (2009) pointed out, mapping space is not only a way to understand cyberspace, but at the same time, is a way to understand the various ways though which politics are reflected online.

While there is a constant debate on the way that digital research methods can be combined with traditional research methods, at the same time, there are many considerations raised by the use of such methods and the combination of various tools and procedures for the examination of different digital media platforms. This study developed under the same consideration. In most of the researches that employed Cyberconflict theory, the methods that used were concentrated on interviews and CDA. Consequently, originally the idea for this study was to do the same, focusing on the non-fixed relation between digital and traditional research methods and looking on how the two could fit and support the examination of cyberconflict through the study of networks and discourse. However, the specialization and training required for digital research methods, as well as the various tools required for the study of different platforms did not allowed the development of an even more complex methodology that would combine both traditional and digital

research methods. After conducting and analyzing some semi-structured interviews, as originally proposed for the study of cyberconflict, it was clear that the project should focus either on interviews and CDA, or on Social networks and discourse. Taking under consideration that digital research methods have never used for the examination of Cyberconflict, it was a risky but at the same time very innovative decision to work on the intersection of these two. Large-scale data driven researches which concentrate on social media platforms might be driven by various questions on the impact of such platforms in communication, however, a response to such questions can be given by investigating short-term events 'within and beyond the social media platform itself' (Snee et al., 2016: p.18). In this study, the research questions were answered through the examination of short-term events, looking at three periods, and on various social media platforms (4.2). The study worked on the combination of digital research methods and the study of cyberconflict, aiming to develop an example for future researches. At the same time, taking this research as example, a combination of traditional and digital research methods would for the study of cyberconflict would be an interesting mix of methods bigger and more extended research projects.

The use of digital research methods raised various theoretical and practical challenges, starting from methodological concerns, matters regards to the use of computational and analytical tools, and ending up to concerns on the nature and the type of the analyzed data, the visualization and presentation of such data, as well as the combination of tools (4.3.; 4.4.). In other words, digital research methods might suggest an innovative research approach, however, at the same time, there are many concerns and flows on how each of the different stages of adapting digital methods might influence knowledge and findings. Within this procedure there are two major implications, with the first one concentrating on the effects of digital research methods on social sciences and humanities, and, secondly, in a micro level, concentrating on the methodological flaws which might arise by the choice and application of different methodological tools (Rieder and Röhle, 2012).

The first difficulty on adapting digital research methods is the epistemological dilemmas regards to the online phenomena that will be studied, questioning what these 'actually represent in social science terms and what assumption we may make when adopting new

tools and new research practices' (Snee et al., 2016: 6). Then, the next big concern is related to practical challenges and difficulties on how to effectively use digital research methods. Each technological development, each examined platform, accordin to its significant characteristics and features and the analysed material, requires different techniques and tools for the collection, the analysis and the visualization of data (4.3.;4.4.). Here, among the big limitations is the cost both of tools and access on archive material and data (ibid.), as well as the issue of ephemerality, with the researcher often overtaken by events of the medium (Rogers, 2009). In this study this was quite obvious with Netvizz when changes on Facebook influenced the data that was possible to be collected using app, while, secondly that was also noticeable on NodeXL, when it stopped providing free access to all its features. While, luckily, in this research these changes didn't influence the project, such limitations and weaknesses should be taken under consideration when adapting digital research methods.

Another important contemplation on the adaptation of digital research methods can be found on the issue objectivity and, then, on visualizations techniques and the power of visual evidence (Rieder and Röhle, 2012). Starting with the issue of objectivity and the digital research methods, what is suggested here is that digital research methods borrows elements from natural sciences, and therefore, up to a point, perceived as promising a high level of objectivity. Rieder and Röhle (2012) explain that in more details by discussing the notion of *mathesis universalis*, or in other words, 'the possibility to specify a set of rules of transformation that 'automatically' generate new knowledge' (ibid.78). This concept dominated the Western thought regards the universality of the mathematic science and its implications in other sciences, while sup to a point, also influenced the digital research methods as well. While computers and numbers might be able to overcome some limitations and flaws of traditional research methods, still questions of subjectivity and bias, which according to Rieder and Röhle (2012) might rise 'from modes of formalisation, the choice of algorithmic procedures, and means of presenting results' (ibid.73) should be carefully assessed. For such reasons, the use of digital research methods could not be understood separately from the critical discussion on 'mechanical objectivity' (ibid. 72). In this study all the above are taken into consideration, recognizing that digital research methods are neither neutral nor unbiased.

The next important risk when using digital research methods raised by the issue of visualization and the power of visual evidence (ibid.). Visualizations can have a great impact on the understanding of findings, while at the same time these possess powerful argumentative tools due to the argumentative power of images (ibid.73). Visualizations and graphs, often supporting the findings of studies using research methods, tend to be perceived as representing somethings, rather than laboratory artefacts, which can be controlled and edited according to different variables and interpretations. Instead, visualizations of data and findings should be understood as tools or instruments employed for the investigation and presentation of data and findings and presenting data and findings (ibid.74). Under this rationale, Rieder and Röhle explain that numbers and visualizations should be perceived as evidences and then, textual rhetoric serves as argumentation (ibid.). Again, under this rationale, al the graphs and visual material provided is critically discussed, and at the same time, it is acceptable that other interpretations, supported by strong arguments, could also be valid.

While the adaptation of digital research methods raised long discussions and debates, as regards to every stage and application, the above points developed an insight in some of the strongest debates on digital research methods as this employed in this research. To understand more on the rationale regards to way that the study overlapped some of the above limitations, what comes next is sampling of data, platforms and events (4.2.), a presentation of the analytical tools and computational tools used for the collection, analysis and visualization of data (4.3.; 4.4.).

4.2. General Sampling of Timeline and Platforms: Evolution of Digital Media Platforms & the Crisis – How the Project Developed

This scheme supported the investigation of different social media platforms and, at the same time, the in-depth investigation of the crisis. In other words, if we understand the evolution of the crisis and the evolution of the online media platforms as two parallel

processes, in chronological terms, then, the collection of data is the point of linkage (Figure 1).

Figure 4: Evolution of Digital Media Platforms & Crisis – Data Collection Scheme

Evolution of Online and Social Media platforms 2008-2015

Indymedia & Youtube 2008

Facebook 2011 - 2015

Twitter 2015

////////////////-- DATA COLLECTION-- ////////////////

December Riots 2008

Greek Indignados/SYRIZA Dispora

SYRIZA Diaspora/ Greek Referendum

Evolution of the Greek Crisis 2008-2015
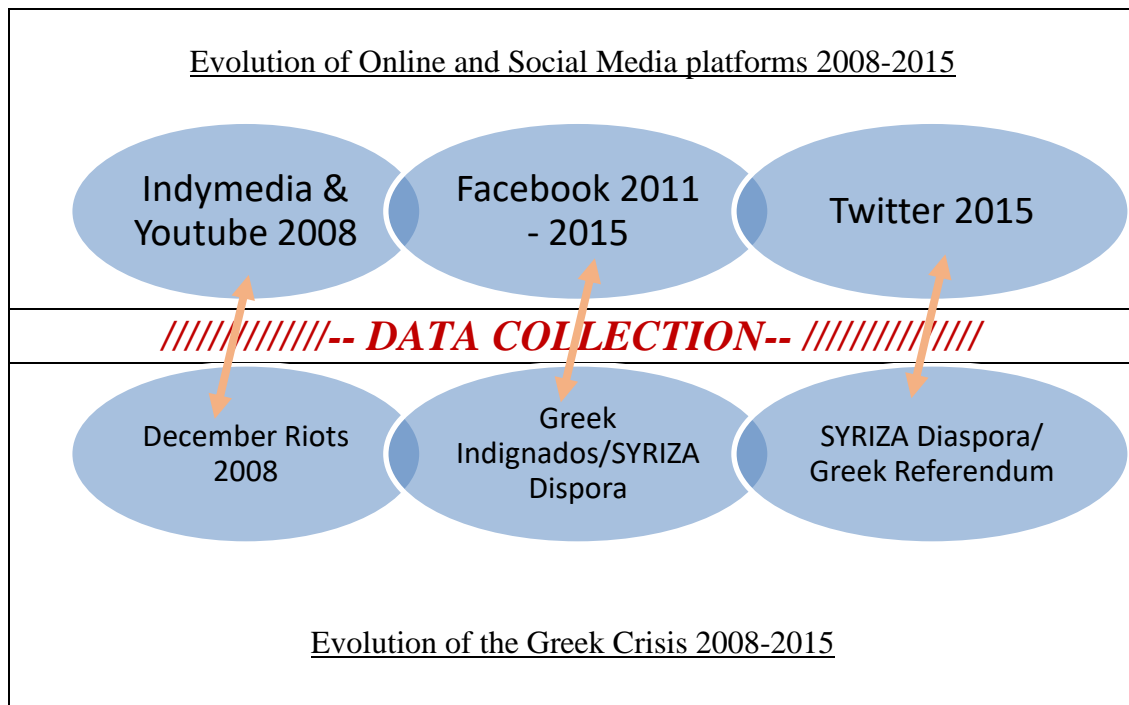
The research provided a longitudinal empirical examination of the social and political conflict and debates as shaped during the period 2008–2015, while it provided a latitudinal understanding of the usage of various digital media in the Greek crisis context, as well as its association with transnational examples. Starting from 2008, and taking into consideration the digital media environment in Greece (3.3.;3.4.) and the literature on social movements in the globalised era (1.1; 2.2), the study began with the study of YouTube and Indymedia, and the case of the December riots (Chapter 5). During the early days of the digital communication in Greece, YouTube was among the most popular online media platforms in Greece, while Indymedia has a significant role and contribution to the first examined case study (3.4.2.). Therefore, looking at these two, the examination of the December Riots revealed the context in which the social and political turmoil or the so-called crisis occurred (5.1; 5.5). The second event on which the study concentrated was the case of the Greek Indignados which appeared in 2011 and the study

of Facebook. Until 2011, Facebook had already become one of the most popular social media platforms worldwide, and one of the most popular social media platform in Greece (3.4.2.).

The case of the Greek Indignados was selected for both its importance on a national level and its association with global cycles of protest which emerged during the same period (e.g. M15, OWS). On a national level, this cycle of protest is understood as a milestone both for the evolution of the anti-austerity movement as well as for the reconstruction of the mainstream political scene (Chapter 3; 6). On a transnational level, this was an indicative example of the Greek adaptation of the anti-austerity movement and the global cycles of protest of that period. Nonetheless, as noted by the literature review (Chapter 2), the anti-austerity protests and mobilisations should be understood as 'networks' of mobilisations organised by different organisations and focusing on sub-themes as raised by the crisis context. Then, the project concentrated on the Greferendum, as an event with a significant impact on the new political environment in Greece and its association with the EU political context (Chapter 7). That includes the study of Twitter, as a social media platform which developed slightly later than Facebook, and lately became popular also in Greece (4.3.2.). The Table 3, suggest the evolution of the online media platforms which were studied, focusing on the chronological order in which these developed and the popularity, in juxtaposition to the chronological order in which the examined events outbroke (4.3.2.; 5.1.; 6.1.; 7). For all these event, data were collected, concentrating both on the significant features of the platforms and the examined events.

These events are representative of the usage of digital media platforms throughout the different phases of the crisis (1.2; 1.3). Through these steps, the impact of digital media on the growth and the evolution of riots and mobilisations events (December Riots, Greek Indignados/Aganaktismenoi), on the rise of non-mainstream political parties and radicalisation (SYRIZA, Golden Dawn), as well as the formation of alternative structures of initiatives and solidarity networks (e.g. building occupations for refugees, etc.) are some of the points based on which the research questions and the aims and objectives of the research are answered (1.2;1.3).

Following the evolution of the crisis, the research study included three of the most popular social media platforms globally (Castells, 2015), YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, and, also, included an examination of Indymedia, as a supplementary case of an examination of a digital media platform during the examined period. Indymedia preceded the others and indicated the potentiality of digital media as regards social and political turmoil before social media (Chapter 3). According to Kassimi (2015), in 2015 Greeks spent more than 80 minutes per day on social media platforms, with more than half of the population registered with at least one social media platform (2015). Facebook is the most popular platform for Greek users and increased by 1.1 million new accounts in August 2015, reaching 6.7 million accounts in total, although this should be understood in parallel with the Greek population (ibid.). Twitter which is the next most popular social media platform increased by 509,448 new Greek accounts, a 49 percent increase in comparison to 2014, while YouTube also had rapid growth too, indicating a 79 percent increase in the number of accounts for Greek users in 2014–15 (ibid.) (3.4.).

Concentrating on these social media platforms and the evolution of the crisis as discussed in the literature, the collection of the data was completed based on the following timeline:

Table 22: Sampling of Digital Media Platforms & Crisis Evolution:
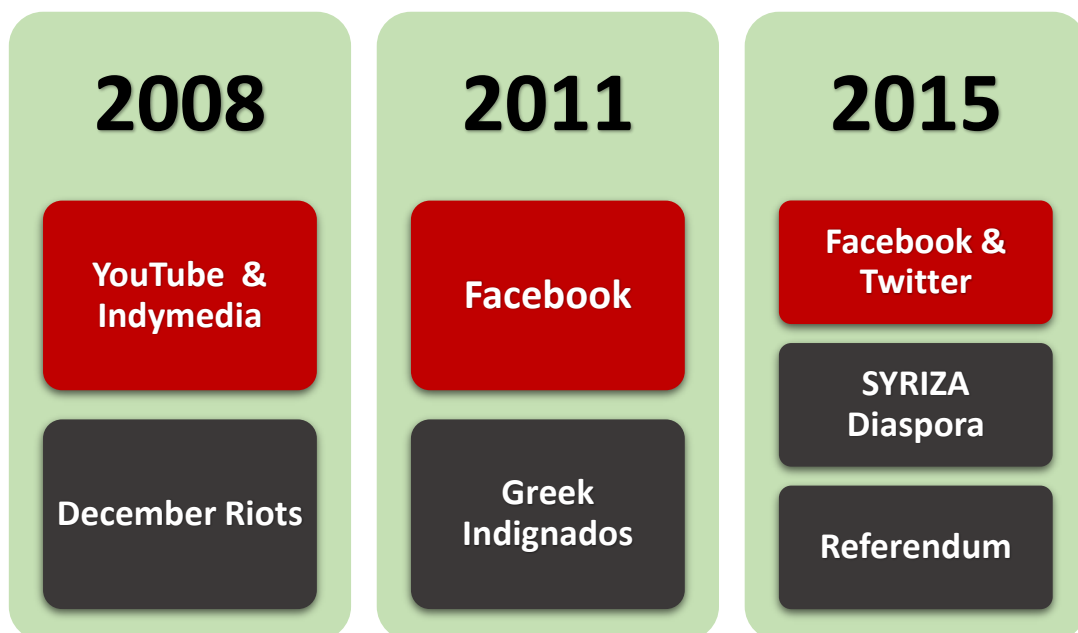
While in Figure 3 we were able to show how online media platforms were associated with the events and the data collection, suggesting an evolution of digital communication and the events, Table 3 indicates the key chronological moments, on which the study concentrates (2008; 2011; 2015). Starting with YouTube and Indymedia, the collection of the data was conducted through the usage of the Indymedia archive, looking at material relating to the examined case, as well as the collection of YouTube comments (Chapter 5). The collection of Facebook data was completed focusing on the Greek Indignados and the usage of Facebook for the organisation of the mobilisation (6.3). Similarly, the SYRIZA online diaspora data was collected by targeting fan pages nationally and transnationally (6.4). In the case of Twitter, real-time data collection was required and therefore, keywords and trending hashtags were collected through the Greferendum period, building a rich data set, which was narrowed down and analysed concentrating on specific debates in that era (Chapter 7).

Based on the significant characteristics of each of the examined online platforms and the collected data, there are three analytical approaches (4.2) and different computational research tools (4.3) which were used throughout the study. Below, both the analytical and computational tools are discussed, while for every platform and in each Chapter, a more detailed description of sampling and analysis is provided accordingly (5.3; 6.1; 7.1).

4.3. Analytical Tools

4.3.1. Thematic Analysis (Indymedia & YouTube)

Thematic Analysis (TA) is a foundational method for qualitative analysis which appeared in the 1970s (Merton 1975), providing a theoretically-flexible approach to the analysis of qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). TA is situated in different epistemological and ontological positions (ibid.), while different versions of TA are used in several disciplines and theoretical frameworks. Following Clarkes and Braun's approach (2013), in this project, TA is used as an analytical method, rather than a methodology, and can

therefore be applied in various theoretical frameworks, including the one used in this project (Chapter 2).

This analytical method supports the study of a range of research questions associated with people's experiences and the 'representation and construction of particular phenomena in particular contexts' (Clarke and Braun, 2013: 121), while it is also used for the study of various types of data, including online data, media scripts and so on (ibid.). According to Smith '*Thematic* connotes the analysis of story like verbal material, and the use of relatively comprehensive units of analysis such as *themas* (Murray, 1943), *themes* (Holsti, 1969), or combinations of categories (Aron, 1950)' (Smith et. al., 1992: 4). At the same time, this method is used both for the analysis of large and small data sets, while according to Clarke and Braun, this method produces both data-driven or theory-driven studies (2013: 121). Thus, in this study, the method is appropriate for the analysis of YouTube and Indymedia material – analysis conducted based on cyberconflict theory.

TA focuses on the identification of 'thematising meanings' (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 78), as well as themes or patterns (Clarke and Braun, 2013) (5.3). This method used for the identification of themes in a selected set of data, while these themes were associated with the research questions for the study (Evripidou and Drury, 2013) (1.2; 1.3) and the theoretical framework (Chapter 2). This method was among the most appropriate for the examination of the two examined platforms, as not only did not raised any technical limitations for the examination (e.g. working with archive material and categorizing various data), but at the same time, this method managed to bring together the analysis of these two very different platforms and data forms, indicating the main themes/debates which already existed before the next two examined platforms and periods. At this stage, what was important to be archived was the identification of the main themes/debates of conflict and not to do a more detailed analysis on content and discourse. The TA was applied by coding the collected material according to Braun and Clarke through six phases of analysis as follows (2006: 86-93):

1. Familiarisation with the data
2. Generating initial codes

3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Writing up

The selection of the themes does not reflect (only) the dominant patterns in the analysed data set but instead these are shaped according to the researchers' interest and questions (ibid.). In this project, the themes identified focused on cyberconflict theory and the four basic parameters (historical/sociopolitical background, sociopolitical conflict, ethnoreligious conflict, internet as a medium (2.1).

TA was used for the analysis of Indymedia and YouTube material. Indymedia was one of the first online platforms indicating the potentiality of digital media in the Greek context, but it was already examined as a factor in anti-globalisation protests (Pickerill, 2006; Karatzogianni, 2006). Indymedia is broadly associated with activism and movements, while in the case of Greece, this platform was extensively used throughout the unfolding of the so-called 'December Riots', supporting both the organisation and coordination of protests and actions across Greece (Schwarz and Sagris, 2010; Vatikiotis, 2011; Milioni, 2012). However, taking into consideration the significant characteristics of the platform, among the major limitations at this point is that Indymedia tends to attract only a very specific profile of users and does not provide a broad understanding of digital media usage. YouTube was among the most popular/significant social media platforms during the December Riots, because the amateur video capturing the shooting scene was uploaded online, while the mainstream media edited and broadcast the video later. While there are many different approaches for the examination of YouTube, focusing on comments (Thelwall, Sud and Vis, 2011), on content (Madden, Ruthven and McMenemy, 2013) or even detection of sentiment (Choudhury and Breslin, 2010), and others, the goal of this analysis of YouTube was the identification of the main themes which were discussed during the so-called December Riots (5.4.2; 5.5). Thus, focusing on this post, YouTube alongside Indymedia provided a sufficient data set for the examination of digital media in the December Riots and the application of TA pointed out the social and political conflicts and tensions, as these existed exactly before the occurrence of the global recession and, later, in the Greek crisis (5.1; 5.4).

The step-by-step coding and analysis process is presented at the beginning of the relevant chapter (5.3). Nonetheless, taking into account both the research questions and the purpose of the YouTube and Indymedia study, the themes were identified through the six-phase coding/analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 86-93) and the four parameters of cyberconflict theory (2.1; 5.3; 5.4). Braun and Clarke explain that in the analysed data set, the detection of themes or patterns can be completed, following an inductive approach, a 'bottom up' method, which is data-driven, and themes are linked to the data themselves (ibid. 83-84). Braun and Clarke (2006) draw on Patton (1990), pointing out the similarities of this process to grounded theory. The example which illustrates this process if the case of the analysis of interview material, which even if the asked questions were specific, may result in a variety of themes raised by the answers (ibid.). On the other hand, another approach is the theoretical or deductive one, a 'top-down' method, which relies on the researcher's theoretical or analytic interests and is, therefore, analyst-driven. Here the analysis provides a limited description of the data, focusing on a more detailed analysis of some aspect of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Following the second approach, the deductive or top-down method, the TA was completed under the theoretical framework of cyberconflict theory (Chapter 2), indicating the themes/points of consideration discussed during the riots and later, their evolution or potential relevance to the crisis context debates.

4.3.2. Social Network Analysis (Facebook & Twitter)

While social networks have always been shaped according to space and time limitations, the evolution of the internet limited some of these barriers (Abraham, Hassanien and Snasel, 2012). Social networks have always been key components of human life and this is reflected in the online world through the rise of virtual social networks, like the offline social networks.

A network is a means through which power is exercised (Castells, 2011), while network science examines patterns of connection in both social and physical phenomena (Hansen, Shneiderman and Smith, 2011). Networks and network science has a long tradition, and

has been used for the examination of different issues. Hansen, Shneiderman and Smith (ibid.) review the growth of the interest and the usage of networks, staring from the 19th century and Kelvin's work on 'collective action, collaboration, and productive communities' (ibid. 4). Since 2005, the references to 'social networks' in academia have rapidly increased, spanning all across the social sciences (Borgatti and Halgin, 2011). While there are many different theoretical elements which support the analysis of networks, focusing on ties and structure (Granovetter, 1983), on power (Knoke, 1994), and so on, still, in many cases networks are suggested as a methodology rather than as theory (Borgatti and Halgin, 2011). Social network analysis (SNA) is understood as being part of the broader field of network science, which supports the examination of human relationships (Hansen, Shneiderman and Smith, 2011). Scott (2000) points to three main traditions of SNA, which describe the lineage of SNA before it became a mainstream research tool. The first tradition of SNA is the sociometric approach, which focuses mainly on the examination of small groups using graph theory (ibid. 8-9), while the second tradition developed during the 1930s when Harvard researchers explored patterns of interpersonal relationships and the formation of 'cliques' (ibid.). The third tradition was developed by Manchester anthropologists, who combined the first two traditions, and explored structures and relationships within communities. Later, during the 1960s and 1970s, again at Harvard, contemporary SNA was formulated (ibid.).

Later, during the 1980s, the development of technology made networks even more popular, and Castells theorised the networked society, 'a society whose social structure is made up of networks powered by micro-electronics-based information and communications technologies.' (Castells, 2004: 3). Castells (2011) discussed networks focusing on the notion of power, which is exercised and distributed throughout networks. Knoke (1994) concentrated on power as mode and effect and interaction; 'Power is an aspect of the actual or potential interaction between two or more social actors' (ibid. 1). Power is a dynamic and unstable relation, while power relationships are 'asymmetrical actual or potential interactions' between actors, which have a strong impact on behaviours and perceptions (ibid. 1-3). Especially in political relations, influence and domination are suggested as some of the most important characteristics of relationships (ibid.). Influence is understood through the transition of information and communication between actors, while, domination refers to the control of behaviour between actors

(ibid.). Going back to Castells' Networking Power,[27] Network Power,[28] Networked Power[29] and Network-making Power[30] are the main distinctive types of power which are able to describe how power is produced and distributed in networks.

In all these types of power, Castells describe the way that human activity not only develops networks, but also the way that networks exercise their power and influence on human mind (2011: 785). Then, these multidimensional and complicated systems of networks construct their power around state and politics (ibid.). In these systems of networks, communication and power are understood in terms of domination and influence. While networks provide an additional experience of space and time, at the same time they denote a homogeneity of practice across a global communication matrix, which, however, also indicates the dynamic transformation of the multi-scaled 'common global network culture' (Terranova, 2004: 72).

In this context, the examination of Facebook and Twitter material focused on the identification of cyberconflict, concentrating both on networks and discourse. The study of the two previous platforms indicated the main themes/debates that existed before the outbreak of the crisis, linking, according to the cyberconflict theory, the environment on online conflict – or in this case debate – to the two most conflicted and debatable examined periods. These two periods are studies through Facebook and Twitter. Based on the significant characteristics of these two platforms, the technical limitations (e.g. access on archive material, real-time collection of data, available computational tools) as well as the aim of studying these two platforms, different analytical tools we used. Facebook suggested an insight on networks and online (political/social) coalitions among

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[27] Networking Power: 'the power of the actors and organizations included in the networks that constitute the core of the global network society over human collectives and individuals who are not included in these global networks.' (Castells, 2011: 774)

[28] Network Power: 'the power resulting from the standards required to coordinate social interaction in the networks. In this case, power is exercised not by exclusion from the networks but by the imposition of the rules of inclusion.' (ibid.)

[29] Networked Power: the power of social actors over other social actors in the network. The forms and processes of networked power are specific to each network (ibid.).

[30] Network-making Power: the power to program specific networks according to the interests and values of the programmers, and the power to switch different networks following the strategic alliances between the dominant actors of various networks. (ibid.)

national/transnational movements, while twitter concentrated mainly on the two-antagonistic campaign and conflicted discourses.

The selection of the examined platforms developed concentrating on the chronological order in which each of the platform emerged, the popularity and the chronological order of events (4.3.2.; 5.1.; 6.1.; 7; Figure 3; Table 3). Facebook examination focused on the case of the Greek Indignados, which was the strongest cycle of anti-austerity protest in Greece and at the same time, was also associated with the global wave of protest of that period (Chapter 6). The Twitter study concentrated on the so-called Greferendum, giving an insight into the national and EU sociopolitical conflict (Chapter 7). While the collection of the analysis included material from different moments in the development of the crisis, during the period 2008–2016, these two events and periods of time were selected as indicative of the digital media usage during the crisis, efficiently answering the research questions (1.2; 1.3).What is examined at this phase of the research is the notion of the network as this is discussed and understood in terms of collective action, connective action and social movements (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013). Focusing on this point, the study concentrated on the analysis of online conflict as this can be observed in and among networks. There were points for which the study of Facebook and Twitter data analysis targets included the evolution of the themes/debates and sociopolitical turmoil as well as online/offline polarisation.

NodeXL, Netvizz, and Gephi were used for the collection, analysis, and visualisation of networks. Then, the findings were analysed and interpreted using Social Network Analysis (SNA), which is understood as the investigation of patterns of relationship between social actors, analysed on different levels (e.g. groups. individuals, etc.) (Brieger, 2004) (4; 6.1; 7.1). Wasserman (1994) explains that SNA 'provides a precise way to define important social concepts, a theoretical alternative to the assumption of independent social actors, and a framework for testing theories about structured social relationships (ibid. 17). SNA is appropriate for the analysis and the investigation of 'kinship patterns, community structure, interlocking directorships and so forth' (Scott, 2000: 2). As Golbeck (2013: 151) highlighted, social networks 'allow all types of things to spread from person to person'. From diseases and viral videos to rumours, different

types of information all propagate from one actor to the other, throughout networks (ibid.).

However, Brieger (2004) explains that SNA investigates patterns of relationships on a different level, focusing on individuals, groups and so on. SNA supports the examination of different social entities or social units. This refers to the individual, corporate or collective social units. SNA supports the development of an insight into the relational ties between actors and their relations, and then, an insight into the social network per se. The examination of groups and sub-groups indicates additional points of consideration relating to the way that different actors are related to each other (Wasserman and Faust, 1994: 16 - 21).

Social networks can use both quantitative or qualitative, or mixed methods of analysis, although, social network analysis itself should not be conceived as being quantitative or qualitative, or a combination of the two, but instead is structural (Carrington, 2014). SNA analysis supports not only the interpretation of networks, pointing out questions relating to the notion of structure, but indicated points (e.g. actors, coalitions, nodes, pages, etc.) which it would be of interest to examine further, focusing on content and discourse.

4.3.3. Semantic Analysis (Twitter)

Twitter is a microblogging social media platform which allows users to communicate information of up to 140 characters on a one-to-one or even global basis (Williams, Terras and Warwick, 2013). This platform is used for sharing news and updates on real-time events (ibid.). In this study, Twitter material was collected and analysed firstly focusing on SNA and dominant actors, and then focusing on discourse, the usage of language and the production of meaning and semantics (Chapter 7).

Similar to social networks, semantic networks are consisted by nodes that represent concepts or clauses linked by various binary relationships (Krippendorff, 2004). The analysis of the aim of such networks is to respond to questions which are or are not clearly included in body texts (ibid. 294):

The idea of semantic networks probably originated in cultural-anthropological efforts to represent cognitive structures or mental models as relational graphs (D'Andrade, 1991, 1995; Quillian, 1968; Wallace, 1961 in Krippendorff, 2004: 294). It has been facilitated by the psycho-logical theorizing of Abelson and Rosenberg (1958), by Schank and Abelson's (1977) inquiries into actionable knowledge structures, by causal inference modelling (Blalock, 1964; Simon, 1957), by graph theory (Harary, Norman, and Cartwright, 1965; Maruyama, 1963), by evaluative assertion analysis (Osgood, Saporta and Nunnally, 1956), by studies of communication networks (Rice and Richards, 1985; Richards and Rice, 1981) and social networks (Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988), and by theories of communication networks (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981).

Semantic networks are used as a research approach for studying natural language (ibid.). As in all the content analysis methods, semantic analysis has some limitations relating, up to a point, the use of online data and computational tools. In this study, the study of language was conducted in combination with social network analysis, aiming to develop an insight into meanings and the information transmitted through networks. Therefore, after understanding the main themes/debates in the pre-crisis era, then the study developed an insight on how Facebook used/supported the development of networks online political coalitions in both national/transnational level, then the research focused on semantics and discourse as regards to the two antagonistic campaigns, providing an insight on how networks influence/supported the emerge of discourse as well as on what was the opposition to that. At the same time, looking on the finding of all the examined periods and platforms, it is possible to observe the discursive transfusion/evolution of the debates in the crisis context.

Using NodeXL, the study concentrated on the detection of the most used words and then, based on the frequency, the visualisation by graphical means forming semantic networks (Friemel, 2008). This process is associated both with the theoretical framework of cyberconflict, as it supports the detection of different or conflicted frames, while at the same time suggesting considerations relating to the historical, political continuity of collective actions and sociopolitical turmoil arising during the crisis, by drawing back to the themes of the YouTube and Indymedia analysis (5.4; 5.5).

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4.4. Explanation of Software Tools: Netvizz, NodeXL, Gephi and NVivo

After the selection of the analytical approach based on which the online data study was completed, it was necessary to review the research tools, the computational tools, which were used both for the collection, the analysis and the visualisation of the data. One of the strongest difficulties at this stage was to efficiently select apps and software which would be used for the collection and analysis of the empirical data. Two were the major considerations, and later, criteria, based on which the selection of apps and software conducted; firstly, any apps and software used should be compatible with the PC used throughout the research and secondly, taking under consideration that digital methods is a trending research approach with various innovative developments, all the apps and software used should be easy to be used, ideally open access, and at the same time, able to efficiently support this study. Then, another important difficulty regards to the selection of the computational tools, arose by the examination of different online and social media platforms, each of which could be studied with the use of different software and apps. Therefore, it was very important to conclude to a combination of computational tools, which ideally would support the study of more than one online platform. Based on these considerations and difficulties, I concluded to the selection of the following computational tools.

NodeXL is an add-in to the Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet software, which supports the identification of social and semantic networks based on analytical and visualisation features. NodeXL is relative easy to use as it is designed for non-programmers but still, it is able to provide rich visual representations and analytics (Hansen, Schneiderman and Smith, 2011: 47). As Smith extensively explains (Smith et al., 2009) NodeXL features enable users to import online data and to develop network statistics as well as to develop network visualisation (sorting, filtering, and clustering) (ibid.), while it can be used for the analysis of data from different social networking platforms and services, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. While there are more sophisticated methods to collected, analyse and visualize online material, for this study NodeXL was able to efficiently support the research objectives of the study, without getting into more complicated statistical and analytical schemes (e.g. use of Python, R, UCINet, Pajek,

etc.). Another asset on the selection of NodeXL was its extremely friendly user interface and my previous experience and knowledge on working in the Microsoft Excel environment. Due to these characteristics, NodeXL was selected to support the collection and analysis of the empirical data. In this study, NodeXL was used for the collection, analysis, and visualisation of Twitter material, supporting both the social network and semantic analysis of the data (7.1; 7). NodeXL was of free access at the time that this research started, while it was also compatible with all the PCs used for this research. However, some of the practical difficulties that rose was that not all the used PCs supported the visualization and analysis of data of large files, i.e. more than 10000 Tweets and relations. Therefore, to avoid the risk of losing or destroying any of the collected material, the limit for crawling Twitter data each time was set to the 10000 Tweets and relations, instead of the 18000 that is the NodeXL limit.

Secondly, Netvizz is described by Rieder (2013) as a data collection and extraction application tool which allows users to export data in file formats as from different sections of the Facebook social networking service. Again, Netvizz was selected among other similar apps (e.g. GetNet, API) due to its user-friendly interface and also, as an easy app which, still though was able to efficiently support the collection of empirical data. Netvizz enables the user to focus on friendship networks, on public groups, pages, and profiles (ibid.). The output of Netvizz was visualised, when needed, using Gephi. Gephi is an open source network graph and analysis tool (Cherven, 2015: 7). Netvizz was used to collect data relating to Facebook fan pages, and then, Gephi supported a more efficient analysis and visualisation of the data (6.1).

An in-depth understanding of digital media in the Greek crisis context could include many different online media platforms and could be supported by different research and analytical tools. However, as it would not be possible to examine every platform and service, the Facebook study indicated the formation of online networks and coalitions, indicating dominant actors and structural characteristics. On the other hand, Twitter described the evolution of discourses and real-time reactions to a variety of different events and processes (e.g. examples such as campaigns, coordination of events, public sphere and social response). Facebook and Twitter were among the most dominant social media platforms, during the examined period, while, as is also suggested by the literature,

they support different processes and types of communication and tend to influence, in different ways and at different stages, the occurrence and expansion of collective actions, mobilisations, and movements (3). The chosen material from both platforms was identified and collected based on the examination of the crisis context and incident as described earlier. Researching digital media provides many options regards to the collected material, as well as the computational and analytical tools. While in the case of Facebook and Twitter, and the examination of networks and discourse a different combination would also have been possible, the significant characteristics of each platforms, would not fully supported such a choice. While Facebook is more accessible on archive material, still it would have not been possible to fully study discourse (e.g. links, posts, or comments) that published months or years before the time of data collection. In a similar way, why Twitter provided some suggestions and insights to networks (4.3.2.; 7.2), still the option to collect tweets on a real-time base, was a big asset which supported the study in a more efficient way.

As regards the analysis of Indymedia and YouTube, NVivo and NCapture were used for the collection and the analysis of the data from both of these two platforms (5.3; 5). NVivo is one of the most indicative tools available to support the complexity of qualitative research (Richards, 1999). At the same time, NVivo helps with handling or rich data records and information about them, supporting coding visually or by categories (ibid. 1-9). Also, this is research software, which provides a range of tools for coding and analysis of online content (ibid.). Finally, it supports both the construction and testing of answers to research questions, which is the goal of this research (ibid.). NCapture is a web browser extension which supports NVivo to collect web pages' content either in a PDF form or concentrating on the collection of posts and comments (YouTube, Indymedia). Threads and comments from both YouTube and Indymedia were downloaded in Excel format, then the data was imported and coded in NVivo.

This concludes a general explanation on how the theoretical frame informs the research design, the chronological and case sampling as well as the research techniques and software tools use for the analysis. In each empirical chapter, more detailed is provided explaining how each tool was applied and how directly relevant to each case examined. The following chapter offers a historical background of the Greek socio-political context,

as the cyberconflict environment under examination, as a preparatory platform from which the thesis can launch the empirical analysis.

5.   The First Period: December Riots – Indymedia & YouTube

After the review of the theoretical framework of the research (Chapter 2), then the research provides an insight to the historical and sociopolitical background of the examined case (Chapter 3), following the basic steps of cyberconflict theory (2.1). After the cultivation of the research design (Chapter 4), then the project developed through empirical research on the topic, examining different online media platforms and their association to significant moments of the crisis (3). Chapter 5 is the first empirical chapter and focuses on the December Riots (5.1) and the impact of online media on the event (5.2). Then, following Chapter 4, the research methods and techniques that was used for the examination of these platforms is discussed in detail (5.3). Finally, the examination of Indymedia (5.4.1) and YouTube (5.4.2) are completed through the analysis of online data.

5.1.   December Riots 2008: Sociopolitical and Historical Characteristics

On 6th December 2008, Alexandros Grigoropoulos, a 15-year-old student, was shot and killed by a police officer, in Exarcheia, an area of the city centre of Athens. This resulted in a series of protests (Theocharis, 2011: 203-223), which lasted for three weeks (Milioni, 2012:1), costing an estimated 1.5 billion euros (Sotiris, 2010: 203)

The so-called 'December Riots' could be considered a milestone in the development of the phenomenon of digital media usage in the organisation of collective action in Greece, while at the same time 'a turning point in social movements against neoliberalism and capitalist restriction' (ibid. 203). The December riots were a significant point in contemporary Greek history as they denoted the limitations and vulnerabilities of the social and political structures, highlighting the disputed relationship between society and the state, which already existed before the outbreak of the crisis. At the same time, this was the first example after the fall of the dictatorship in 1974 that mobilisations were strongly characterised by violence and therefore, the discussion about social unrest re-occurred, destroying the elusive image of a prospering Greece as shaped after 1980, which reached its zenith with the 2004 Olympics held in Athens. Civilians demonstrated for days and the violence both from the demonstrators and the state was intense, while there were many solidarity actions organised across the EU. Moreover, this was the first

time in Greece that different online platforms were used for the organisation and coordination of the incident. Kyriakopoulos pointed out that both the Greek and the international media strongly compared the December riots with other historical events such as the Parisian May of '68 (2010: 242).

The December riots link the sociopolitical and historical background of Greece to the contemporary issue of the crisis, while proving a case which can additionally enable an examination of the evolution of social and online media in Greece. Therefore, the study of this event (Karamichas, 2009; Monastiriotis, 2009; Sotiris, 2010; Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011) was intensive and focused on a variety of different arguments and topics about the event, from civil society and institutions, contemporary and street politics to collective actions and social movements.

In this thesis, the study of the December riots was conducted concentrating on the sociopolitical and historical background of the environment in which the event occurred. This included both an analysis focusing on the national context of Greece, as well as on the EU context, taking into consideration that the December Riots occurred after the Paris Riots (2005), and before the UK student protests (2010-11) and, then, the wave of anti-austerity and anti-capitalist protests of 2010 (1.1.). The way that different cycles of protest emerged, overlapping each other, is an interesting point of exploration, which will be examined through the understanding of digital media usage in this process. In the case of Greece, the December Riots indicated the potentiality of digital media in the Greek context, and at the same time, it situated the case of Greece in the pre-crisis and crisis collective actions within the EU context. Critically, the December Riots event is often theorised as a milestone in terms of pre-/after-crisis discourse and structures (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011).

Sotiris explains that the December riots have been placed in the 'history of modern social movements' (2010: 2013), proceeding with social discontent and the global recession, as it became apparent through the crisis later on. According to Karamichas (2009: 292), sectors of the European Left addressed the December riots as a prelude to other similar incidents provoked by the global recession. However, an in-depth analysis of such incidents, or more specifically, an analysis of acts of resistance (ibid.), should be carried

out and linked to the 'individual cultural and national context' (ibid.). In terms of scholarship, Anastasakis (2009: 7) and Psimitis (2011: 114) feel compelled to explain to an international audience that Greece is a country in which protests and riots are not a rare phenomenon. Greek society is familiar, or according to Karamichas (2009: 290) is 'not averse', to street politics and most of the citizens have participated 'at some point, in some sort of protest activity' (ibid.). Demonstrations here should be understood as a cultural element and in linkage to collective actions of previous decades, starting from the 1960s and 1970s (Anastasakis, 2009). Psimitis (2011) describes the December riots as a Greek Youth Movement, which could be perceived as being in linkage with other acts or mobilisations related to the student movement (ibid. 113) (3.2.1.; 3.2.2.).

For instance, Karamichas emphasises that along with student mobilisations, both anti-war and anti-globalisation protest campaigns, which traditionally have high levels of student participation, were some of the most indicative and recent examples of massive mobilisations before the December riots (2009: 290). In a national context, the ground for the emergence of a collective identity had already been laid by the 2007 protests and the defence of 'Article 16 of the Hellenic Constitution that provides for the public and free from tuition character of universities in Greece and against the government's Higher Education Bill.' (Psimitis, 2011: 114). An interesting point here is that mobilisation in Greece occurred in the national context, but was connected also to the transnational order of dissents (Karatzogianni, 2016).

Therefore, the December riots were read as an expression of social disaffection against evident social inequalities (Mouzelis, 2009: 1) which arose due to the dominance of neo-liberal ideologies and policies since 1980 (ibid.), focusing both on the national and EU context and policies (Anastasakis, 2009).The sociopolitical characteristics of the period of time that the December riots emerged were decisive and could explain the phenomenon, which is understood as a prelude to the crisis which was about to follow in Greece (Karamichas, 2009; Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011). Nonetheless, even if the riots occurred exactly before the debt crisis, the substantial causes in both incidents could be perceived as being similar, concentrating both on political and social problems, such as corruption, education, unemployment, industrial relations and others. An interesting point of consideration here is the way that all these issues were prominent in 2008, both

at a national and European level, and then the way that they shaped the repertoire of mobilisation in the crisis and post-crisis era.

The problem of youth unemployment in Greece is an indicative example of the context of the riots. In 2009, youth unemployment in EU-27 reached 16.7% while the average in Greece was 22.3% (Sotiris, 2010: 204), rapidly increasing from an average of 19.1% in 2005 (Karamesini, 2005: 30). Therefore, the everyday life of the young generation was shaped by an intensive pressure, which did not correspond to any rewards (Karamichas, 2009: 290). The paradox of a well-educated generation with limited employment prospects and poor or flexible working conditions, in combination with a weak Greek civic society (Mouzelis 2009: 2) and its linkage to the corrupted state, created the conditions in which the December riots emerged. Hence, social relations and structures produced and maintained inequalities between social actors (Psimitis, 2011: 114) and, later, in turn, resistance to these structures produced radical collective movements. What is presumed at this point is that the involved actors, the 'victims', will move to a more active participation against their social opponents. The neoliberal and capitalist policies which affected young people, including students, workers or employees (Sotiris 2010: 204), contributed to the creation of a wider collective identity which encompassed the special characteristics of each group/actor participating in the mobilisations (ibid. 113).

Featherstone (2009: 2) points out that the December riots represented a generation which, for the first time after the fall of the dictatorship in Greece, was about to 'face worse economic prospects than its predecessors' (ibid.). In the case of Grigoropoulos, the stereotype of the middle-class family was a significant point as regard the outbreak of the incident (ibid.), especially focusing on issues of participation and identity. Indeed, the origins of the December riots can be found in former collective actions and movements, in terms of the historical background of Greece or even in linkage with the contemporary European social and political turmoil. However, while the social indignation about the sociopolitical structures and conditions was, up to a point, expressed throughout the emergence of the riots, the devastating issue which shaped the nature and the extent of the protest, was the fear of losing privileges, even in social groups which traditionally tend to be protected or less affected during political and financial turmoil (e.g. well-educated, middle-class citizens).

Therefore, social groups whose privileges were threatened were the pillar of the riots, while marginalised groups (e.g. migrants) defined the broad spectrum of the mobilisations. However, a major limitation of the December riots was that, while there was a strong opposition to the disintegration of existing rights and privileges, still the mobilisations did not manage to make any kind of suggestion about future policies or structures. According to Argyrou (2013) though, this is the limitation of revolutions, which tend to struggle for change, focusing on the past (lost privileges, etc.), rather than on the future. This results in the creation of a teleological cycle and continuously leads back to the point of departure (ibid. 79). Another significant limitation of the December riots was that this movement did not clearly identify its demands. Participants did not try to prevent a specific policy or ask for a specific change, but rather they just expressed dissatisfaction about the social and political breakdown (Featherstone, 2009), and this was expressed through violence.

5.2.   The Role of Online Media

After the Wildfire mobilizations, the December Riots is the second case which indicated the importance and potentiality of online media in the development of mobilizations and protests (3.4.3.). During the December riots, the role of online media and its contribution was significant. Online media were used both as 'coordinating and organisational tools' (Milioni, 2012: 7) impacting also on the creation of a collective identity. Two hours after the fatal shooting to Grigoropoulos, using mobile phones and the internet, the first demonstrations had already been organised in the city centre of Athens (ibid. 10). While the case of the Parnitha wildfires had already indicated the way that digital media in Greece could be used for the organisation of mobilisations, the December riots was the first example which demonstrated the impact of digital communication on spontaneous organised collective actions in the Greek context.

The December riots were the first digital media enabled protests and they paralleled the rapid growth of the digital communication sector in Greece, expanding the year before, in 2007 (EL.STAT. – National Statistical Service of Greece, Hellenic Statistical

Authority, 2013; 2014). Although online media played an enabling role in the December riots, participation and online access are still points of contention. As has been extensively discussed in the literature review of the case (5.1.) this is because young people, both female and male, who had a high level of education and lived in urban areas, comprised the core profile of online users who had daily access online during that period (ibid.).

5.3.   Methods, Sampling, and Analysis

The December Riots were characterised by the key role of online media platforms, especially Indymedia and YouTube, in terms of the progress of the incident per se (Vatikiotis, 2011; Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011: 133-150; Milioni 2012). Therefore, at this stage, the study concentrates on an examination of Indymedia and YouTube, focusing on their contribution to collective identity and movement formation. At the same time, this case situates the start of the Greek mobilisations within the wider theoretical problematic and debate on the role of digital media and the linkage to society and politics.

In order to offer an insight into the online media contribution to the incident, the collection of data was targeted first, in terms of the earliest posts relating to the incident on Indymedia and secondly, amateur video, which captured the shooting scene and posted it on YouTube. Starting from the case of the Indymedia posts, the collection and analysis of the data were conducted using NVivo and NCapture (4.4). Indymedia provides an extensive archive of old posts, which in the case of the December Riots, are organised in thematic sections (4.3.1.). Therefore, data collection concentrated on Indymedia's thematic section 'December Riots 2008'.[31] This thematic section consists of 152 pages and 3025 posts, each of them linked to a thread/discussion (Dec 2008–Dec 2015). The analysis of all the posts can offer an insight into the way that the December riot debates amplified in the period 2008– 2015 and demonstrate the evolution of the mobilisations longitudinally as well as the differences in terms of goals, organisation,

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[31] https://athens.indymedia.org/topics/77/

and identity across time. However, this research focused specifically on the analysis of the first three posts and the threads/discussion after the shooting, in order to take a snapshot of the use of online media at that point in time. Therefore, the examination of Indymedia included the collection and the analysis of posts from three different threads. The first thread consisted of 52 posts/items (A) reporting and asking for confirmation about the incident.[32] The second thread consisted of 17 posts and concentrated on the confirmation of Grigoropoulos' death (B).[33] The third thread consisted of 6 posts and focused on the video of the shooting scene as this was broadcast by Mega Channel (C),[34] pointing out the differences between online and mainstream media.

The sampling of Indymedia threads and posts consists of the following:
- The first analysed thread: 52 posts/items (A), posted between 06/08/2008, 21:18 pm and 10/12/2008, 12:39 am
- The second analysed thread: 17 posts/items (B), posted between 06/12/2008, 22:02 pm and 07/12/2008, 01:07 pm
- The third analysed thread: 6 posts/items (C), posted between 08/12/2008, 15:16 pm and 08/12/2008, 16:26 pm.

Using NCapture and Chrome, these threads and the posts were downloaded as PDFs and then were imported into NVivo. The coding of the material was accomplished based on cyberconflict theory (Chapter 2) and descriptive characteristics. Therefore, following the theoretical framework of cyberconflict theory, the examined nodes concentrated on the historical background of the incident, on the mobilisations (organisation of actions, protests, etc.), on the mainstream media (representation and online media contrast, etc.) and on the incident per se (information and details) (2.1). Focusing on these themes/nodes

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[32] https://athens.indymedia.org/post/933042/, Emergency! Someone is heavily injured at Messologiou square, Exarchia ('Επείγον! Σοβαρός τραυματισμός στη Μεσολογγίου' (Εξάρχεια)) (52 posts) (Indymedia, 6/12/2008- 10/12/2008)

[33], https://athens.indymedia.org/post/933066/, The fifteen-years old boy is dead ('Ο 15χρονος είναι νεκρός')(17 posts) (Indymedia, 6-7/12/2008)

[34] https://athens.indymedia.org/post/935769/, MEGA cheat: they edit and add sound at the shooting video (Αλητεία του MEGA: πρόσθεσαν ήχους στο βίντεο της δολοφονίας) (6 posts) (Indymedia, 8/12/2008)

and on the descriptive characteristics of the posts the categorisation was completed and analysed accordingly.

Then, at the next stage of the study, the examination of YouTube was conducted concentrating on the original amateur video, which captured the shooting scene and was posted online by the channel RageTMGr,[35] a day after the incident, on the 7th of December 2008. The video was posted on YouTube, after the post on Indymedia, which, due to technical difficulties, was not broadly accessible. Following the links in Indymedia and using NCapture, 489 comments from the YouTube video were collected, downloaded and imported into NVivo. Again, a cyberconflict analysis of the comments focused on the historical background, mobilisation, mainstream media and the incident per se. Due to the characteristics of this platform, three more nodes were included in the analysis, concentrating on the involved actors (Police, State) and on comments irrelevant to the incident.

To sum up, following the suggestions in the literature, the examination of the December Riots focused on Indymedia and YouTube, as the most indicative platforms to illustrate the impact of online media on communicational and organisational processes. In 2008, before the rapid adoption of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, YouTube and Indymedia provided an additional public space and alternative channel of communication. The extensive amount of online material produced then could support a more in-depth examination of the December Riots. However, the selected analysed material aims to efficiently support the review of the social and political debates, leading to an examination of digital media in the crisis context. Therefore, while the study of additional material would be possible, an important point that should be understood at this stage is how the online media contributed to the progress of the incident, rather than evaluating the influence of online media at every phase of the evolution of the incident. The selected analysed material provides an insight into the contribution of online media to the actual development of the incident, both in terms of representation and communication.

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[35] https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=b1wrDbw9KeQ

5.4. The Examined Platforms: Indymedia and YouTube

5.4.1. Indymedia in the December Riots

Indymedia, which was founded in Athens in 2001, is an indicative example of an online and alternative media platform, which supports communicational, organisational and representational processes and contributed to the rise of collective action. Similarly, in the case of the December Riots, this was the first online media platform used for the organisation of the demonstrations, which emerged later (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011: 133-150). Indymedia's statistics of the page views show that one day before the incident, on the 5th of December, the website had approximately 600,000 hits, while two days after the incident, on the 7th of December (ibid.) there were more than 9,000,000 hits. Eight minutes after the shooting of Grigoropoulos, the incident was reported on Indymedia, while the mainstream media reacted approximately forty minutes later, by a 'breaking news' spot, on a private TV channel (ibid.).

The examination of Indymedia began with the collection of the first relevant post(s) on the page, focusing on Indymedia's thematic section 'December Riots 2008' and the selection of material was based on the relevance of the threads to the incident, in turn drawn from academic scholarship discussed above. As explained, using NCapture and NVivo, the posts were collected and analysed according to the cyberconflict theory, identifying the main themes and types of conflict, the political context and environment, social movement characteristics and the impact of online media use, as well as media dynamics, and conflict elements (Karatzogianni, 2006: 195). The coding of the posts was accomplished focusing on the following points/nodes (Chapter 2):

a) Historical background and sociopolitical structures (references to the historical background and sociopolitical structures). This node illustrates how the environment of the conflict and the historical background is linked to the actual examined incident. At the same time, this node identifies the type of conflict (sociopolitical and ethnoreligious), in order to contextualise further analysis.

b) Ideology,organisation and mobilisation structures This node provides an insight into the usage of online media within the conflict and the contribution to the emergence of collective actions.

c) Mainstream media (mainstream media representations, published information, censorship and control of information, identifying the actors dominating the political discourse). This node refers to the discussion of frames and the internet as a medium.

d) Posts relating to the incident itself (what happened and how). This node mainly supports the analysis of the data, categorising information, which does not necessarily support any further understanding of conflict.

All the analysed posts were categorised into multiple nodes, according to their content. Using NVivo and the speed-coding bar, the data were manually coded based on a 'node coding system' (Richards, 1999: 112-4). The aim of this system is both to create and manage categories, providing an opportunity to view/review the material and to make distinctions between categories, dimensions or patterns of coding (ibid. 112).

The first analysed thread consists of 52 posts/items (A), while the first post, the seed of the data, posted on 06/12/2008, at 21:18 by the user *Ora Miden*, reports and asks for confirmation of the incident:

Figure 5: Seed Thread/Post

Translation in English, by the author: Urgent! Serious injury at Mesologiou Street (Exarcheia), by ORA MIDEN, 06/12/2008, 9:18 pm.

I just received a phone call from a comrade who told me that there have been some clashes at Mesologiou Street and one kid has been injured by a rubber bullet of a cop

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and that he is in a critical condition. An ambulance has arrived and is transferring him to Euagelismos hospital… Those of you in Athens please confirm the information.

The second analysed thread, consisted of 17 posts, with the first confirming that the 15-year-old boy was dead (B):

Figure 6: Seed Thread/Post 2

Ο 15χρονος είναι νεκρός   933066

από **Αναρχικό Σφυροδρέπανο** ⊙ 06/12/2008 10:02 μμ.,

Εξέγερση Δεκέμβρης 2008

@

Κατεβαίνει κόσμος στο κέντρο. Όλοι στα Εξάρχεια να μην αφήσουμε να τα αποκλείσουν…
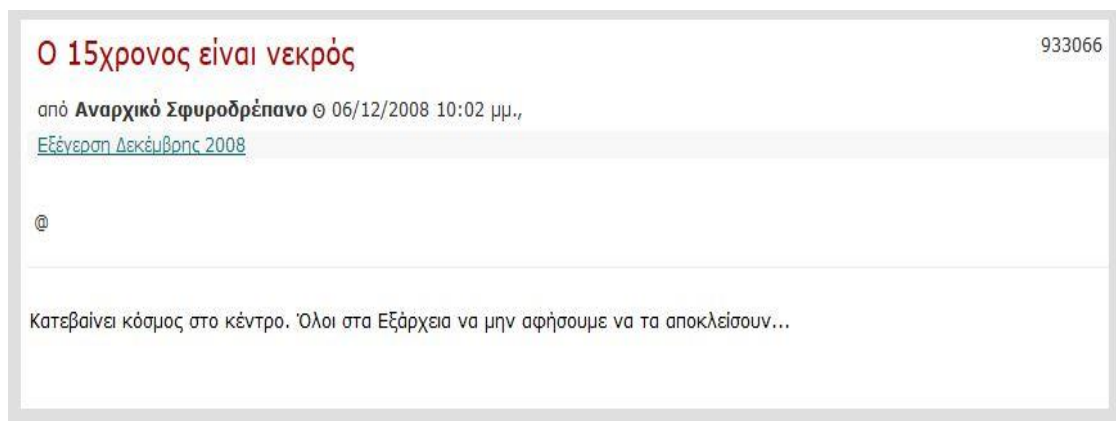
Translation in English, by the author: The 15-year-old boy is dead by Anarhiko Sfirodrepano, 06/12/2008, 22:02 pm.

People are heading to the city centre. Everyone gather at Exarcheia. We should not let them ban the area

The third analysed thread focuses on comments on the video of the shooting scene as this was broadcast by Mega Channel (C) and consisted of 6 posts. However, in the thematic section of the December riots, there is another discussion which concentrates on the video, which was not included in the sampling as it mainly focused on the technical characteristics of the video.[36]

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[36] https://athens.indymedia.org/post/934020/, The video of shooting scene

Table 23**:** Nodes and References in the Three Threads/Posts

Sources:	References				Nodes
	Total	A	B	C	
	7	3	3	1	Historical background and socio-political structures
	35	25	10	-	Mobilizations
	9	2	1	6	Mainstream media
	33	25	7	1	Incident

For the first examined node, concentrating on the historical background and the sociopolitical structures, there are seven different references, which indicate a parallelism between the case of Grigoropoulos and the Kaltezas case, pointing out the police and state violence. Michalis Kaltezas was a fifteen-year-old who was shot dead by a police officer during a march to the American embassy on the November 1973 Polytechnic anniversary in 1985 (Kassimeris, 2013: 84); this resulted in violent protests and riots in Athens and other cities. At the same time, this case is discussed as an example of state corruption and injustice, as the police officer who shot the 15-year-old boy was sentenced and spent less than three years in prison, after which the court cleared him of all the charges.[37] In a comparative way, these two cases were discussed extensively focusing on the state's failures in terms of social justice and suppression policies as well as state violence. Other issues from this node were relevant to conspiracy theories and the state, while the same consideration was later observed in the debt crisis discourse too (e.g. surveillance practices, discussion on historical incidents and police violence, how the incident outbroke). Finally, in this node the complicit relationship between state and capitalism are also debated.

The second examined node concentrated on mobilisation practices, communication, and organisation. This node is linked to 35 different references as observed in two out of the three analysed discussions. Even if the last discussion/thread (C) in relation to the

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[37] http://www.tovima.gr/politics/article/?aid=245725

shooting video did not have any references related to mobilisation, this was a major consideration in the other two examined discussions/threads (A, B). In this node, users discuss and exchange information on the real-time evolution of the incident after the shooting, as well as coordinating and organising future protests and collective actions. Therefore, organisational issues, strategies, and practices dominated the discussion at this point. This includes a review of police practices and opposition, advice related to the safety of protestors, while users used this platform for organisational reasons, settling and spreading information about meeting points.

As regards the privacy of online communication and the platform, users are aware of monitoring and surveillance practices of the state, warning other users not to reveal much information about mobilisation plans. Using this platform, users coordinated actions in different locations and cities across the country, while at the same time, a solidarity network emerged. While this is already known from the literature, it is also confirmed here by the analysis of the relevant Indymedia posts/threads.

Table 24: Sample of Posts – Information about Mobilisations:

User:	Posts (translated into English)
a	Everyone from Patra who reads should go to the local branch
euri	From Patisioon Street you can have access (in Polytechnic School), there are around 200 people in and 50 hemmed in the square by the riot police
euri	There is access to the Polytechnic School from Patision Street.
BB	15 police officers at Apogeumatini offices (newspaper) in Benaki Street
dsparagis	Protests and scuffles between young men and the police in Nicosia and Paphos
T	Hey guys, does anyone knows about Patra? Anything about tomorrow? Is there going to be any mobilisation for example? What I've been told from KNE is that they organised a mobilisation together with KKE… What about the rest of us to organise something independently to political parties?
P	Tomorrow at 4 pm, discussion at the Polytechnic School Tomorrow at 6 pm, left-wing protests starting from Propulaia, maybe there is also organised protests from our front Could someone confirm?

Issi85	I don't know about Patra, but I wish that a proper protest will be organised. Keep us updated/informed
SpyrusThe Virus	Today Σήμερα,8/12 στις 12.30 at 12:30 student fathered at Kallithea's Council and marched to the police station of Kallithea, anyone from Kallithea come and join
ANTIFA (αντιφα)	Finally, the march took place earlier today in Kerkira, including attacks on the police station of Soroko and the Administration of the Citizens Protections of L. Alexandras str. At Wednesday 10 of December all together united for a greater wave/cycle of attacks on police stations and banks

Throughout the online discourse, a heavily debated issue is the nature and what type of actions should be organised. While there are examples of users encouraging participation in protests or calling for attacks on the police, on the other hand, there is much discussion about which kind of actions should be avoided or not be accepted (e.g. looting shops). Thus, strong critiques against the uprising emerged in relation to acceptable protest action, with the debate concentrating on whether it is possible to recognise forms of resistance or struggle through destruction of property, vandalism, and violence. This was debated by both participants and non-participants in the uprising.

The final thread concentrated on the video of the shooting scene. This was an amateur video, which was edited and broadcast by mainstream media presenting the shooting as a defence reaction, in contrast to the original video which documented the real incident and was broadcast online (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011). The post and the thread related to the video dominated the node of mainstream media, while some relevant references were observed in the other two examined discussions/threads (A, B). The dispute about the mainstream media was expressed focusing on different points (e.g. ownership), while the linkage between the state and the traditional media is also pointed out. At the same time, the contrast between the online and the offline incident's representation was highlighted and criticised throughout the discussion.

Table 25: Mainstream and Online Media Contrast

User:	Posts (Translated into English by this author)

Indy1208	They added irrelevant sound of breakages in the Grigoropoulos' murder video. Watch the original video on YouTube and watch how it was presented on the Mega Channel News, presented by Stravelakis yesterday. If indeed they did this for dramatisation (of the video) they are just stupid – as if there is a necessity for more dramatisation of the in cold blood murder of a 15-year-old boy. If they did this to support the police version of the event related to attack by hooded thugs, then they are affiliated with the government… The Mega Channel video will be also uploaded to the indy1208.wordpress.com and here and other sites before it will be shut down by Mega Channel
Re paideia (ρε παιδιά)	This video has already been normally broadcast on television and the only procedure was adding beep sounds that they put on the girl's voice saying 'they are assholes'. I can't believe that did this thing, what was heard was the sound of a demonstration… As a start, the original video is still on YouTube, and even if they (police/government) shut it down from there, I guess that many people have already downloaded and saved it to their PCs like I did… how can we blow the whistle? A supreme disgrace... once again… mercy, that's enough
Police on by back	Don't forget that there are eyewitnesses and all of them can gainsay the lies that have been said, heard and written. Generally, television is the main source of misinformation and misguidance/distortion of incidents, serving experiences – it has always been. Fortunately, except me there were many people witnessing the incident – they (the police) were stupid enough to do this (the shooting) in front of everyone, so even if they prohibited YouTube and every other site, they would have had to kill so as to keep mouths shut and bury the truth, both TV (media) and the government

Finally, there were 33 different references to the incident, discussing the conditions and the involved actors. Users exchanged information about the incident, in contrast to mainstream media information and representation. While the real-time information about the incident was important, at the same time, some of the online participants started organising actions and protests straight away.

Table 26: Organisation of Actions/Mobilisations

Nikos (νικος)	Scuffles in the Square with the confirmed critical condition of the young comrade. Do not let this atrocity pass with no response… whoever doctor or lawyer can go to Euagelismos (Hospital).

Syntrofos (comrade)	From a comrade call who just arrived at Mesologiou (square). The pavement is accessible, fires around, police riot at the periphery
Nm (νμ)	A lot of people at the Polytechnic Schools, scuffles at Exarcheia, Patision is accessible, the kid is 16-years, this is confirmed, everyone should join at the city centre
cabaret_b audelaire	(picture attached) Patision street, close to Stournari street. I couldn't go closer due to the teargas.

Indymedia participants exchanged information about the victim's identity, the hospital he was transferred to, as well as the police officer's identity, confirming information and raising awareness of the incident. An interesting point here is that this is one of the first times in Greece when the online news agenda was transferred to the offline and mainstream media agenda (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011) raising debates about the impact of the digital media on the formation of the public sphere. Before continuing to the analysis of the YouTube video post, it is worth mentioning that among the Indymedia posts there were some references to the first tweets about the incident as follows, highlighting Twitter's usage of the incident. The first tweet related to the incident was the following (Tsimitakis, 2009):

Figure 7: First Tweet about the Incident

Translated into English by the author: 'Someone got shot in Exarcheia'

5.4.2. December Riots and YouTube: Video and Comments

As indicated by the relevant thread on Indymedia, the contrast between the mainstream and alternative media representation of the December riots is clear in the case of the

amateur video, which captured the shooting scene and the first reactions to the incident. Mainstream media edited and broadcast the video, presenting the shooting as a defence action to Molotov cocktails and attacks on police officers in the area. However, the original video was posted online raising strong criticism of the mainstream media. Later, mainstream media adopted and presented the original video as well, explaining the mistake in the editing process before screening (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011). Almost a month after the incident, around mid-January, the Greek government tracked down Indymedia, making it part of the parliament agenda for days (2011: 143).

The examination of YouTube concentrated on the original video of the shooting scene as posted on the platform, in contrast to the mainstream media version. The analysis included 489 comments conducted under the node coding system as explained above. However, the final coding set was shaped according to YouTube's features and the rich corpus, which was provided by the collection of comments. In contrast to Indymedia, which is used mainly by users with specific political and ideological affiliation, YouTube caters to users affiliated with the wider political and ideological spectrum. Therefore, due to the length of the analysed material and the platform's features, a more detailed examination of the annotations and debates among users and about the actors involved in the incident is actually possible.

The analysis consists of the following nodes: a) the incident, b) the sociopolitical structures and the historical background, c) mobilisation and the d) mainstream media. Due to the rich corpus of data, three nodes were added to the data set focusing on the main actors involved in the incident (state, police), on the conflict as it occurred online (users' arguments and conflict) and on offline conflict (violence): e) argument/conflict among users, f) police, g) state and finally h) comments not related to the incident. The YouTube comment coding developed as follows:

Table 27: YouTube Comments, Nodes and References

Nodes/Themes	References
Incident	90

Social Structures
   o Historical Background
	104
	   o 53

Mobilization	13

Mainstream Media
   o International attention
	9
	   o 11

Argument/conflict among users
   o Against Riots
	95
	   o 13

Police	107
State	70

Non-Related to the incident
   o Swearwords
	60
	   o 18

Starting with the first examined node, there are 90 different comments/references relevant to the incident, with users discussing the conditions under which the incident emerged as well as the involved actors. Similarly, to Indymedia, discussion and information about the incident were expected to be among the most dominant themes of annotation, highlighting the way that different online media platforms provided alternative forms and channels of information, in contrast to the mainstream media and traditional journalism's practices. Users used online media platforms both to organise collective actions and mobilisations as well as to communicate real-time information about the incident, some of which transferred to the mainstream media. At the same time, themes and issues, which later constructed the crisis discourse are linked to this node and the examined incident. Some of the most indicative examples here are related to the domination of the mainstream media, the state and the corruption (e.g. linkage between media and politics, ownership, historical background, etc.) (3.3; 3.4.).

In this node, the incident is discussed focusing on the video content, as well as on characteristics of the shooting scene, including details regarding the number of shootings, the number of people involved and the type of argument (e.g. verbal, etc.). The next dominant discussed point concentrated on the involved actors. Here the annotations are elaborated based on stereotypes, pointing out social structures and traditions, which arose within the historical context of the incident. Therefore, the state, the police as well as the protestors and the people who did not support the mobilisations, were identified in

stereotypical political debates and stereotypes (e.g. far right – far left, pro-/anti-government and the state, etc.).

Table 28: Example of Involved Actors and the Discourse (e.g. Police, State, etc.)

Users:	Posts (translated into English)
daneisteEllines	Cops, pigs, murderers, gallows to who is responsible who gave guns to the peasants, cops, goodbye alexi
nikathgr	Cops, Pigs Murderers! ACAB
Doomgus1	It is not directly cops' mistake. This is your democracy. Police kill civilians every day, but just because they are not Greek no one cares.
cfuplus	The thousands of dead who died for the nation, does anyone think of them anymore? They killed so that today the so-called anarcho-liberals play the game of the Para-state. Which are the real problems of this locale? A stray bullet?
Michail georgakis	1. No one said that if the police officer shoots having as a purpose to kill it's not a crime. But this will be cleared soon. 2. Swearing at me is flattering because most you are uneducated. 3. You are 300–400 people that the best for you would be to go either to school or to jail. Choose. 4. I know that he was just 15 years old and this is sad but why a 15-year-old boy from a rich family attacked police officers? 5. Why does every horse believe that Exarcheia should not have police? You should think about these and leave along the expletives fascists
akaramanis	Of course, it is not right to burn stores or cars of other people that are innocent that's for sure. Wakeup Greek assholes, because the 2 parties there PASOK and ND have stolen everything and you stupid that you are go and vote hoping to get VOLEMENOS (settled). Sakis Stockholm Sweden.

Comments on the police officer who shot Grigoropoulos were mainly focused on his symbolic role as a member of the police and the state's power, while the critiques both on the police's practices and the state violence were also strong. In a similar rationale, the discussion around Grigoropoulos is elaborated based on the misconception of the anarchist teenager or the stereotype of the spoiled middle-class fifteen-year-old boy. These stereotypes should not be understood separately to the period when the incident

broke out, which was just before the beginning of the crisis – or in other words, as suggested, a prelude of what was about to follow (Vradis and Dalakoglou, 2011). In the Greek context, the clichéd perception of the violent and corrupted police officer, has its origins in the civil war and the dictatorship, while contemporary incidents, such as the Kaltezas case in 1985, re-shaped this stereotype according to the contemporary Greek sociopolitical context. Based on these stereotypes, the discussion was further expanded focusing on an injustice framework expressing pre-existing historical political conflict continuities between actors.

The second node consisted of references to the main points of argument/conflict among users. This node consisted of 95 different references/comments, with the major argument among users being about whether violence and vandalism should be understood as appropriate actions and forms of resistance. Exarcheia, the location where the incident took place, is a student district of Athens, which is also characterised as the centre of radical political activism (Kretsos, 2012) and thereby, a strong critique on the motivation of the people and the teenagers visiting the area emerged. On this critique, Grigoropoulos' stereotypical characterisation as a middle-class spoiled teenager fulfilled this narration. On the other hand, the opposition to this approach pointed out the vulnerabilities of the state and the police, without straightforwardly linking the area to a specific political spectrum. A third approach to the issue pointed out that even if the incident justified the formation of collective actions and resistance, still violence and vandalism contribute to degrading protests (and the movement). On these cases, users accuse each other of fascist behaviour and ideology.

The next cluster of nodes included the node on police, state and the historical background. These nodes were analysed in groups, explaining the way that the involved actors are framed, and at the same time, pointing out the way that the police is understood as part of the state apparatus. These nodes are linked to the node of social structure and historical background, demonstrating the stereotypical and misconceived narration of the incident online. Starting with the police node, there are 107 relevant references/comments, which are not confined to the involved actors, but instead are focused on the institutional role of the police within the state apparatus. In this node, the examined incident is once again discussed in juxtaposition to previous cases, concentrating, though, on both the national

and the international context, with references to the case of Kaltezas in Greece and Carlo Giuliani in Genova (2001). Police here is discussed as a part of the state's repression practices, while the youth is understood as a symbol of political opposition to the neoliberal capitalist system.

In this node, the examined incident is straightforwardly linked and presented as a result of the contemporary sociopolitical structure and the limitations of neoliberal democracy. Thus, Greek society is to be blamed for the establishment and maintenance of the contemporary Greek political environment, which is characterised by injustice and corruption. Again, the issue of vandalism and violence is critically discussed, focusing on the destruction of the middle and lower-class properties, as a strategy, which could impact on the policies and practices of the police and the state. Police and state corruption are among the main concerns in this node, while the association between the police and Golden Dawn is also pointed out. This is an early appearance of Golden Dawn, the neo-Nazi party, which came to prominence in the mainstream political scene only after the elections of 2012 (Ellinas, 2010, Bistis, 2013).

In the next node, there are 70 comments/references related to the state. This discussion is dominated by two sub-themes: corruption and power, which at this point is linked to state violence, justifying the incident and linking it to the historical background. Here Grigoropoulos represents the youth, which is straightforwardly offended by the state and therefore, youth should resist and reclaim its voice and position in society (rambokop1, 08/12/2008, comment 326). It is indicative that, during that period the discussion on the so-called 'G700' was intensive (Theodoropoulou, 2014: 183). 'G700' was a term with age, cultural and class characteristics and used to describe the younger generation (ibid., 183-190). This generation was the first which was well-educated, with – mainly – a middle-class background, having low-paid jobs and part time jobs, following the European trend which increased around 2008, and eventually proved to be a prelude to the debt crisis.

In opposition to this approach, instead of focusing on the younger generation, riots were described by opposing voices as having been organised by a minority, a specific small group of people, which traditionally tries to destroy the country through such kinds of

behaviour and actions. Another point that is strongly highlighted in this node is that riots and violence were tools effectively used to draw attention from the profound meaning and concerns raised by the incident and managed to influence the media and political agenda (see previous and next table).

Table 29: Example of Violence-related Discourse

Users	Posts (Translated into English)
Countdemian	To go and destroy and burn is not terrorism? Mercy
Michail georgakis	Assholes fuck you! Who told you that you are allowed to go and vandalise others property? Who said that you can attack police officers? Go fuck yourselves! Every time they should shoot you assholes! You burn universities, work, and properties! Go fuck yourselves!
doctormarkon	Today it was Alexis, tomorrow it may be your child or my child. This is how it has always been. The state seems in distance to the citizens, something like a foreign invader. If you hadn't access to coaxing and favours you were always a stranger and hunted!
Onoma66	Tomorrow marches around the city! We should fuck them! Especially fucking Athens! Burn it!

The node of the historical background and sociopolitical structures is comprised of 53 and 104 references/comments. This node decodes the structures and stereotypes, which in all of the above nodes results in argument and conflict, online and offline. At the same time, this process offers an in-depth understanding of the evolution of the incident per se. As regards the references focusing on the sociopolitical structures, unemployment, corruption and inequality, these emerge as the dominant issues of the online discussion.

Another debate examines which practices are related to fascism, while a discussion around racism and migration is also already raging away at this point. What is suggested once again is that contemporary democracy is unable to protect civil rights or protect lower and working-class rights. As regards the references to the historical background, Kaltezas and other similar cases are mentioned, with typical references to the complicity of police and state crimes during the dictatorship. Furthermore, migration, fascism and

anarchism are discussed in linkage with historical examples and cases. There is clear attribution to neoliberal policies as well as to left and right-wing parties and ideologies. Based on these points, state corruption is suggested as the surface issue of a multidimensional and historical political problem.

Table 30: References Related to the Historical and Sociopolitical Background of the Incident:

Users:	Posts (Translated into English)
Mavro Kokkino (black-red, Μαύρο Κόκκινο)	Once again, the servants of the authorities and of the legal order showed their real face... Like 20 years ago with Kaltezas, etc. and now with Grigoropoulos… and we should not forget the students who ended up at the hospitals and Giuliani in Genova... And then they say that if I go to burn a police car then I am the criminal… u can kill the protester, but u can't kill the protest.
Countdemian	So, the era of peace ended. Fire and axes. For an era without states' murders
LKJHGFDSA2222	Dictatorship is coming back today. They blamed only the anti-authoritarians and for the fucking-cops nothing!!!
Athenscity13	If they could see which reasons they died for (these who died or the nation) and who governing us and what they achieved they would have had to rue.
Doomgus1	It is not directly cops' mistake. This is your democracy. Police kill civilians every day, but just because they are not Greek no one cares.
cfuplus	The thousands of dead who died for the nation, does anyone think of them anymore? They killed so that today the so-called anarcho-liberals play the game of the Para-state. Which are the real problems of this locale? A stray bullet?

The strong linkages to the historical and sociopolitical background denote the emergence of a rich cyberconflict environment. The arguments and the conflicting ideas and ideologies are not only based on the contemporary difficulties of the time, but additionally express traditional debates which were expressed differently through history and time. This confirms the strong historical continuity, which up to a point explains the

pre-crisis and the crisis era, while at the same time, the historical memory and the conflicting ideologies support the formation of contemporary social and political tensions. The ideological positions of the actors diversify when the case of Grigoropoulos is understood as an unfortunate momentary incident, rather than framing the Grigoropoulos murder as part of a historical political continuity of structural violence. In other words, the conflict arising online expressed offline is being understood as a sociopolitical conflict, whereby online platforms support the formation of mobilising structures (participation, recruitment, tactics, and goals), framing processes (strategy, identity and the internet effect) and the political opportunity structure in which the internet is situated as an important component (ibid.) (Karatzogianni, 2006).

The next node focused on the mainstream media, both as regards the national and the international interest that the incident attracted, as indicated by comments in different languages. The international interest resulted in the emergence of a solidarity network, which was strongly observed more in online media, rather than in the mainstream. A major point of consideration arises within the different narration and discourse as observed in comments in different languages. Users commenting in other languages expressed solidarity, while they also used online media to learn information as regards the way that the incident evolved. The dispute of mainstream media is strongly expressed and the online platforms used to confirm or disprove mainstream and offline media information.

The vulnerabilities and limitations of the Greek mainstream and offline media have already been discussed while their impact on the public sphere is pointed out by the usage of online media. However, the dispute about the mainstream media system is justified by the history of the Greek media environment as well as by its linkage to political structures and the state (e.g. ownership, corruption, linkage to the state) (Doulkeri and Terzis 1997; Sims 2003; Tsimitakis 2009; Smyrnaios, 2010; 2013). The gap raised by these limitations further amplifies the potentiality of online media, especially as regards the formation of the public sphere. As suggested by the analysis of online data, users reported the incident in real time, thus influencing the narration of the mainstream media (e.g. YouTube video) and consequently, the discourses and debates in the public sphere.

The node on mobilisation is comprised of a small number of references/comments, pointing out the necessity for the organisation of collective actions and mobilisations. That organisation was facilitated by the use of the two online platforms examined. In fact, participants adjusted to the characteristics and the features of each platform. In the case of YouTube, the features of the platform provided a space for debate and conflict, giving the opportunity for the discussion to be expanded continuously, but not in a chronological continuity and order, with users tending to respond to and criticise comments even years after the original post. In contrast, Indymedia's features supported the participation of a more specific demographic and ideological set of participants, who were highly involved in the organisation of collective actions. On both of these platforms, references to mobilisations and especially the participation of the organisational processes suggests that the online users were likely to participate in offline mobilisation. References to conflict or argument using swear words, or references which were not related to the incident were grouped in one node. These references/comments did not contribute to the creation of online discussion and, therefore, were not included in the analysis.

5.5. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

The analysis of data was shaped according to the cyberconflict framework. Therefore, the baseline of the analysis concentrated on the examination of the historical background of the incident, as indicated by the online material, and then, the findings were interlinked to the fourth chapter of the study and the review of the historical and sociopolitical background of the Greek political and media landscape. The next step of the analysis focused on the identification and the evolution of the major debates and conflict, starting from the examined incident up to the crisis era (e.g. state corruption, polarization, far right ideology, etc.). Participation is of significant importance both in the online and offline environment. Users participated in the online discourse, organising mobilisations and initiatives, in an attempt to fulfil gaps raised by the already existing sociopolitical structures. At the same time, participation had a meaningful impact on the formation of the public sphere as well as on the representation of the incident.

The December riots denoted a new era not only for communication but for political participation, activism and protest organisation and coordination. Some of the initiatives founded during that period included the creation of online and alternative media projects, the occupation of social public spaces and squats, as well as neighbourhood assemblies. This created an appropriate *pre-existing environment of networked dissent, which at the crisis period supported the formation of alternative and solidarity structures and initiatives, which up to a point acted as a shadow* state, creating the foundation of the crisis movements and subsequent mobilisations.

The contrast between the representation of the December Riots in the online media and offline media indicated the way that the features of each media form influence the formation of the public sphere. At the same time, the analysis of the Indymedia and YouTube material pointed out the impact that the features of each platform have in terms of communication and participation in the online discourse. *Indymedia attracted users who shared a common understanding of the incident, common values and political ideology, in contrast to YouTube, which attracted users with characteristics from a wider social political and ideological spectrum*. Thereby, YouTube supported the beginning of a complex discussion, as well as conflict at a more advanced level. Nevertheless, the areas of conflict and the discussed themes are identical on both platforms. Additionally, the features and the different opportunities provided by each media platform also had an impact on the organisational process of collective action. Indymedia was used for more in-depth and targeted discussion, including the organisation of protest, while YouTube was used mainly to raise awareness and recruit people, as well as a space for debate. Therefore, YouTube should be understood as a space for discussion and conflict, able to influence ideas and ideology, while, on the other hand, Indymedia is understood as a tool used for specific purposes, more strictly focusing on activism and supporting specific political orientation.

An interesting observation here is that the areas of conflict and the themes discussed online, in the case of the December Riots, were major considerations and issues which dominated the crisis of sociopolitical changes and discourse, highlighting the gap between media, politics and society. Issues related to the state and politicians' corruption, violence, democracy's vulnerabilities in contemporary Greece and capitalism, are some

of the issues dominating the political discourse. *Online platforms were used to express and debate issues which, at that point in time, were not on the agenda or part of the discourse of mainstream media, pointing out, the weak inefficient linkage between media, society and politics*. At the same time, a strong bottom-up dynamic relationship between society and online media, which is a step forward in terms of expression, representation and understanding of the sociopolitical turmoil, is observed.

The December riots were a 'monument to the glory of freedom of information and freedom of expression under capitalism' (Matsas, 2010b: 52), which challenged the 'monopoly of violence of the State and bourgeois power itself' (ibid.). At the same time, this was one of the first times in Greece that individuals participated in the construction of the public sphere, as it is shaped by the media, building the news agenda and finally, influencing the mainstream media representation of an incident (Tsimitakis, 2009). As is highlighted by the literature too, the mainstream media representation didn't manage to follow the online media discourse and content, which was updated in real-time, influencing the evolution of the incident per se. Although, later, the mainstream media reproduced news and information from the online media, a trend that still exists. Milioni discussed Owners and Palmer's opinion that traditionally, the radical social movements face a dilemma as regards media coverage and representation (cited in Milioni, 2012: 2). Mainstream media tend to ignore or misrepresent radical movements, while social movements are not able to control that representation. In contrast, while online and alternative media representations overlap such limitations, at the same time they do not provide the opportunity to communicate messages to a broader public (ibid.).

In the case of the December riots, *these resulted in a fragmented public sphere*. Nevertheless, while the concept of the public sphere should be studied in terms of public deliberation, dialogue or democracy, the Western establishments, including the contemporary type of democracy and the mainstream media structures, have already clearly indicated their vulnerabilities and limitations (Dahlberg, 2001; Cammaerts and Carpentier, 2007: 108-111). In this context, online media offered an opportunity to overcome such limitations, providing a representation of the riots different from the mainstream media representation. Although this creates an ambiguity about the potentiality of online media, it still suggests a significant alternative to mainstream media

limitations. At the same time, while at a later stage mainstream media adapted and transmitted information from the online media, still, the way that the information was adapted and presented by the mainstream media should be an issue of consideration. The example of the analysed YouTube video is one of the clearest examples of this procedure.

As Kyriakopoulos highlights, after the first week of demonstrations, the Greek and international mainstream media presented the situation as follows: 'the revolt of the spoiled: European youth are rising as they see the end of their privileges' (2010: 242). The representation of 'youth', of 'masked faces' or 'foreigners' participating in the riots (2010: 242-43) indicate references which could be related to fear and terrorism. At the same time, media representation didn't extensively concentrate on Grigoropoulos' death but instead, focused on governmental practises and skills in handling the crisis, in contrast to the online media, thereby creating an interesting effect on the public sphere. Mainstream media were strongly criticised as regards journalistic practices and ethics, as well as the impact on public opinion. According to Fenton, 'the media, hungry for news fodder, routinely access and privilege elite definitions of reality and are claimed to serve ruling hegemonic interests, legitimise social inequality and thwart participatory democracy' (Fenton, 2008: 231). Thus, online media provided the opportunity for the formation of additional communicational processes and participation, having a strong impact on the evolution and structure of the incidents.

Consequently, the mainstream media's representation either had a weak influence on the public sphere or all together with online media contributed to the formation of a fragmented public sphere. The online media provided a public space for discussion and organisation of demonstrations in different cities across Greece and Europe, supporting the emergence of a network of actions as well as the creation of a new collective identity. Users participated in mobilisations both in local physical spaces and in online communities, reinforcing ideology and collective identity. Online media provided an autonomous and independent channel of communication, making explicit mainstream media vulnerabilities and their linkage to the state.

Traditionally, online media have always been more supportive of radical and social movements providing a more direct and effective method of representation and

communication/organisation, in contrast to traditional media. For Atton (in Coyer, Dowmunt and Fountain: 71-78), online and alternative media manage to reflect ideologies and support the creation of social movements and dissents, in contrast to mainstream media which tend to homogenise varieties of dissent, limiting the richness of ideologies and collective actions through simplified approaches and representations (ibid.). Indymedia, which is well known for its role in the anti-capitalist struggles of the 1990s, is an indicative example that points out the importance of online media in the case of the December Riots (ibid.). YouTube, on the other hand, illustrated how the different features and characteristics of the platform provide different communicational and organisational processes, supporting the formation of collective actions and social movements.

The case of the December riots is a complicated and multi-dimensional example and it has been examined from a variety of different perspectives. In this analysis, what is understood is the main type of cyberconflict, which started with sociopolitical characteristics and was soon dominated by ethnoreligious debates, indicating the grounds on which the crisis discourse was framed a few years later. At the same time, the December Riots represents the first case which situated the Greek context in the contemporary debate on the attributes of the internet and its effect on democracy – digital or not – highlighting the importance of online media in civil society and the contemporary social movements/protests.

6. The Second Period: The Anti-Austerity Movement – Facebook & Networks

The study of Facebook focused on the case of Aganaktismenoi (6.3) and the SYRIZA Online Diaspora (6.3.), as two of the most indicative cases of the rise of the anti-austerity movement, and the restructuring of the Greek political environment within the crisis context (3.3.). This chapter provides, briefly, specific sampling and software techniques (6.1.) (for general explanation of the methodology see Chapter 4), the review of the overall statistics of the two cases and networks (6.2.), and then proceeds to the analysis of the two cases (historical and sociopolitical background and analysis of data) (6.3; 6.4.).

6.1. Sociopolitical and Historical Context: The Greek Indignados/Aganaktismenoi and SYRIZA Online Diaspora

6.1.1. The Greek Indignados/ Aganaktismenoi: Sociopolitical and Historical Characteristics

The so-called Greek Indignados (Aganaktismenoi) can be understood close to the notion of waves of protest of contention (Tarrow, 2011), and constituted one of the first anti-austerity series of mobilisations in Greece. Therefore, there are a great number of different analyses and interpretations focusing on social and political structures, on conflict and in crisis context (Psimitis 2011; Douzinas 2013; Mylonas 2014; Theocharis, Lowe and Van Deth, 2014). The analysis of the Greek Indignados became prominent as a consequence to the December Riots (Chapter 5) and in the context of the sociopolitical debates and conflict already suggested and observed by the Greek Riots incident. This view is justified considering the historical continuity of events and collective actions, as well as due to the characteristics of the mobilisations, including discourse and participants. The examination of the Greek Indignados concentrated on the examination of online relationships, of patterns of connectivity and online coalitions. This process supported a supplementary understanding of the digital media use in the examined period, providing an identification of cyberconflict and its origins, as regards December Riots, as well as the detection of digital media's contribution to the development of online conflict, through networks and discourse.

Therefore, based on the main cases of cyberconflict, the examination of online relationships and coalitions, of patterns of connectivity, as well as the study of online discourse, an insight into digital media's contribution to the rise of collective actions, mobilisations and conflict can be proposed. A challenging consideration is whether and how the online conflict is linked to the offline conflict. At the same time, the study of the above points not only proposes an understanding of digital media in the Greek context, but situates the Greek case in the broader discussion in regard to the global wave of protest of that period, starting from the UK student movement and the OWS or the Indignados Movement, to the Arab Spring and Gezi Park.

In January 2010, the IMF announced the 'Technical mission to Athens' (Crisis-scape.net, n.d., timeline: 6) while a few days later, in February 2010, the Greek government announced the first economic measures as well as the necessity of a rescue plan for the Greek Economy (Psimitis, 2011: 194). In April 2010, the Greek government announced the agreement on a stabilisation mechanism, which was created by the IMF and EU. At the same time, the first general strikes took place in February and parallel to the outburst of the crisis, which prevailed in all aspects of the sociopolitical spectrum, a series of anti-austerity mobilisations, demonstrations and protests emerged. During the period 2010–2011 the implementation of austerity politics according to the memorandum and the rescue packages' IMF and EU requirements, resulted in a deconstruction of the sociopolitical structures in Greece (Chapter 3). However, there is a point of view which supports the idea that these policies rescued Greece from bankruptcy, the decay of social welfare, the degradation of key sectors such as public health, education or national insurance and pensions and raised taxes, together with the collapse of the two governing parties; these were only some of the counterpoints which deeply influenced social cohesion.

One of the largest mobilisations took place in Athens, on 5th February 2010, and was organised against the first bailout agreement between the Greek government and the so-called 'Troika' (European Commission, Internationally Momentary Fund, European Central Bank). Despite the magnitude of 5th February protest, it was overshadowed by the death of three bank workers, among whom was a four-month pregnant woman. In the crowd, two or three people attacked the branch of Marfin Bank, which was located close

to the Greek parliament, throwing two petrol bombs (Molotov cocktails) and setting the building on fire (McElroy and Anast, 2010). More than twenty employees escaped, but three of them were blocked as they were trying to escape onto the roof and they were suffocated (BBC News, 2010). The case of Marfin Bank was a shocking incident, which should be considered within the broader context of historical police brutality and governmental repression policies of mobilisations (ibid.). Sotiris (2010) highlighted the 'tremendous amount of police violence against a huge demonstration' and the effect that such policies have on the escalation of violence in mobilisations. The CEO of Marfin and two other administrative members were accused of negligence and bodily harm to the victims, as they decide not to close the branch sooner, while the building safety and security measures considered being inadequate. At the same time, suspects in the bomb attacks were considered to be two anarchists. Although participation in the austerity protests were reduced after Marfin, mobilisations and strikes both in the private and public sectors continued. In 2010, the demonstrations in Greece were estimated at 580, of which 250 took place in Athens (Hellenic Police Statistics, 2012, in Rudig and Karyotis, 2013: 12), while, in 2011, the mobilisations were estimated as being up to 445, including general strikes in the public-private sector (Katsoridas and Lampousaki, 2012: 90). Most of these strikes were related to the changes in the labour conditions, as these were shaped during the implementation of the austerity policies, as well as to the general outrage raised by a newly emerging sociopolitical reality.

At the same time, mobilisations such as the 'Indignados' in Spain, or even the 'Arab Spring' and the 'Occupy' movement (Chapter 1), highlighted different perspectives of the crisis in the global recession as well as different forms of social expression. In the case of Spain, the financial and debt crisis indicated a 'moral' perspective of the crisis, influencing the sociopolitical spectrum and resulting in the emergence of the Indignados movement, which included a series of protests and occupations (Exadaktylos, 2011). On 15th May 2011, the so-called Indignados occupied the squares Puerta del Sol (Madrid) and Plaça de Catalunya (Barcelona) (Simiti, 2014:5). The online media's contribution to the creation of the Indignados was significant (Hughes, 2011). Online and social media were used as important a 'networking and organising tool' able to 'express and coordinate discontent' against austerity measures, social injustice and so on, supporting resistance actions and mobilisation (Tsaliki, 2012: 5). More precisely, the website

'Democracia real ya' (Hughes, 2011) had a significant role among other sources within online media, providing information and details of the concepts and the structures of demonstrations as well as the opportunity for participation and the launch of the concept of *Indignados*. The concept of Spanish demonstrations was supported and in some cases, adopted by other countries. One of the most obvious cases, which not only supported but also adopted the concept of Spanish demonstrations, was the case of Greece and the square's occupations in 2011 (Hughes, 2011).

The call for the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens, and other central squares in different Greek cities appeared, following Greek media stories which covered the Spanish protests in Plaza del Sol describing some of the protestors holding banners with the sarcastic slogan 'Silence or we will awaken the Greeks!' (Korizi and Vradis, 2012: 237); according to others, among the slogans which were heard in Puerta De Sol was a call to Greeks to 'Wake Up'[38] (Monastiriotis, 2011). Nonetheless, a different perspective on the issue supports that the Spanish demonstrations did not treat the Greek issue in this way and, according to interviews with people who had a leading role in Spanish demonstrations, such slogans were never heard in Spain – at least on a massive level (Niaoti, 2011). In any case, the Greek mainstream and online media cultivated a discourse focusing on the Greek 'answer' to the slogans at the Spanish demonstrations. The media representation of the incident created a strong social correspondence/effect, whether it was true or not.

The occupation of Syntagma Square on 25th May 2011 was one of the first mobilisations of the so-called Greek Indignados, or, in Greek, Aganaktismenoi (Αγανακτισμένοι) (Douzinas, 2013: 135). However, Simiti explains that the actual first attempt at Syntagma Square's occupation took place on 23rd February 2011, but due to the limited participation of protestors and the forceful police actions, this attempt was not successful (2014: 5).

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[38] According to blogs and in some cases TV, this was a message from Spain to Greece. Although, according to interviews with people who participated in Spanish demonstrations, this was never a slogan commonly known to demonstrators. Even if, indeed, this information was not documented, the way that it was presented via Greek media creates great interest. As an example see: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/blogpost/post/spanish-revolution-thousands-gather-in-madrids-puerta-del-sol-square/2011/05/18/AFLzpZ6G_blog.html

After the February attempt, the online media mobilisation was intensive, calling people to participate in a peaceful protest disconnected to the traditional political ideologies, 'without holding any party flags or banners' (ibid. 5) (Chapter 3). Social media was used both as an organisational tool, as well as a space promoting the formation of an online community with a shared collective identity (2.2). The online media provided a space in which motivations and ideas of the movement emerged, as well as a communicative channel for people to spread information on the movement, communicating its messages to a wider audience and influencing the news agendas of the mainstream media (Tsaliki, 2012) (2.3).

On 25th May 2011, people who characterised themselves indignantes occupied Syntagma Square. The point of reference for the Greek Indignados was the Spanish Indignados (M15) although a parallelism which could also be found with the Tahir Square movement (Douzinas, 2013: 135). During the summer, Syntagma Square was the 'heart' of the movement, although the universal character of the movement was designated by the occupation of central squares in other Greek cities and the occupation of institutional buildings (e.g. hospitals, schools, etc.). Participation in the occupation was high, involving up to 200,000 people (ibid.) and different events or rallies each day. However, the diversity of protestors in terms of ideology, class or age (Simiti, 2014: 1-2, 8) did not allow the creation of a 'minimum collective identity', and therefore, the creation of a social movement, according to traditional characteristics was not possible. In contrast, Douzinas notes the importance of the high participation of people who shared a 'common political desire, which was the radical change of the political system' (2013: 135). From this perspective, the occupation of a public space such as Syntagma Square, which holds a large amount of symbolism in Greek political life (ibid., Simiti, 2014: 6), indicated an alternative structure of mobilisation, focusing on a 'debating, deciding and acting crowd' rather than on 'a manipulated and dictated crowd' (Douzinas, 2013: 135). Thus, even if the mobilisation formed a weak collective identity, *the alternative structure of the mobilisation as well as the structural availability as regard to the opportunity for participation in the movement*, were some of the main limitations and potentialities of the mobilisations (Olson, 1965).

In the case of the Greek Indignados, the physical and symbolic space's characteristics strongly illustrated and, up to a point, supported the political tension that appeared in the crisis context. In contemporary Greek history, Syntagma Square, which literally means Constitution Square, where the Greek parliament is located (Simiti, 2014: 6), symbolised the struggle for democracy. This was already established from 1843 onwards and there were mass mobilisations against King Otto, which resulted in the establishment of a Greek constitution (Madden and Vradis, 2012; Simiti, 2014: 6). On the other hand, Douzinas (2013) discusses the physical space of the mobilisation in parallel with the Athenian Agora, which is located a few hundred metres away. This parallelism denotes a linkage to contemporary civic society, which tries to redefine democratic processes, as well as the notion of citizenship and participation. Therefore, following the historical continuity of social struggles and the signified references of Syntagma Square, in the case of Greek Indignados, people demonstrated, creating a common body, or in theoretical terms, 'a political subjectivity' emerged, highlighting 'the right to resistance in post-industrial and post-democratic society' (ibid. 135).

Crucially, the spatial characteristics of the public space reflected and reproduced the – offline – political and ideological conflict, which did not enable the rise of a massive social movement against austerity. At this point, the dynamic relationship between the online and offline space with regard to the escalation of the political and ideological conflict is significant. Simiti explains that Syntagma Square is not a single, unified, physical space, but two different squares/levels connected by stairs that act as an invisible line to the physical space (2014: 8). This spatial division soon turned into an ideological one, revealing a tension between the upper and lower part of the square. Both the upper and lower part of the square expressed anger and indignation against the austerity measures and the political system. However, the 'upper' square formed a discourse concentrating on the crisis as a consequence of the corrupted political system, threatening the nation (Kaika and Karaliotas, 2014: 7), in contrast to the lower part of the square, which launched an anti-capitalist narration, situating the crisis on a global scale. The two parts of the square reflected two different ideological orders of dissent, national and transnational/global, as theorised in 'Surfing the Revolutionary Wave 2010–2012', mentioned in the theoretical framework in Chapter 2.1 (Karatzogianni and Schandorf, 2015: 46).

The upper square hosted everyone who lost their privileges (e.g. civil servants, pensioners, etc.), including professionals of all sorts as well as nationalists (Tsaliki, 2012: 3). Here, the demonstrators held Greek flags and presented both Greek and foreign political leaders as traitors, developing an anti-political populism (Simiti, 2014: 9). Groups such as '300 Greeks', 'The Greek Mothers' and others, formulated a xenophobic rhetoric, which transferred across the square's political spectrum (Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014: 8). An indicative example here is Kaika and Karaliotis' analysis of how the left-wing group 'Spitha' adapted some of the ideas of the upper square (ibid.). Even if it is not clear whether this xenophobic rhetoric was able to influence every participant in the upper square, the racist violence and the xenophobic incidents in Athens increased the tension between the upper and lower square's protests (ibid. 8-9). While the discourse of the upper square was shaped according to a xenophobic and nationalistic ideology, there were not organised right-wing groups/parties participating in the process; however, left-wing activists tried to expel the extreme right groups of the upper square from the mobilisations (Simiti, 2014: 24) (Chapter 3). In the lower square, the rhetoric, the content of the rallies as well as the people who participated founded a different concept and frame of action. The lower part of the square hosted more politicised and left-wing aligned people, comprising the 'hard-core' of the Greek Indignados (Tsaliki, 2012: 2). Here, not only various professionals participated but also the 'marginalised, anti-established people' (ibid.), representing the new generation of homeless people (Simiti, 2014: 5), as evolved after the 2011 austerity measures.

Members of groups or political parties were allowed to participate in the occupation only as individuals (ibid.); however, the left-wing SYRIZA and the extra-parliamentary left-wing Antarsya made a distinguished contribution to the movement (ibid. 10). Activists who participated were considered to have a relevant experience of various movements and mobilisations, such as the global justice movement, the anti-war movement as well as the World Social Forum (ibid.). An interesting point here is the way that the collective actions sculpted alternative organisational structures (Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014:8), through the organisation of detailed labour divisions (Tsaliki, 2012: 2), such as a press office, a doctor's and nurses' office and others. At the same time, many artists contributed to the mobilisations, organising gigs, concerts, as well as dance and performance events

(ibid. 3). Simiti (2014: 10) highlights that protestors experimented with direct democracy by adopting horizontal-decision making, while protestors used cosmopolitanism's terminology indicating the international character of the occupation.

The spatial and ideological division of the Syntagma Square occupation reflected the fragmentation of the sociopolitical discourse of the mobilisations, which later contributed to the reconstruction of the political system (e.g. decomposition of the traditional political parties, the rise of Golden dawn, SYRIZA, and so on). In terms of the participants' profile, Simiti (2014: 16-17) utilising polls during the protest, concentrated on the following categories/characteristics of participants:

Table 31: Categories/Characteristics of Participants in the Syntagma Square Occupation

Profession:	- Private employees: 23,8% - Pensioners: 14,6% - Public servants: 13,7% - Unemployed: 13,7% - Self-employed: 13,2% - University students: 12,9% -
Age:	- 25-44 years old: 25,3% - 35-49 years old: 27,4% -
Education:	- Bachelor degree: 60% - Graduate degree: 8% -
Political background:	- Left-aligned citizens: 43% - Right-aligned citizens: 36% - No ideological background: 38%

(Data from Chiotis 2011; Kollia 2012 cited in Simiti, 2014: 16-17)

Parallel to the mobilisation processes and the organisational structures, another process that should be taken into consideration is the media representations of the movement (2.3). The contrast between mainstream and online media representation of the movement indicated the potentiality of digital media, not only in terms of representation, but communicational and organisational processes as well. However, digital media had

a contradictory impact on the evolution and the success of the movement. These are the two issues we turn to next.

The mainstream corporate media, which produced the visualisation and the narration of the Greek Indignados events, (Tsaliki, 2012: 6) was influenced by digital media representations. Online media and especially services such as YouTube and Facebook crafted a 'carnivalesque' factor in terms of communication and representation (ibid. 5-6). This was among the most significant reasons why the movement failed to overlap its 'carnivalisque' character, and from an urban feast to be turned into an act of 'revolutionising' the so-called 'democratic politics' (Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014: 10). However, the Greek Indignados supported the formation of an alternative 'political imaginary', very much as the Occupy Wall Street did at the same period (Castoriadis, 1987; Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014: 11), which resulted in the creation of a new generation of activist and radical politics. According to Dalakoglou (2012: 541), despite the limitations and the critiques, contemporary social movements, including the December riots, the Greek Indignados and movements with smaller dynamics, managed to construct a 'social infrastructure' based on which 'spontaneous (or not) revolutionary moments will not be just moments but a long-lasting situation', which, later on, will have the opportunity to deal more effectively with opposite political forces. Digital media contributed to the formation of a collective identity, which loosely arose through the different mobilisation throughout Greece. Also, digital media literally and metaphorically linked the movement to other international movements, developing an international solidarity network (Gould-Wartofsky, 2015: 32-34). Digital media supported the creation of non-hierarchical, horizontal communicational and organisational processes (Karatzogianni, 2006), giving the opportunity for participation to individuals, groups or organisations, engaging them in a political/cultural conflict based on a shared collective identity but, according to Tsaliki (2014: 4), not necessarily sharing a common ideology.

Some of the most important mobilisations of the Syntagma Square occupation took place on 28–29/6/2011 parallel to the parliamentary discussion and vote on Greek austerity measures when the labour unions called for a 48-hour general strike (Sotirakopoulos and Sotiropoulos, 2013: 449). The mobilisations continued until the end of July when the

municipal police intervened in the lower part of the square (30/7/2011) (Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014: 10). The non-violent identity of the occupation was agreed and secured by the protestors, although the extreme police violence, as well as the ideological conflict between the 'left-spectrum' and the upper square was significant. The police attacked not only the demonstrators, but also journalists, passers-by, patients at the first-aid station in Syntagma Square (Simiti, 2014: 12), as well as volunteer Red-Cross doctors who treated the patients; they injured more than 500 people (Sotirakopoulos and Sotiropoulos, 2013: 449). Police brutality alarmed Amnesty International (ibid.) and at the same time, limited participation to the mobilisations in Syntagma Square. More than two million people participated in the Greek Indignados' mobilisations (2013: 448), accentuating the government's significant loss of political legitimacy.

Theocharis (2011) highlights that Greek citizens rank higher than any other European citizens in demonstration attendance and building occupations, comprising a tradition in relation to political expression, and, in a way, citizenship. The impact of digital media should be examined focusing both on new practices and media usages, as well as the potential impact on political turmoil within the crisis context. The Greek Indignados demonstrated that digital media contributes significantly to the coordination, organisation and mobilisation of contentious movements and the obvious the contrast between digital and mainstream media representations (Tsaliki, 2012). The extensive usage of digital media by groups with different ideological viewpoints (e.g. upper/lower square), who coordinated the digital media operations directly from the physical Syntagma Square occupation, depicted the polarisation, division and tension between the different online communities, but also internally in these communities (Simiti, 2014: 25), thereby linking the online division to offline political conflict in a way of hybrid continuation.

6.1.2. SYRIZA Online Diaspora: Sociopolitical and Historical Characteristics

SYRIZA stands for the Coalition of the radical left (Ovenden and Mason, 2015) and it is comprised of thirteen tendencies (Moschonas, 2013), dominated by SYNASPISMOS (Rakopoulos, 2015: 180). The eleven parties participating in the coalition unified in 2004

and dissolved in 2013 when SYRIZA was founded as a unitary party. Although the origins of the party can be found back in 1968 when the KKE split in two (Moschonas, 2013), the pro-soviet or orthodox communists remained as the KKE, while the Eurocommunists formed the KKE Interior (ibid.). In 1989, SYNASPISMOS, Coalition of the Left and Progress (SYN - CLP), was founded as an electoral coalition between KKE and E.AR., which was part of the renamed KKE Interior and known as the E.AR-Greek Left. In the same period, the coalition of government between ND-SYNASPISMOS and later, in 1992 ND-Pasok-SYNASPISMOS, lead to further fragmentation of the KKE, when the youth section of the party, KNE, formed the New Left Current also known as NAR (Ovenden and Mason, 2015: 21) and later part of Antarsya. Later on, in 1992, SYNASPISMOS represented the Eurocommunists and the critical/renewing communists, another group divided by KKE (Moschonas, 2013). In 1991, SYNASPISMOS (SYN - CLP) turned into a unitary party, while in 2004, smaller political parties of the left spectrum joined the party, creating the SYNASPISMOS – Coalition of the Left, of Movements and Ecology, which formed the origins of the Coalition of the Radical Left – SYRIZA.

During the 1980s and 1990s, KKE sacrificed its ideological purity in favour of electoral growth and at the end, governmental participation (Charalambous, 2012). At the same time, SYNASPISMOS, which identified itself as a pluralist, left the party in between to the orthodox communist and the social democratic parties and recommended a contemporary viewpoint on 'new issues' (Tsakatika and Eleftheriou, 2013). Both SYNASPISMOS and later on SYRIZA strongly criticised and challenged the radical terrain of KKE, actively supporting the formation of social movements and contemporary initiatives. Nonetheless, SYRIZA's aim was not to guide but to participate in the movements (ibid.), creating linkages to new social movements and the younger generation of activists. Therefore, SYRIZA created strong networks establishing the SYRIZA Youth Section and the SYRIZA Network of Trade Unionists (ibid.).

Despite the poor electoral dynamics of SYRIZA until 2012, SYRIZA had a strong impact on politics through its grassroots movements and social initiatives. After 2013, SYRIZA's turning from a coalition of tendencies to a unitary party did not reinforce the cohesiveness of the party. In contrast, the ideological and political fermentations of the

participated tendencies didn't manage to support the creation of a fresh program able to suggest a realistic political alternative as regards the crisis' developments (Moschonas, 2013). After the 2015 elections and the referendum period, this proved to be a weakness in the party's alliances with social movements as well as their functioning as a political party internally and as a leader of the coalition government with An.El.

SYRIZA was the first political party in Greece which took advantage of technology, creating and maintaining a website to support its pre-election political campaign in 1997 (Mylona, 2008). In 2012, SYRIZA's social media campaign was one of the most innovative online political campaigns in Greece, illustrating the potentiality of digital media adaptation in the Greek political context and communication. This campaign created increased interest in the communication strategies of the party, while this interest rises even further in the period between the 2012 and 2015 elections. Mainstream media concentrated on the online activity of the party and its communication strategies, claiming that an 'army' of employees or 'trolls' was working on the party's social media accounts, managing to establish or strengthen the linkages between the party, the younger generation of activist and the movements (Papadaki, 2012).

One of the first and the most characteristic examples here is Papadaki's reportage for the online news project on the 2012 elections (2012), published on the news portal Protagon, YouTube and Google (Protagon, YouTube, Goole together again for June's elections – Elections '12). This was among the first cases in which the mainstream media extensively focused on SYRIZA's online communication, presenting interviews with young activists and scientists who comprised the social media team of SYRIZA. In the reportage, politicized citizens and activist, working as volunteers explain how they organise their actions, pointing out that they not only work collectively but that what they are doing has evolved since the Aganaktismenoi mobilisations. They explain that they created an (online) network across Greece, which concentrated on discussing current affairs, on answering questions, on organising mobilisations, as well as updating information. At the same time, they not only bridge the party to the citizens, but they support the formation of a transnational network, with citizens from different countries expressing solidarity and support. This Protagon-YouTube-Google production social media team refers to the increase of the professional/or trolls' accounts and how this is reflected in

the online conflict through organised online attacks. After the elections of 2015, when SYRIZA came to power, starting from this reportage, the social media team and the communicational strategy of the party were strongly criticised for different reasons. Three of the most indicative examples can be found in the participation of members of the social media team in government (AthensVoice, 2017), in the usage of social media for blaming/threatening members of other parties (Ελεύθερος Τύπος/Eleftheros Typos, 2016), as well as reports about fake accounts used in the SYRIZA campaign (Dimokidis, 2016).

In the same period, in 2012, the antagonist party, ND, launched an equivalent campaign by establishing the 'Truth Team', reminiscent of the Orwellian Ministry of Truth (Samara, 2013) and having as an official mission everyday political analysis (Alevizopoulou and Zenakou, 2013). The Truth Team was created before the second elections of 2012, supporting the ND campaign, and then, stopped its operations. Later on, and under D. Ptohos' supervision, the Truth Team re-organised and worked on the online communication of ND, which was at that point, in power (Samara, 2013). Opposite to the SYRIZA social media team, the Truth Team was comprised of experienced executives, mostly associated with A. Samaras, who served as Prime Minister between 2012 and 2015 and was leader of New Democracy between 2009 and 2015. One of the most interesting examples here is the case of G. Mouroutis, who was director of the Truth Team and Head of the Press Office of the General Secretariat of the Prime Minister, and the case of Th. Dravillas, who associated with the Truth Team mainly before the elections and before being promoted to the position of Director-General of the National Intelligence Service (EYP) (Samara, 2013). During the elections of 2012, the Truth Team campaign based its rhetoric on the 'Communist peril', making strong historical references to the Greek civil war and the Truman Doctrine (Manolopoulos, 2011: 67). This strategy cultivated a civil war atmosphere, supporting polarisation through the creation of the image of 'Us' ND voters and 'Them' – anyone not supporting the party's policies as a potential 'communist threat' and supporters of SYRIZA (Alevizopoulou and Zenakou, 2013).

The political terrain of the period, 2012–2015, can be understood as a long-term pre-election period. Four rounds of national legislative elections and one European

parliament election within four years radically transformed the Greek political environment (Chapter 3). The elections of 2012 signalled the collapse of the Greek party system (Pappas, 2014), with the election of May 2012 failing to produce a government and the elections of June 2012, which were marked by the rise of SYRIZA, the entrance of neo-Nazi Golden Dawn (Chrysi Aygi) to the Greek parliament for the first time, as well as the pro-bailout ND victory. SYRIZA raised its percentage of votes from 4.6% and 13 seats in 2009 to 16% and 52 seats in May 2012 and 26.9% and 71 seats in June 2012 (ibid.). Golden Dawn entered the Greek Parliament with 7% of the vote and 21 seats in May 2012, and 6.9% and 18 seats in June 2012 (ibid.). ND was elected with 18.9% of the national vote and 108 seats in May 2012 and 29.7% of the vote and 129 seats in June 2012, forming a coalition government with Dimar and Pasok (ibid.).

Table 32: Elections 2009–2015

	7 Oct. 2009		6 May 2012		17 June 2012		Jan. 2015		May 2015	
	% of votes	N of Seats	% of votes	N of Seats	% of votes	N of Seats	% of votes	N of Seats	% of votes	N of Seats
ND	33.5	91	18.9	108	29.7	129	27.8	76	28	75
PASOK	49.9	160	13.2	41	12.3	33	4.7	13	6.3	17
SYRIZA	4.6	13	16.8	52	26.9	71	36.3	149	35.4	145
AN.EL.	-	-	10.6	33	7.5	20	4.8	13	3.7	10
GD	-	-	7.0	21	6.9	18	6.3	17	7	18
DIMAR	-	-	6.1	19	6.3	17	-	-	-	-
KKE	7.5	21	8.5	26	4.5	12	5.5	15	5.5	15
Laos	5.6	15	2.9	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	-
Potami	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.1	17	4.1	11
En.Kentroon	-	-	-	-	-	-			3.4	9

In this context, SYRIZA's campaign, both on the 2012 in the 2015 elections launched an alternative political discourse which ended up dominating against the mainstream media and the antagonist parties. The campaign concentrated on creating a strong communication channel between the party and the users, who in turn co-created online political communities via social media networks to support the party. Until 2015 the SYRIZA campaign was linked to the slogan 'Hope is coming', which had a positive

connotation emphasising justice and dignity. In the referendum period, this slogan transformed into 'No', expressing the resistance to austerity policies. On the other hand, the antagonist party campaign and the ND's Truth Team created a campaign based on the division between Us and Them, a scheme which was reflected through the communist threat rhetoric and in the Greferendum slogans such as, 'We Stay in Europe', 'Resign'. In other words, what is observed here is the online manifestation of the politics of hope in opposition to the politics of the fear (Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou, 2017).

In a European context, Fuchs (2012) points out that the SYRIZA 2012 campaign could be understood as an opposition to right-wing European mainstream media campaigns, which developed not only against SYRIZA but also in order to support neoliberal discourse. In this campaign, the crisis is discussed not focusing on capitalist interest, but instead focusing on racist stereotypes as regard the 'lazy Greeks' spending too much money (ibid.). One of the most important things that happened after the elections of 2015, when SYRIZA came to power, is the way in which the discourse on crisis changed both in national and international mainstream media, through recognition of linkages between different manifestations of the crisis (financial, refugees, etc.) and neoliberalism.

Therefore, following the study of Facebook usage in the case of the Aganaktismenoi, and taking into consideration the ideological or political linkages between the social movements and initiatives during that period and the rise of SYRIZA, this study concentrates on the SYRIZA Online Diaspora. The study of SYRIZA Facebook is conducted through the detection and the analysis of a page like-network, giving an insight into the way that SYRIZA network evolved in the national and international context.

6.2. Methods, Sampling and Analysis

For the examination of the usage of Facebook, the online data were collected and analysed using Netvizz and Gephi (4.4). In both the examined cases, a page like-network was identified, and analysed using Social Network Analysis (SNA) (4.3.2.). The selection of the FB pages was completed after searching on Facebook for the keywords/phrase 'Αγανακτισμένοι στο Σύνταγμα'/'Aganaktismenoi sto Syntagma', in the case of the Greek Indignados, and 'Σύριζα/SYRIZA', in the case of the SYRIZA

Online Diaspora, using both Greek and Latin characters. Then, after the detection of the relevant pages and due to the high volume of detected pages, pages with more than one hundred likes/followers were included in the corpus. This was a factor which allowed the examination of pages which were used to coordinate actions in different locations, or between actors. Pages created for various purposes not active enough were excluded from the sample. The data extraction developed in three phases, starting from December 2014 to August 2015. At the first phase, December 2014 to January 2015 the data extraction concentrated on Aganaktismenoi network. At the same period, a second round of extraction concentrated on the SYRIZA online diaspora, focusing primarily and the transnational online SYRIZA Diaspora and secondarily on the SYRIZA online diaspora in national level (branches in Greece), from December 2014 to February 2015. Finally, a third round of extraction conducted from May to August 2015, fulfilling the national SYRIZA online diaspora (branches in Greece).

Then, based on this corpus, the page like-network included pages that were followed by other examined pages (depth 1), concentrating on the online coalitions, linkages and relationships between groups and pages. These Facebook pages acted more as websites in terms of why people read/follow and like them, rather than as typical examples of FB pages, in terms of individual use and social media features. Therefore, in this study, the examined pages are understood as nodes or actors, which represent different institutions and ideologies. The page like-network was examined through the detection of a cluster of pages (Gephi, Modularity Clustering), indicating main themes and linkages among them, online coalitions, etc. While the development of the page like-network indicated which pages each of the examined page likes/follows, it is indeed an important consideration whether these links/likes are a personal choice of the page's administration or indeed denote linkages between pages, groups, identities, and so on. However, even in the case that these links/likes are just personal choices of the page's administration, this is still a process which influences the production of online material as well as the communication process.

Going back to the tools used in this study, Netvizz provides two different options as regards the depth of the collection of the online material. Starting from the examined page, the 'seed', Netvizz either retrieves all the pages that the pages liked (depth 1), or

will continue trawling the links/likes between the liked pages and the pages that these pages like (depth 2). Thus, by trawling data at depth 1 it is possible to examine that page A likes page B and C, if this process continues at depth 2, then it is possible to examine which pages are then liked by pages B and C.

In the case of Aganaktismenoi, starting from the page[39] which was used for the organisation of the protests of 2011 in Syntagma Square, Athens, the page's network indicated linkages/relations to either pages with similar content, which supported the organisation and evolution of the anti-austerity protests in different cities, or pages vicariously related to the protest. The online network suggested an insight into the diaspora of the movement/mobilisations pointing out linkages to other (social) structures and initiatives. At the same time, the visualisation of the page like-network indicated additional points of considerations, focusing on dominant clusters, actors, positions, unexpected linkages between pages (e.g. far right – far left pages, etc.), as well as the linkage between the offline spatial division and online reproduction of online formations.

In the case of the SYRIZA Online Diaspora, starting from the official FB page of SYRIZA,[40] the page's network indicated linkages/relations between FB pages of different SYRIZA branches, both national and international, while at the same time, providing an insight into the online relations between SYRIZA, EU politics and social movements. While some of these relations are already indicated by the origins of the party, its position in the national and EU political terrain and its association with social movements, still this analysis of the online network of SYRIZA offers a better understanding of these relationships and also a better understanding of the usage of Facebook and SYRIZA's online communication strategy.

As noted earlier, the examination of online coalitions and the identification of online relationships and clusters, explains how different actors linked online and offline, pointing to strong or weak ties in group alliances and the interplay between online and offline conflict. Gephi was employed for the visualisation and analysis of the data

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[39] https://www.facebook.com/AganaktismenoiStoSyntagma

[40] https://www.facebook.com/SYRIZAofficial/

collected. The development of a one mode-network (Wasserman and Faust, 1994), which refers to networks which measure a single set of actors (ibid. 36), provided an insight into the examined online networks, supporting the understanding of substantive connections (ibid. 37-38) between communities and organisations as well as the transfer of non-material sources and movements in non-physical space (ibid.). This is a very interesting procedure proposing an insight into online relationships, coalitions, the flow of information as well as the formation of online communities and networks. These relationships are not only understood by focusing both on cyberspace and the offline world, indicating a blurred complex of relationships; what is suggested here is that even if the online social units, the networks and the communities do not directly denote influences or interdependencies, still the study of networks and communities support the understanding of actors and the way that these are situated in the examined environment (6.2).

For visualization and clustering of both the examined networks in Gephi, the same parameters were used. Therefore, modularity, the community detection algorithm, run randomized, so to produce better decomposition, using edge weight. On this occasion, concentrating on the qualitative characteristics of the network, it was important to look on more communities rather than on just the bigger ones, thus the resolution was set to one (1.0), so to get more communities (lower than 1.0 would give less communities, but bigger ones). Visualization of the networks developed based Eigenvector Centrality, which used to point out nodes which are highly connected to other nodes which are having a high level of influence (Cherven, 2015).

To sum up, the examination of the Greek Indignados and the SYRIZA Online Diaspora was conducted in three stages; firstly, the analysis concentrated on the examination of the environment of conflict; then the study focused on the collection and the analysis of online material using Netvizz and Gephi, while the analysis was completed based on the theoretical framework of cyberconflict, using SNA and focusing on networks and discourse (6.3).

6.2.1. Aganaktismenoi Network & SYRIZA Online Diaspora: Overall Graphs Statistics:

The overall graph statistics of the two examined networks suggest some characteristics and attributes of the two networks, and could be examined both in comparison as well as individually. In this discussion, the two networks are discussed individually, developing into insight on the usage of Facebook in the case of Aganaktismenoi and SYRIZA. While a comparative approach could indicate some interesting points of consideration about the way that Aganaktismenoi might have influenced the formation of the SYRIZA network, here these two cases are discussed together only for reasons of repetition and space limitations. At this stage, a quick review of the overall statistics of the two graphs, focusing on the statistical and numerical characteristics of the networks, led to the detailed analysis of their individual content and structural characteristics. Thus, after consideration of the overall graph of the two networks, the cases of Aganaktismenoi and SYRIZA are discussed individually focusing on the sociopolitical/historical background of each case and then the analysis of the networks.

Following the process described in Chapter 6.2, the corpus of the Aganaktismenoi page like-network consisted of data from 141 unique FB pages, while in the case of SYRIZA, the data-set consisted of 391 FB pages, all trawled up to level one (depth 1). Then, the corpus of each case was imported into Gephi, which visualised a directed network. In the case of Aganaktismenoi, this consisted of 1,908 nodes and 21,247 edges, while in the case of the SYRIZA Online Diaspora this included the 1,997 nodes and 15,404 edges. The nodes refer to any object in the network and in some cases, can be understood as an actor, while edges refer to linkages between nodes, also known as ties (Carrington and Wasserman, 2005). The network statistics were calculated as follows:

Table 33: Overall Graph Statistics: Aganaktismenoi Network and SYRIZA

	Aganaktismenoi Network	SYRIZA Online Diaspora
Nodes	1908	1997
Edges	21247	15404

Network Diameter[41]:	8	13
Graph Density[42]:	0.01	0.007
Average Path Length[43]:	3.124	5.467
Modularity[44]:	0.623	0.55
Clustering Coefficient[45]:	0.356	0.254
Eigenvector Centrality[46]	0.139	0.095

In the case of Aganaktismenoi and taking into consideration the 1,908 nodes and 21,247 edges which make up this network, a network diameter rating 11 suggests an averagely linked network (Cherven, 2015: 182), while in the case of SYRIZA 1,997 nodes and 15,404 edges and a network diameter rating of 13 suggests a strongly linked and tied network. For Aganaktismenoi, the rate of 0.01 Graph Density suggests a sparse graph (ibid.), while the Average Path Length rated at 3.1 suggests an average of information flow. For SYRIZA, the graph density was rated as 0.007 suggesting an even more spare graph, although this is justified after the visualisation of the network, and on this occasion, Graph Density does not efficiently reflect the characteristics of the network; as

[41] The network Diameter refers to the maximum number of connections required to traverse the graph. Another way to look at it is to check how many steps it takes for the two most distant nodes in the network to reach one another (Cherven 2015: 182).

[42] The graph density is a measure of the level of connected edges within a network relative to the total possible value and is returned as a decimal value between zero and one. Graphs with values closer to one are typically considered to be dense graphs, while those closer to zero are termed as sparse graphs [...] this is an important measure as explains how an individual network is structured, and might help identify gaps or holes within the graph (Cherven, 2015: 183).

[43] The average path length provides a measure of communication efficiency for an entire network, by measuring the shortest possible path between all nodes in the network. An overall number is calculated for the entire network, with lower numbers giving an indication that the network is relatively more efficient, and with high average numbers signifying a relatively inefficient graph for information flow. This number will necessarily be less than the network diameter, as that value represents the maximum path length between nodes (Cherven, 2015:183).

[44] One more approach to measure clustering in a network is through the application of the modularity statistic, which attempts to assess the number of distinct groupings within a network (Cherven 2015:189).

[45] With the Clustering coefficient, Gephi provides us the ability to measure the level at which the nodes are grouped together, as opposed to being equally or randomly connected across the network. Scores on this measure will have an inverse correlation with other statistics, including several of the centrality calculations, particularly when we are speaking at the global level (the entire graph). We can also measure this statistic at a local-level, to understand the influence a single node within its own neighbourhood (Cherven,2015:189).

[46] Eigenvector Centrality explains the relation between nodes that are highly connected to other nodes with high levels of influence; this result to a high-level of Eigenvector centrality (Cherven, 2015).

it is indicated by the visualisation this network is comprised of two individual (sub)-networks which are linked together with only a few nodes (See Table 37). The average path length of the SYRIZA network was rated at 5.647 indicating an average to efficient graph of flow of information.

The modularity for the Aganaktismenoi network was 0.623, while for the SYRIZA network was 0.55; according to Newman (2006), when modularity >0.4, then it indicates that the partition produced by the modularity algorithm can be used to detect distinct communities within the network, highlighting that some nodes in the network are more densely connected with each other than with the rest of the network. The Clustering Coefficient for the Aganaktismenoi network is rated at 0.23 and for the SYRIZA network at 0.254, indicating the level at which the nodes are grouped together, as opposed to being equally or randomly connected across the network.

While the overall statistics suggest and give insight into the networks' characteristics, the calculation of the networks' metrics could describe in more detail the characteristics of the network. The first examined metrics calculated the Eigenvector Centrality. In the case of Aganaktismenoi, this was rated at 0.139, while in the case of SYRIZA it was rated at 0.095, indicating the importance of each node in the graph. Then, the calculation of the partition modularity measured the clustering in the networks, in an attempt to assess the number of distinct groupings within the networks. The group nodes formed based on the strength of their relationships while the nodes that are highly connected are likely to wind up in a common cluster.

Overall, the steps for the formation of the networks were as follows: visualisation of the network using Forced Atlas 3D. The Force Atlas 3D layout is identical to Force Atlas 2, with the additional option of setting the graph to 3D via a simple checkbox selection. As is noticed, though, the '3D graphs can lead to certain nodes being obscured from view (Chevren, 2015: 74). The differences between the two versions are often quite minimal, mostly related to how the nodes are visually depicted' (ibid.). The Force Atlas 2 layout is an algorithm, which is described as a good network analysis tool, which discovers and detects behaviour patterns (Chevren, 2015: 94).

At the final stage, the calculation of the networks' statistics was completed; after this process, the networks were visualised by ranking the nodes according to the Eigenvector Centrality and changing the colour and node size accordingly; the final step of the visualisation was completed using the Sigma.js template exporter. The Sigma.js Exporter is based on the Sigma.js software, which facilitates the creation of interactive web-based network graphs using a template-driven approach (Chevren, 2015: 294; 297-98).

What the core characteristics description of these social networks means is examined in each case individually in the following sections.

6.3. Greek Indignados/Aganaktismenoi Network Analysis (Page Like-network)

As also explained above, after running metrics for eigenvector centrality and partition modularity (colours), the visualisation of the Aganaktismenoi network indicates five dominant groups, which encompass more than 100 nodes each (Group 1, 2, 3, 4, 6). Then the second category of groups consists of the groups encompassing between 20 to 100 nodes and the third category of groups which encompassed 2 to 20 nodes. The fourth and final category of groups consists of isolated one-node groups. While each of these groups indicates a different level and type of connection/relationship, the first category of groups, which consists of Groups 1,2,3,4 and 6, encompassing more than 100 nodes, indicates the dominant communities in the network. Thus, instead of discussing the metrics and statistics of each of these groups/sub-networks, what is important here is the qualitative characteristics of each group, focusing on dominant actors and online coalitions, leading the discussion to the way that these can be understood in linkage with offline political turmoil.

Figure 8: The Greek Indignados – Aganaktismenoi Network

Greek Indignados/ Aganaktismenoi network:	Groups:

Group 1 (522 members)
Group 2 (214 members)
Group 3 (417 members)
Group 4 (116 members)
Group 5 (86 members)
Group 6 (400 members)
Group 7 (21 members)
Group 8 (50 members)

Group 9 (29 members)
Group 10 (3 members)
Group 11 (4 members)
Group 12 (16 members)
Group 13 (5 members)
Group 14 (1 members)
Group 15 (1 members)
Group 16 (1 members)

Group 17 (1 members)
Group 18 (1 members)
Group 19 (5 members)
Group 20 (1 members)
Group 21 (1 members)
Group 22 (1 members)
Group 23 (1 members)
Group 24 (1 members)

Group 25 (1 members)
Group 26 (1 members)
Group 27 (1 members)
Group 28 (1 members)
Group 29 (1 members)
Group 30 (1 members)
Group 31 (1 members)
Group 32 (1 members)

Group 33 (1 members)
Group 34 (1 members)

The first category of groups (Group 1), is mainly comprised of the online Greek Indignados' diaspora. In this group, there are strong linkages to the international equivalent movements/mobilisations (e.g. Occupy, M15, anti-austerity and anti-capitalist movements, etc.), suggesting an ideological kinship between movements as well as the origins of the anti-austerity movement (Chapter 3). What is interesting here is not only the historical continuity and transformation of social movements, but also the way that anti-austerity and anti-capitalist movements were expressed in different contexts and countries. Therefore, while all the examined movements fall under the crisis context as this was shaped after 2008 (Chapter 5), the effects and the manifestation that the crisis had in each country can be identified through the character of emerging movements. This
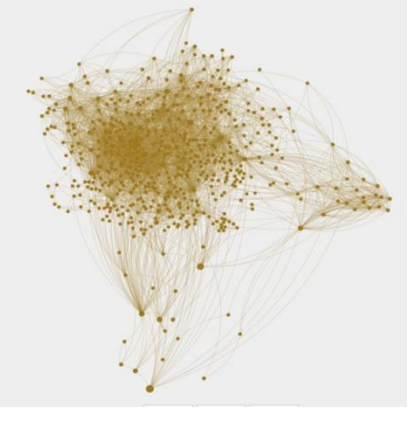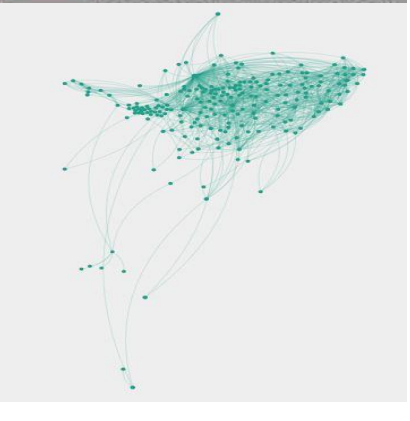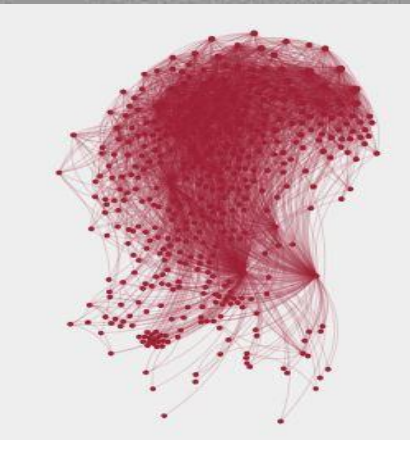
draws the discussion from the local to the global and vice versa, pointing out the multi-dimensional character of the examined period.
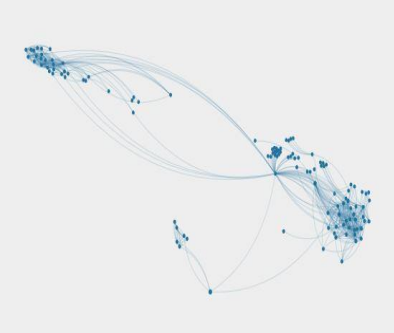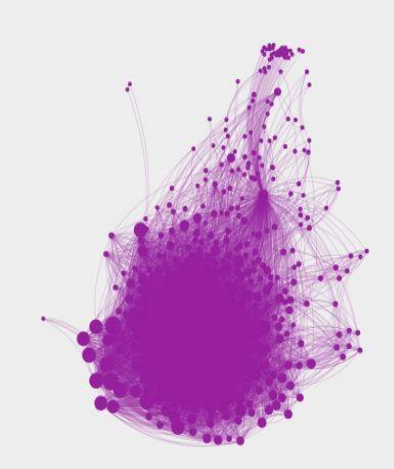
Group 2 consists of FB pages against the 'new world order', FB pages related to conspiracy theories (e.g. Paisios case, etc.), to the Greek Orthodox culture, the Greek army and police, as well as pages related to the political party of An.El. (Anexartitoi Ellines/Independent Greeks). The ideological relevance between these pages and the formation of An.El., a new political party founded in 2012 (Ravanos, 2012), provide an example of social media's contribution to political polarisation, suggesting a relevance to the eco-chambers argument. The later rise of An.El. confirmed the dynamic relationship between social media and politics; what is suggested in this case is that, indeed, like-minded people can be exposed to 'one-sided arguments that reinforce their initial predispositions' (Gainous and Wagner, 2013: 122) (e.g. Aganaktismenoi pages, pages with nationalistic content, anti-corruption, conspiracy theories, religious related pages, and conservative/populists parties) . An.El. which after the 2015 elections became a member of the SYRIZA coalition government, emerges as a populist-right wing party, having strong ideological relevance to the content of the examined group. On the other hand, focusing on the linkages between Group 1 and Group 2, what is interesting is the ideological differences between the two groups, as this suggested by the actors comprising each group. While concenttating on each group individually suggests the notion of polarization, the opposite can be noted, if the two groups studied together. However, while there are some linkaged between the two groups, still these are not significant as to conclude to the above.

Group 3 is related to pages against Illuminati and conspiracy theories (e.g. Illuminati, etc.) and other pages, creating a very heterogenous cluster of pages, which is not having a strong significance, but still suggest some relevance to left-oriented activism, the antiglobalization movement as well as contemporary social movements and collective action (Occupy Movement, Anonymous, Wikileaks, Alex Jones, etc.). Group 4 is comprised of humorous and entertainment pages (e.g. trance music, Mega Channel TV, etc.). Finally, the last group in this category, Group 6, consists of pages of general interest; among the most dominant nodes in these groups is a page expressing opposition

to the rise of the product prices in the supermarket (Aganaktismenoi with the supermarkets' prices). In more detail, the first category of groups is shaped as follows:

Table 34: Subgroups – Aganaktismenoi Network 1
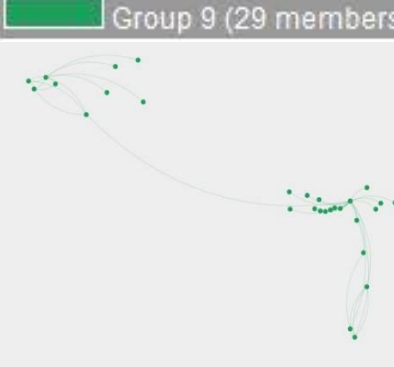
Groups:	Dominant pages/Themes:
Group 1 (522 members)	- Aganaktismenoi/Indignados in Greece and International mobilisations (Occupy, M15) - Pages against parliament/Politicians, Corruption, - Greeks united – pro-Greek and nationalist pages, - Call for resistance or violence pages - Alternative structures and solidarity (media initiatives, neighbourhood assemblies & Squats), - Drachma (National currency) - APOEL (Cypriot football team) and Cyprus -
Group 2 (214 members)	- Pages against 'New World Order' (NWO), - Greek Orthodox stereotype and culture, pages related to religion, Christians (Christians against NWO, Christians united, etc.,) - Independent Greek/ Anexartitoi Ellines (An.El.) – political party later member of the SYRIZA coalition government - Against globalisation, against digital surveillance and technology, 666, - Paisios case, Church/god, home-country and religion -
Group 3 (417 members)	- Anti- Illuminati, against NWO, Zeitgeist, Alex jones, Occupy Movement and related pages, Rockefeller, Exposing the truth, awakening/awareness - Free Gaza, Free Palestine, Against Monsanto, Food Freedom, Demand safe water - Wikileaks, Google is evil, Anonymous and Anonymous Greece, ANTI-ACTA – against internet surveillance, Greek hacking scene - Anti-/Pro-Christ pages, - John Lennon, Greek Hip-Hop, Bob Marley and other entertainment related pages -

Group 4 (116 members)	- Aganaktismenoi humorous pages (lost, Beverly Hills, South park, Farmville, etc., - Greenpeace Greece, Greenpeace international, etc. - Vegan society, Plan a tree - Trance – Psychedelic music, - Entertainment pages, TV Channels, TV shows
Group 6 (400 members)	- Atenistas - Love affair related pages, - Greek music, TV and pop culture, - General interest and fun

The second category of groups consists of groups encompassing between 20 and 100 pages. The main group in this category is made up of Groups 5, 7, 8 and 9. Group 5 is characterised by university-related pages; Group 7 is related to SYRIZA, to the left as well as to anti-Nazi and anti-fascist pages; Group 8 is mainly comprised of romantic exchanges and entertainment pages; Group 9 is composed of pages relating to the island of Crete and Olympiakos, a Greek football/sports club. Going back to the historical background of Greece, what is suggested is that student unions always made an important contribution to the rise of social movements and to sociopolitical change. Group 7 and SYRIZA on the other hand, point to the increased impact of the movement and its rise in mainstream politics; both SYRIZA and An.El., have a strong presence in the network and this later materialised offline through the 2015 government coalition. At the same time, even if both of these parties were characterised as being populist, still there was not any political or ideological proximity between them. While An.El. emerged through the online environment, SYRIZA had an intense offline presence during the mobilisations.

These mobilisations could be characterised as being a turning point in the rise of the SYRIZA party and its political and social impact. For many, SYRIZA took advantage of the political turmoil of that period, because it was riding the wave of the movements starting from the December riots onwards. This gave an opportunity to the people participating in contentious politics and collective action to be represented in the parliament, and at the same time, propelled SYRIZA to power after the 2015 elections.

Table 35: Sub groups – Aganaktismenoi Network 2

Group 5 (86 members)	Group 7 (21 members)
- University related pages, Against University's occupation, Indignant students – No to occupations - Elix- volunteering program, Tv Shows, Turkish soap operas, Greek Soap operas and series	- SYRIZA related pages, Alexis Tsipras, 105,5 Sto Kokkino portal, left.gr, H Avgi newspaper - Anti-Nazi and anti-fascist pages, against Golden Dawn, Against ND and Pasok coalition government, - Aganaktismenoi, Anarchist, Communism
Group 8 (50 members)	Group 9 (29 members)
- Fan pages and entertainment - Romantic exchange related pages	- Aganaktismenoi in Chania, Crete related pages - Olympiakos

The three most dominant themes in Table 35, as indicated by the graph, are related to the cycle of protests as they broke out in Europe and in the US in 2011 (Occupy movement, Indignados), the conspiracy theories (Illuminati, new world order) and the stereotypical discussion of Greek Orthodoxy. The Greek Indignados appeared within the global wave of protests, which emerged after 2010, and were comprised of anti-austerity movements in opposition to capitalism (OWS, Indignados, etc.), demanding democratisation and regime change (i.e. the protests in the Middle East and North Africa, or the so called 'Arab Spring revolutions'). Alongside similarities between the Greek Indignados and other movements, the online linkages of the examined network pointed out the position of the movement in the national and transnational context, as well as in different orders of dissent (Karatzogianni, 2012) (2.1).

The first examined sub-network, Group 1, could be understood as being the backbone of the network, as it provides an insight into the Aganaktismenoi mobilisations, including online organisation and structure as well as the characteristics of identity and ideology. Aganaktismenoi emerged as a form of resistance against austerity politics, which in those days, were not discussed within a transnational context concentrating on contemporary capitalism, but instead, the discourse is much focused on the 'P.I.G.S.' narration, Greek laziness and the division between the European north and south. In contrast, a different point of view described Aganaktismenoi as the consequence of the 'unjust impoverishment of working Greeks, the loss of sovereignty that had turned the country into a neo-colonial fiefdom and the decline of parliamentary democracy into corruption, cleptocracy and clientelism' (Douzinas, 2013: 148). The difference between the mainstream and online media narration and framing of the crisis those days was intense, pointing out considerations of the formation of the public sphere, and focusing on the constructive process and the dynamic relationship between the offline and online public sphere.

As observed in the examined case, the contribution of social media at the time was significant, since it provided the opportunity and the space for the formation of an alternative political narration and ideology, able to fit in the new sociopolitical conditions, dealing with 'new enemies and new competitors' (Albertazzi and McDonnell,

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2008: 222). The insufficient governmental and political response to the crisis, the social response in dealing with the 'new enemies and new competitors' materialised through the establishment of solidarity networks and initiatives, including examples of social economy and extra-parliamentary politics (Nasioulas, 2012). What is also described as 'creative resistance', included more than 550 active groups and collectivities during the period 2011–2012 in different sectors (Petropoulou, 2013: 73-76), such as education, welfare, health, squats, neighbourhood assemblies and others. Digital media used throughout the different phases of these initiatives, supported the emergence, the maintenance and the further construction of hybrid (online and offline) resistance networks.

In terms of their position in the network, Aganaktismenoi pages/nodes make a structural contribution but at the same time, they were focal points for the social and political developments during the crisis (Chapter 3). While media initiatives, house squatting, social kitchens and clinics were only some of the ways through which civil society recomposed its resistance, another significant point which is indicated by the first examined group concentrates on the issue of Greekness. Mylonas (2014) explains that in the case of Greece and the crisis, stereotypes were used as the prevailing truth, based on which the 'connection between (a rotten) Greekness and the economic crisis' was established (2014: 310-311). Therefore, the issue of Greekness is a point of contention, and indicates polarisation terrain. Albertazzi and McDonnell (2008) explain that this is not a surprising phenomenon, because when the powers of the state shrink, control is taken by multinational corporations or organisations, whilst populist rhetoric attempts to reassure against fear and uncertainty by promising 'protection and security visà- vis new enemies and new competitors and the 'rediscovery' of allegedly forgotten traditional cultures (ibid. 222). Populist ideas and ideology, which are either left or right oriented, seem to be dominant in almost the whole of the network's spectrum. This type of process can be observed in more recent history with Brexit and the Trump-related mobilisations.

Aganaktismenoi was a wave of protests not directly or formally influenced by political parties and ideologies. This suggested an alternative in terms of political identities and ideology and it supported the appearance of populist influences and characteristics within the wider spectrum of the network, as well as the so-called politics of extreme. What was

dominant in the mainstream media was an identification of the extreme politics of the far right to the far left in the Greek context, because of the bankruptcy of the politics of the neoliberal centre. More recently, in France Le Pen and Melenchon were seen as extreme parties and their ideologies were portrayed as such in a similar move, which saw Macron's party win the presidency (Smyrnaios, 2017). Gerbaudo extensively discussed the emergence of populism 2.0, which is described as a manifestation of the potentiality and threats of the contemporary 'global economic crisis, political innovation and fast diffusion of social network technologies' (Gerbaudo, 2015). However, what is critical here is that *such linkages/tensions were already obvious online in the networks I examined, way before the 2015 elections propelled that coalition into power.*

Group 2 and Group 3 and the comparison between them indicate the way that populist ideas were adapted from both left and right-wing groups. The major components of these two groups are pages relevant to 'New World Order' and other conspiracy theories (e.g. Illuminati, etc.), although, there are significant differences in the content of these group too. Group 2 is extensively related to the NWO and at the same time, is strongly linked to pages which are related to Greekness as well as to religion. The case of Paisios is a representative example of how religion is paradoxically and latently linked to the crisis and global politics. Paisios was a monk, venerated in Greece and Russia for miracles and prophecies (Eleytherotypia, 2014). The satire FB page Geron Pastitsios/Elder Pastitsios was a fanpage similar to the international Pastafarianism movement which promotes irreligion, created by Philippos Loizos (Jauregul, 2012), playing with the name of the monk and a traditional Greek pasta food (Nevradakis, 2012). When the issue was raised at the Greek parliament, by Pappas, MP of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, the Greek Cyber Crime Unit arrested Loizos, who was finally sentenced for malicious blasphemy and offending religion (21/09/2012) (Weisenthal, 2012). Loizos' case was one of the first cases, which at the time, due to the insufficient regulations relating to the Greek online environment, attracted national and international interest. In an act of solidarity and as a means of criticising the Greek authorities, the hashtag #FreeGeronPastitsios was trending for days on Greek Twitter. This case links to the sub-networks here because of the religious component and how that connects to prejudice and conspiracy theories, in turn feeding into far right thinking and ideologies. The case of Paisios/Pastitsios indicates a conflict between two different ideologies, two different ways of understanding

relationships between state apparatuses such as the state and religion, digital governance and political cultural hegemony in civil society. At the same time, this case straightforwardly illustrates the way that the debt crisis turned into a crisis of democracy and freedom (Nevradakis, 2012).

Group 2 consists of nodes/pages relevant to the Greek Orthodox stereotype and culture, the right-wing Populist Party An.El., and of general interest. Indicative examples of the populist and far right rhetoric of this group are pages related to Paisios, a Greek monk, to Greece and the beloved nation, as well as to pages related to internet dystopia and technophobia. Such pages developed around inaccurate and bizarre perceptions and discussion on surveillance and globalisation. Here, technology and digital services are preset as the metaphysical 'evil', the abstract 'bad' and 'immoral'. Under this rationale, the nationalistic-oriented ideology and actions are suggested as the most indicative path for resistance. Nonetheless, these latent approaches should not be confused with the international global justice or anti-surveillance and transparency movements. This is closer to the New World Order conspiracy theory strands, where anti-globalisation rhetoric is developed under the thread of an abstract evil idea (NWO) and the threat of globalisation as a procedure which will, first of all, destroy the notion of nation and national identity. This, however, is not discussed in academic debates and ideas, but rather is presented as a threat from the abstract 'superpower bad' that plans to destroy the country, 'threatening our language, our culture', etc. In other words, due to the abstract 'superpower evil' and the existing conspiracy-related plans, what should be protected is the idea of 'us' against the 'others' (Billig, 1995; Anderson, 2006).

Moving to the third group, what is impressive is that while the issue of conspiracy theories still has a dominant position in the understanding of the network, the way that this is detected here is slightly different in comparison to the previous one. The discussion here is related to the NWO and strongly linked to Illuminati, Rockefellers and other similar pages. Such pages as the ones in this group are also related to pages which call for 'exposing the truth', try to awake people or to raise awareness –about corrupted politicians, about the NWO and others.

At the same time, another important theme in the network focuses on the pages which demand 'Free Gaza', 'Free Palestine' or express support for groups which act against Monsanto, organisations supporting the right to free and safe water, etc. The next notable theme is related to technology and the digital world, which here is presented in a very detached way in comparison to the previous group. Links to Anonymous pages, to Wikileaks pages, as wells as pages related to the Anti-ACTA campaign against internet surveillance and the Greek hacking scene, suggest that indeed, a consideration of digital governance exists, although it is perceived through a less conservative and parochialist approach. Furthermore, this approach suggests a linkage with international movements and activism which is expressed both online and offline. Other less prominent themes are related to this group concentrate on anti-/pro-Christ and religion pages and on entertainment-related fanpages. The next two groups, 4 and 6, could be described as being less politicised or 'apolitical'. These groups consist of pages are supportive of NGOs, vegan and environmental groups, of humorous Aganaktismenoi versions of pages, making some connection with pop culture and entertainment (i.e. the Atenistas, a hipster-type pop culture phenomenon). Other notable themes in these groups are related to entertainment (music, TV Channels and Shows, etc.), to romantic exchange-related pages, as well as to pages of general interest.

The analysis of the second category of groups (Groups 5, 7, 8 and 9), points to a different perspective in term of graph interpretation as well as the formation of small online communities. These groups concentrate more on themes limited to each group's boundaries. Group 5 focuses on an anti-occupation university community, supporting the New Democracy and other right-wing groups, which expressed opposition to the wave of university occupations at the time. In this last section of analysis, we are able to observe the dominant actors and their coalitions, in order to understand the fragmentations and emergence of network structures, which later dominate and transfer to Greek Twitter in the following chapter.

Figure 9: Structure of the Network and Sub-networks
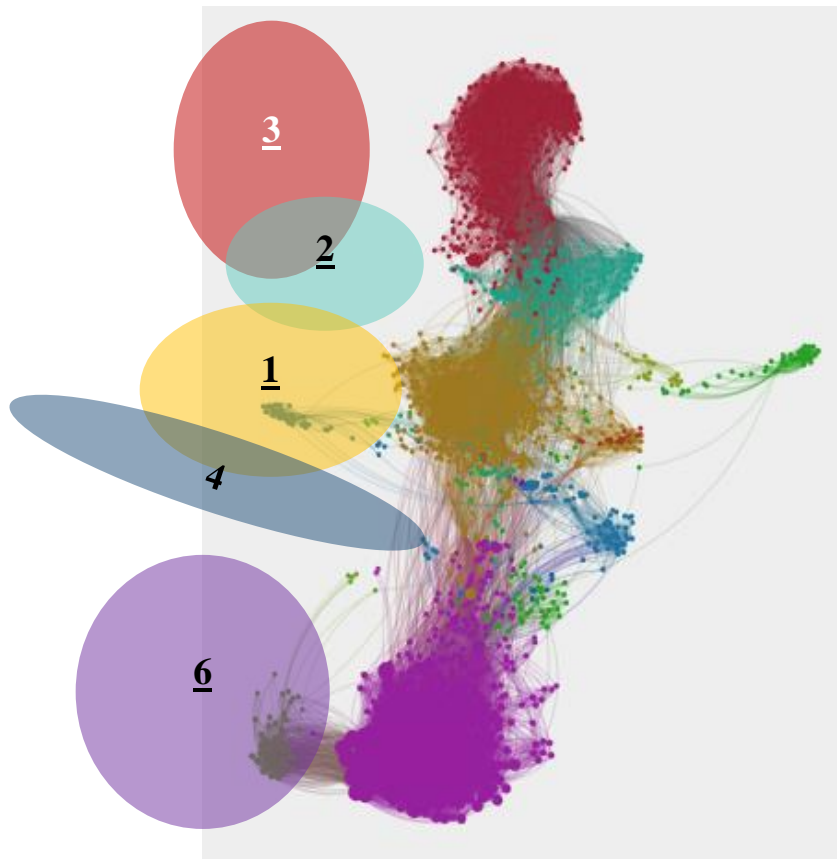
Focusing on the overall structure of the network, the most dominant group, Group 1 (Aganaktismenoi), could be characterised as the obvious heart of the network, due to the content it carries. This group is linked to Group 2 (NWO, Conspiracy theories/religion) while Group 4 develops by crossing with Group 1 and at the periphery of the network's main body. Group 4 consists of pages related to Greenpeace, to vegans as well as to entertainment pages. This group has no strong linkage to the other groups, although its position in the network could suggest an insertion to Group 6, which is comprised of pages mainly relating to music and entertainment. Thus, the groups located below Group 1 are not straightforwardly related to politics or the crisis context. On the other hand, the groups located above Group 1 have more political-oriented content. Moreover, and this is significant, while Group 3 consists of pages related to contemporary social movements from different countries, focused both on local and global politics, this group is not straightforwardly connected with Group 1, the Aganaktismenoi group. Instead, the

connective group between Groups 1 and 3, is Group 2 which though is related to pages linked to national and religion content as well as against the New World Order and conspiracy theories. While this is not supporting the bubble effect, as suggested above, another interpretation could also suggest that the Aganaktismenoi are essentially exposed to anti-globalisation movements and international discourse through conspiracy theorists and NWO groups.

6.3.1. Concluding Remarks and Discussion

The graph of the Aganaktismenoi network could be further analysed, in a more advanced and in-depth approach, focusing on sub-networks and nodes, on dominant points and positions, and so on. However, the analysis of the network conducted was in order to track the emergence/ evolution of the ideology and organisation through digital media starting from the previous examined cases/platforms (Indymedia, YouTube, December Riots) to the next examined case (Twitter greferendum) – to explain, the themes as raised by the December Riots (Chapter 5), related to movements, corruption and resistance as well as solidity networks, move on to new themes such as the currency debate (Drachma/Euro) as well as to pro-Greek nationalists' pages. This is not impressive considering the historical continuity of the incidents as well as the evolution of the crisis and its effects on the whole range and structure of the social and political spectrum (Chapter 3).

The networks of Aganaktismenoi pointed out issues of polarization as well as the emergence of different ideologies. Starting from polarization, the offline polarization of the Aganaktismenoi mobilizations (6.3.1.) is reflected online through the development of groups and then, through the structural development/association of these groups to the main body of the network. The Aganaktismenoi pages (Group 1) are strongly linked to right-wing and populist pages (Group 2), which act as a bride between the Aganaktismenoi pages and the pages related to national/transnational social movements (Group 3). In a different interpretation, Group 3 (Social Movements pages) act as an ideological umbrella, in reference to which Group 2 (right-wing and populist pages) and Group 1 (Aganaktismenoi pages) developed. Apart from the ideological and structural

opposition as observed by Group 1 and Group 2, opposition among smaller groups (Group 5 and 7) pointed out the contrast between left-wing and right-wing pages online.

Going back to the case of the December Riots (Chapter 5) what is significant is the way that the indicated themes evolved and were expressed differently in the two cases. (December Riots and Aganaktismenoi). In December Riots, there are some linkages to transnational debates and movements, however the debates of that example were related to national oriented issues and context. In contrast, the Aganaktismenoi are straightforwardly related to transnational debates, focusing both on the crisis and various ideological concerns/conflict on issues related to technology, politics, and so on. The comparison is discussed further in the last chapter of the thesis. For now, the cases in the previous two chapters suggest their own core debates and conflicts, which did not evolve linearly or through continuous ideological debates.

6.4. SYRIZA Online Diaspora (National – Transnational): A Page like-network

The visualisation of the SYRIZA Online Diaspora network indicates four dominant groups, which encompass more than 100 nodes each (Groups 3, 2, 1, 4). Then the second category of groups consists of groups encompassing between 10 and 50 (Groups 5, 6, 10, 20) nodes and the third category of groups encompassing 1-node groups and up to 3-node groups. The first category of groups, which consists of Groups 1,2, 3 and 4, encompasses more than 100 nodes, suggesting the dominant communities in the network. Similar to the Aganaktismenoi analysis, the analysis focuses on the qualitative characteristics of each group, concentrating on dominant actors and online coalitions, in order to understand their relationships with the offline political culture in the years 2012–2015 and their impact on the several elections taking place during that period.
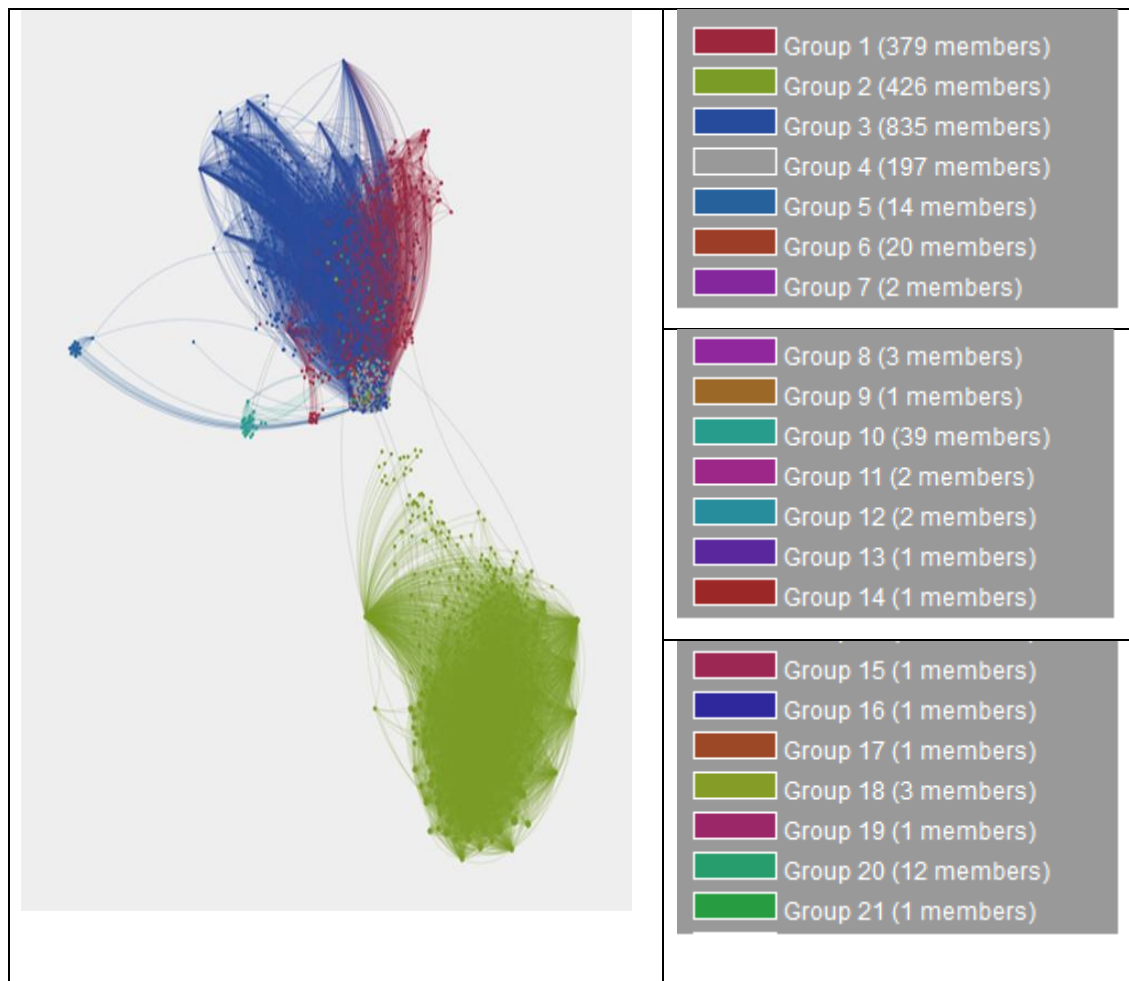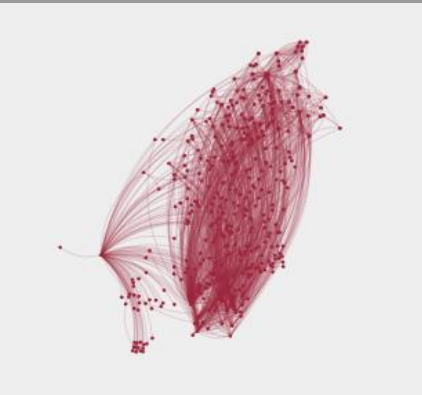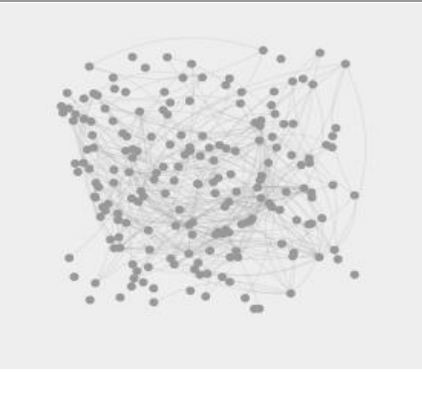
In the first category of groups, Group 3 is the heart of the network as it consists mainly of SYRIZA-related pages. Group 2 is comprised of pages related to AEK FC, a Greek association football club. Group 3 and Group 4 could be understood as two different networks as there are only five linkages between them, among which are entertainment pages, and youth SYRIZA branches and youth Football branch pages. Group 1 is associated with various pages, including media, politics, social movements and initiatives.

The second category of groups is comprised of Group 10, Group 6, Group 5 and Group 20. Group 10 is comprised of pages against austerity and pages related to nationally-oriented debates (Macedonia, Cyprus, etc.) and anti-racist pages. Group 6 develops

around the coalition of SYRIZA – An.El., and similar pages, as well as around pages about Exarcheia. Group 5 is comprised of pages related to SYRIZA and Exarcheia, while Group 20 is related to SYRIZA pages and various left-oriented pages (e.g. Antifa, Youth section Ecologist-Green. Etc.). Nevertheless, this category of groups is comprised of small groups/sub-networks, which consist of a maximum of 40 members/nodes. Therefore, these groups were not perceived as having critically influenced the SYRIZA network and therefore, are not discussed in depth. A closer look at the first category of groups supported the in-depth understanding of how this platform contributed to the case of the SYRIZA Diaspora, and at the same time, indicates linkage between SYRIZA, movements and other coalitions. In more detail, the most dominant groups are shaped as follows:

Table 36: Sub- Groups – SYRIZA Network

Groups:	Dominant Pages/Themes:
Group 3 (835 members)	G3 (Blue): SYRIZA national/international pages Communism – Eurocommunism pages Solidarity initiatives & networks (media initiatives, neighbourhood assemblies & Squats) ERT- ERTOpen Indignados & Greek Indignados, Occupy, Anonymous, Free Palestine pages, Podemos Socialist workers, international workers left, MP candidates & Academics pages, Marx, Lenin, Žižek, Castoriadis, etc. Die Linke, European Left, L' Altra Europa con Tsipras Media pages

 Group 2 (426 members)	G2 (Green): AEK FC, Football team
 Group 1 (379 members)	G1 (Red): Antifa & anti-Golden Dawn pages, Save Skouries & environmental pages, SYRIZA pages, University left societies' pages Evo Morales, Hugo Chavez, Che Guevara, Salvador Allende Aris Velouhiotis, Alekos Panagoulis WikiLeaks, Ship to Gaza, Squats & autonomous initiatives (BIO.ME, etc.), Solidarity Water Europe, Eu citizens' initiative, Call for revolution pages Interdependent & alternative media pages
 Group 4 (197 members)	G3 (Grey): International SYRIZA diaspora, University pages, Media pages (England, France, German, Italy) Left EU parties, SYRIZA international (Scotland, Sweden, etc.), EU parliament, US Uncut, Podemos diaspora (Berlin, etc.) For a European Spring, Naomi Klein, Blockupy Europe, Assembly against austerity, Refugees Welcome
 Group 10 (39 members)	G5 (Light Blue) Pro-EU, Anti-nationalist traditions Anti-fascism, Anti-Golden Dawn

Group 3 is the backbone of the SYRIZA Online Diaspora, consisting of the national and international SYRIZA pages as well as SYRIZA candidates' fanpages. Secondly, left-wing oriented pages, including media pages (left.gr, Aygi Newspaper, RednoteBook, Leftlab, etc.), communism/Eurocommunism and EU left wing parties' pages (Die Linke, International Workers Left, European Left, L' Altra Europa con Tsipras), as well as Greek, left wing groups (Antarsya) are also included in the group. This group is indicative as regards the national and transnational formation of the SYRIZA network, both online and offline, suggesting an insight into the party's coalitions. To a lesser extent, pages relating to historical and contemporary philosophical and political figures (e.g. Luxemburg, Althusser, Marx Engels, Castoriadis, Žižek), pages related to contemporary national and international social movements (Anonymous, Wikileaks, Aganaktismenoi, OWS, Podemos, Cleaners-Ministry of Finance, Skouries, etc.) as well as pages of solidarity networks and initiatives (ERTOpen, Stand with Greece, Network for Solidarity and Change, Neighborhood assemblies and housing squats, Solidarity Community), are also part of this group. The historical and political references/links observed in the network reveal the way that SYRIZA reflected its ideological and identity characteristics online, situating itself in the online network of social movements and initiatives.

Group 2 is a sub-network with only a few links and is comprised of pages related to AEK FC, football club. While this sub-network could have been excluded from the SYRIZA Online Diaspora, at the same time, it is a great opportunity to point out limitations of computational and software-assisted analysis, highlighting the importance of the efficient analysis of qualitative characteristics of each examined case as well as the contribution of the efficient understanding of the historical and sociopolitical background of each case.

The most dominant actors in Group 1 are pages related to SYRIZA national branches (SYRIZA Neapolis, SYRIZA Magnisias) as well as anti-fascist pages and anti-Golden Dawn pages (We say no to Golden Dawn, Antifa Paros, Antifa Magnisias, Action against Racism, Sunday Migrants' School, Anti-fascist action for Greece, etc.). This group is indicative of the online association between SYRIZA and social movements or collective

actions, especially at a national level, including pages related to environmental mobilisations (e.g. Save Skouries, Save the Water, etc.) and autonomous initiatives (BIO.ME). Few nodes of international pages such as Solidarity Water Europe or Eu citizens' initiative point out clear alliance building or, as Bennett would call it, 'connective action' (Bennett, Date) between national and international collective actions. Other nodes such as SYRIZA and left-wing University (EAAK, Antarsya, etc.) student associations' pages as well as left-wing youth organisations (e.g., Students Antifa-movement, etc.), suggest a linkage between the younger generation of activists and SYRIZA. Again, pages related to historical political figures (Evo Morales, Hugo Chavez, S. Allende, Che Guevara, Velouhiotis) as well as revolutionary pages pointed out the radical background of the party, while left-wing oriented media pages highlight once again the ideological association made in relation to and for the benefit of the party.

SYRIZA's pre-election campaigns of 2012 and 2015 emphasised the bottom-up structure of the party, which could almost be understood in terms of networks: a network comprised of small networks and initiatives. Therefore, this group together with Group 3, demonstrates how the SYRIZA network spread among different political institutions and actors at the national and European level, which then jump-scaled to the international level. Finally, linkages to media institutions indicated the way that SYRIZA, during that period, was heavily supported by mainly non-mainstream and left-wing oriented media organisations.

Group 4 is comprised of the SYRIZA transnational diaspora, drawing from the Greek academic diaspora (i.e. University of Cambridge, European Left Summer University 2013) and the Greek diaspora (i.e. Berlin Greek Society) which was actively involved in EU politics (Communist Party – Cambridge Branch). University and media pages in English, French, German and Italian highlight the way that the SYRIZA network expanded in different countries, linking the party to the European and international mobilisation against austerity and neoliberalism (i.e. For a European Spring, Naomi Klein, Blockupy Europe, Assembly against austerity, Refugees Welcome, US Uncut, Podemos diaspora). What is interesting in this sub-network is that *there are not many linkages between SYRIZA international and the national diaspora, but instead the SYRIZA international diaspora is linked to social movements and solidarity networks and*

initiatives (US Uncut, Free Gaza, Coalition of Resistance: Can't pay won't pay, Social clinics- Rethimno, etc.).

In contrast with the Aganaktismenoi network, what is observed in the SYRIZA network is that there is a strong coherence between the pages included in the network and the analysed groups. Therefore, the type and theme of pages in this network focus on the ideological terrain through which SYRIZA evolved, as well as on the linkages between SYRIZA and different institutions, organisations and social movements. Here, the internet is not used as a weapon for attacking the other side in endless debates and trolling, as much as it is a tool for coordination, organisation and mobilisation of large national and international groups of the public for support building to connect the party to the masses. This led to the creation of the online SYRIZA identity, forming ideology produced and reproduced by hybrid (online/offline) coalitions.

Figure 11: Structure of the Network and Sub-networks – SYRIZA Network
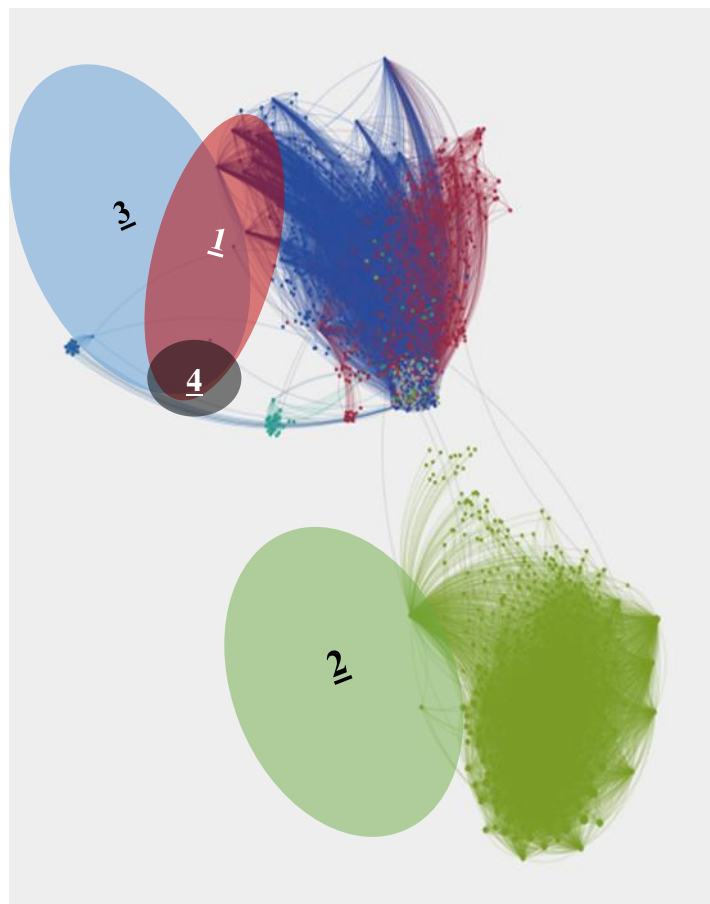
Focusing on the structure of the SYRIZA network, the devision of the network in two sub-networks (Group 2 and Groups 1,3,4) is pointed out. These sub-networks formed due to the poor linkages between Group 2 and the upper part of the network (G1, G3, G4). While this group could have been excluded from the corpus, it highlights why the in-depth understanding of the historical and sociopolitical background of each examined case is equally important to the analysis of online data. Therefore, on this occasion and based on the context of the examined case, Group 2 is not directly associated with and relevant to SYRIZA, and was only included in the network because of some weak linkages to the core network.

The upper part of the network is comprised of G1, G3 and G4. G4, formed by transnational SYRIZA pages – G1 by SYRIZA national branch pages, while G3 is dominated by social movement pages. G4 has a strategic position in the network as it acts as a cross point for G1, G3, and G4. G1 (SYRIZA national branch pages) is strongly connected to G3 (social movement pages), while G4 (transnational SYRIZA pages) has an important position in the network's structure, banding all the groups of the network together.

6.4.1. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

The SYRIZA Online Diaspora is comprised of the national and transnational diaspora as well as the participation of civil society actors. This network demonstrates the strong association between SYRIZA and the movements, starting from the case of Aganaktismenoi and concluding with more contemporary examples (Chapter 3; 5). While there are some similarities between the Aganaktismenoi network and the SYRIZA network, SYRIZA appears to be more concentrated and has clear frameworks as regards themes and its political and ideological orientation. Still, however, references to historical and political figures, or references on social movements with origins in the anti-capitalist and anti-war movements, indicate the association of SYRIZA both with Aganaktismenoi and international social movements. At the same time, contemporary examples, such as environmental mobilisations (Skouries), solidarity initiatives (social

clinics) and linkages to the anti-fascist movement demonstrate the transformation of the crisis. At the same time, another interesting point suggested by the network is the way that SYRIZA took advantage of contemporary collective actions and social movements in order to build a political platform to represent these civil society actors by riding the mobilisation wave. This point was among the most significant points of criticism against SYRIZA, which might indeed have managed to gain the vote of people participating in social movements, although it did not manage to successfully represent them in the mainstream media arena.

At the same time, the SYRIZA network highlighted the political debate as regards the evolution of the EU crisis. SYRIZA appeared to be strongly linked to the EU left political scene, which supports the necessity for change in Europe (Podemos, Die Linke, etc.). In this discussion, and in the network too, the role of Academia is important, while after the election of SYRIZA in 2015, many academics were in charge of neuralgic positions in the government. SYRIZA's pre-election campaigns of 2012 and 2015 developed in contrast to the New Democracy rhetoric which was based on the division between 'us' and 'them', focusing on the pro-/anti-austerity debate as it appeared both on a national and European level. Therefore, the linkages between SYRIZA and social movements, which emerged in the crisis context, as well as the linkages between SYRIZA and the European left, suggest the formation of a unitary political front with dynamics from 'below'. *Grassroots mobilisation by SYRIZA formed an online network bringing together the social movements of the left and the debates on austerity, anti-austerity related pages, pro-refugees and anti-fascist pages, suggesting the transformation of the debt crisis of 2008 into the multilayered crisis after 2015, which was dominated by the refugee crisis and the rise of the far-right.*

While the SYRIZA network strongly indicated the importance of the social movement dynamics both online and offline, this was a structure which collapsed after the election of SYRIZA and the 2015 elections. The (de)coalescence of the movement and its bureaucratisation, indicated the impact of social movements on the party and vice versa. Another consideration that might arise here is the impact of SYRIZA on the EU and national left-wing politics as well as its impact on anti-austerity politics. Within all these procedures, the online space is suggested as a basic component of political opportunity

structure, influencing offline social and political formations. While the SYRIZA network suggests a revolutionary virtual world (Karatzogianni, 2012) of digital materialisation with inherent potentiality for social change, this revolutionary virtual world confined itself to an ineffective government unable to provide alternative governance structures of resistance to the EU. *After the referendum period, these online diaspora activists were to conclude that the SYRIZA government mutated resistance into a great betrayal.*

7. **The Third Period: The GReferendum – Twitter, Networks and Discourse**

The study of Twitter fulfils the examination of the most dominant social media platforms used in Greece during the period 2008–2016 (FocusBari, 2015) (3). The study of Twitter was completed through the analysis of trending and significant hashtags focusing on the period of the Greek referendum (June – July 2015) and the third memorandum era. This period and the examined events were selected based on the literature review and the development of the crisis (Chapter 3), because they are considered to be significant examples illustrative of the contribution and linkage of digital media to the sociopolitical turmoil (Chapter 2; 4). The study explains and contextualises the Greferendum case (Chapter 7), and elaborates on the methods, sampling and research techniques (7.1). Lastly, it provides an analysis of the data collected (7.2.1 – 7.2.5), focusing on the two rival campaigns and both the SNA and semantic evolution of the event.

7.1. Methods, Sampling and Analysis

The (G)Referendum began as a national incident, but soon transformed into a critical EU problem, which then jump-scaled further into a debate relating to the global recession. Therefore, the crisis which started by focusing on the 'lazy Greeks' narration (Fuchs, 2012; Žižek, 2012: 13), soon turned into a European crisis with critical sociopolitical and economic aspects for the future of the EU, as well as symptomatic manifestations, such as the rise of populism (Stavrakakis, 2014) and the dysfunctional response to the refugee crisis in Greece and in Europe more generally (Dalakoglou, 2016; Ellinas, 2013; Voutyras, 2016).

The study of Twitter begins with the examination of the Greek Referendum, concentrating on the two antagonist campaigns (#oxi vs #menoumeevropi). The examination of the hashtags #syntagma and #17junegr, which were used in the mobilisations organised before the announcement of the referendum on 17/06/2015, offer an insight into the protest discourse and the tensions before the referendum. The analysis

of the selected hashtags gave an insight into the patterns of communication and networks, suggesting the origins of debates and conflicting ideologies already observed in the web sphere, before the announcement of the referendum (#syntagma, #17junegr). Then, the analysis focused on the comparative examination of #austerity – #antiausterity hashtags, on the first protests (18/06/2015), and of #nai (yes) – #oxi (no) hashtags, and on the day of the referendum (05/07/2015). The study of the two antagonist campaigns explored the evolution of #menoumeevropi (we stay in Europe) and #oxi (no) hashtags, focusing on three indicative dates (Bailout Expiration, 30/6/2015; Referendum Eve, 4/7/2015; Post-Referendum, 6/7/2015) and analysing both networks and discourse as well as the evolution of #greferendum, focusing on three different dates (Referendum announcement, 27/6/2015; Bailout expiration, 30/6/2015; Referendum, 5/7/2015). In the final stage, the examination of these hashtags provides an insight into the so-called politics of fear, concentrating on the main debates and criticisms arising from the announcement of the referendum and its output (Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou, 2017). Here, the study of the above material included tweets, RTs and mentions. Retweets and mentions are suggesting slightly different structure and discourse in comparison to the study of Tweets (Conover et al., 2011), as users might have different reasons for mentioning other users or even retweeting Tweets. However, at this stage what is interesting to be examined is the general characteristics of networks, dominant/ influential actors and discourse, and that can include both Tweets, RTs and mentions. On a later stage, a follow up study of this material would be interesting to be conducted, examining Tweets, RTs and mentions individually, even though a comparative approach, looking on the type/reason of domination and influence that actors are having in the examined networks.

The Twitter features raised two major methodological difficulties with regard to their study. The first one lies in the well-known problem of the Twitter political economy, which only supports quick and real-time communication, without giving the opportunity to access archive material, unless purchased from the platform (Tornes, 2015). This is reflected in the collection of the data, which was conducted on a real-time basis during the period June 2015 to March 2016, focusing on trending hashtags and keywords. While this has resulted in a rich corpus of material (see Appendix), a major limitation is that the days that the hashtags were collected were not always same with the days that these were

trending on Twitter. However, this is not always a requirement, especially when it comes to the examination of different campaigns, where the analysis of keywords is more important. The second difficulty concentrates on the rich analytical and interpretational options for the online material (Chapter 4). The analysis of hashtags concentrates both on the analysis of social and semantic networks, as well as on the evolution of networks. At the same time, a comparative examination of the evolution of networks provides the opportunity for a more in-depth examination of the analysed material, understanding the linkage between the evolution of the examined incidents and the evolution of the online network.

Concentrating on the evolution of networks, the exponential random graph modelling (ERMS) could support an in-depth understanding of the patterns and the evolution of both social and semantic networks, giving an insight into the procedures of forming and maintaining a networked-base social system (Lusher, Koskinen and Robbins, 2012: 9). While this approach is able to support a longitudinal study of Twitter, it also requires a more statistically oriented study and the analysis of a bigger data set (big data). Therefore, at this stage, a comparison of different snapshots of networks, taken at different times, still provides an efficient understanding of the emergence and rise of networks.

Here, I have used NodeXL, through which I collected 10,000 Tweets and relations, per hashtag/per day, including tweets, retweets, and mentions. Based on how dense the usage of each of the examined hashtags was, hours or even days of material produced under an examined hashtag could be trawled. However, taking into consideration that NodeXL is able to trawl up to a week of archive material, the collected Tweets, Retweets and mentions are sometimes less than the 10,000, in cases with little usage of the examined hashtags. After data collection and the calculation of the overall graph metrics, I grouped the data by cluster using the Clauset-Newman-Moore algorithm (Clauset, Newman, and Moore, 2004) and visualised them accordingly. This included all the Tweets and relations (RTs and mentions) collected. The Clauset-Newman-Moore concentrated on modularity and 'takes into account the number of in-cluster edges and the expected number of such edges' (Djidjev and Onus, 2013). In other words, this algorithm creates groups that bring together nodes that are more connected, or disconnected from other nodes.

Then, I detected and analysed the top items of the networks based on the most dominant, most repeated dyads of words, and I identified and analysed the semantic network focusing on meaning and discourse. For the detection, visualization and analysis of meaning and discourse through semantic networks, occurrences or dyads of words which appeared more than 50 times included in the sampled material. In most of the examined hashtags, dyads that appeared less than 50 times were the majority, without though having any significant difference or any importance influence in the final network. That tended to create noise on the graphs without giving additional information. Therefore, setting the limit of 50 times regards to the dyads that appeared in each hashtag, it was possible to reduce the noise in the graphs and concentrate on the most influential and dominant meanings and discourse. This process supported both the examination of social and semantic networks and it was also repeated for each of the examined hashtags.

As regards to the discussion and the analysis of each of the examined hashtag, this varied based on the aims of each analysis. Starting with the first study, the #syntagma and #17junegr hashtags, intended to develop a first insight, an introduction, on how the two conflicted campaigns and the discourse, developed online. Therefore, what is examined here is the structure of the networks, before looking in more details on the Top items of the networks (i.e. domains, hashtags, words and pair of words). Then, the study of #austerity vs #antiausterity concentrated on the contrast between the two, looking on the Top items of the networks, going a step further from the previous study, helping us to understand in more depth the online conflict or contrast between the two antagonistic campaigns. The study of the #nai vs #oxi hashtags, goes even deeper looking not only on top items, but also on influential actors and hubs in the networks. These two hashtags were the most common in terms of describing the two campaigns, and where not directly associated with any political or party affiliations as other hashtags (e.g. menoumeevropi). Therefore, after looking on the structure of the networks, then, the contrast between the campaigns, it was also interesting to look closer, and examine influential actors.

While, generally, such an in depth discussion and analysis would be interested in all the examined hashtags (i.e. discussion on structure, top items, dominant actors and hubs, etc.), still such a detailed presentation and discussion of all the data, would not be appropriate at this stage. The goal here is to understand how the two conflicted campaigns

developed and employed twitter, rather than to look on the contrast and the differences among all the analysed hashtags. Therefore, such a detailed analysis and discussion would not be beneficial for the research objectives or the reader, but instead would create a confusion and an overanalyses of the hashtags. Therefore, the study of various hashtags supports the in-depth examination of the two campaigns and the online conflict and contrast, and while more discussion and in-depth analysis for each hashtag would be possible, this is not provided when is not completely necessary for the study of the campaigns. Under the same rational, the study of the #menoumeevropi vs #oxi concentrated in the evolution of the two campaigns, while the study of the #greferendum looked on the evolution of the overall discussion on the Greek Referendum, including top items, actors and semantics.

7.2. Greferendum: #Menoumeevropi VS #Oxi

On 27 June 2015, the Greek Prime Minister A. Tsipras announced a referendum on the bailout conditions and agreement proposed by the so-called troika (IMF, EC, ECB). This was the first referendum in Greece, after the collapse of Junta and the 1974 referendum, which supported the transition to democracy, abolishing the monarchy (Pappas, 2014).

The political turmoil of the summer of 2015 was already articulated with the mobilisations of 17th and 18th of June 2015. The mobilisation of the 17th of June 2015 was the first mobilisation against Greece's creditors and austerity politics since SYRIZA came to power after the January 2015 elections (Khan, 2015). This mobilisation took place 13 days before the bailout expiration, with many members of SYRIZA also participating. This was the first time that an anti-austerity mobilisation was also perceived as being a pro-government mobilisation. The 18th June 2015 mobilisation 'we stay in Europe' (#menoumeevropi) was organised in opposition to the 17th of June mobilisation, with the gathered crowds indicating their consent to the implementation of additional austerity measures (Maltezou and Koutantou, 2015). The political and ideological division between people participating in these mobilisations was strong, while polarisation intensified further after the announcement of the referendum. The mobilisations of 17th and 18th of June can be understood as the manifestation of the anti-

/pro-austerity and later anti-/pro-EU debate, which, already since the 2012 elections and following the two-party system, had been represented in the mainstream political scene by ND and SYRIZA. Therefore, these two protests, which later transformed into the two antagonist campaigns of the referendum should be understood directly in relation to the 2012 and 2015 election campaigns of the two antagonist parties, SYRIZA and ND.

In contrast to ND's narration of the crisis, which was identified by the mainstream media both at the national and European level, SYRIZA provided an alternative political discourse, focusing on justice and dignity, taking as a slogan 'Hope is coming'. During the referendum period, this transformed into the 'Oxi' campaign, expressing resistance to the austerity policies. On the other hand, the Menoume Evropi (We stay in Europe) campaign had strong ideological linkages to the ND's Truth Team, which already, since the 2012 and 2015 election, reinforced the division between Us and the Them, revitalising the stereotype of the 'communist peril' and the signified historical references. Therefore, following the ideological characteristics of the Truth Team, the Menoume Evropi campaign, and, later, the #Resign campaign, expressed opposition to any alternative political and ideological proposals, supporting the austerity politics. The origins of the Menoume Evropi[47] can be found back in 2011, when G. Papandreou requested a confidence vote in Parliament before stepping down and small scale mobilisations, organised by G. Prokopakis, took place in Syntagma Square, Athens (Zoulas, 2016). G. Prokopakis, who later served as CEO of ND's public broadcaster NERIT, the successor of ERT, repeated the attempt to successfully organise pro-EU mobilisations, representing the 'silent majority', which for the left comprised the bourgeoisie (ibid.). This was the origin of what during the referendum era, can be described as politics of fear and hope (Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou, 2017) (Chapter 3).

During the referendum period, the two antagonist campaigns, and the two antagonist parties' rhetoric, created a scheme of conflict and antagonism, having strong historical references and 'synthesizing collective memories and the "affects" of fear and hope, simultaneously' (2017: 52), further supporting the division between Us and the political

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[47] https://menoumeevropi.com/ , https://www.facebook.com/menoume.evropi/

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Others/Them. What is suggested at this point is that Samaras' discourse supported the dichotomy between the Greek 'Patriots' against the utopian political vision of the 'communist peril', SYRIZA, emphasising the traumatic past and a dramatic future, (2017). In contrast, the Tsipras discourse focused on neoliberal European policymakers and the Greek political elite, and his discourse supported the unity of the nation, committing to the politics of the hope (ibid.).

The two antagonist campaigns were supported by different political parties assembling two conflicting political and ideological poles, according to the #oxi and #menoumeevropi characteristics. The #menoumeevropi front was comprised of ND, PASOK, DIMAR and smaller conservative parties and parties of the centre while the #oxi front was comprised of SYRIZA, AN.EL., Golden Dawn, Antarsya and smaller left-wing parties, while KKE didn't support any of these options (Ministry of Interior, Hellenic Republic, 2015). While the imposition of capital controls had a significant impact on the vote, still, the results indicated that the vote had class and age characteristics, with the poorer and younger supporting the No campaign (Ntelis, 2015; Tsakiroglou, 2015).

Table 37: Social Characteristics of No Vote
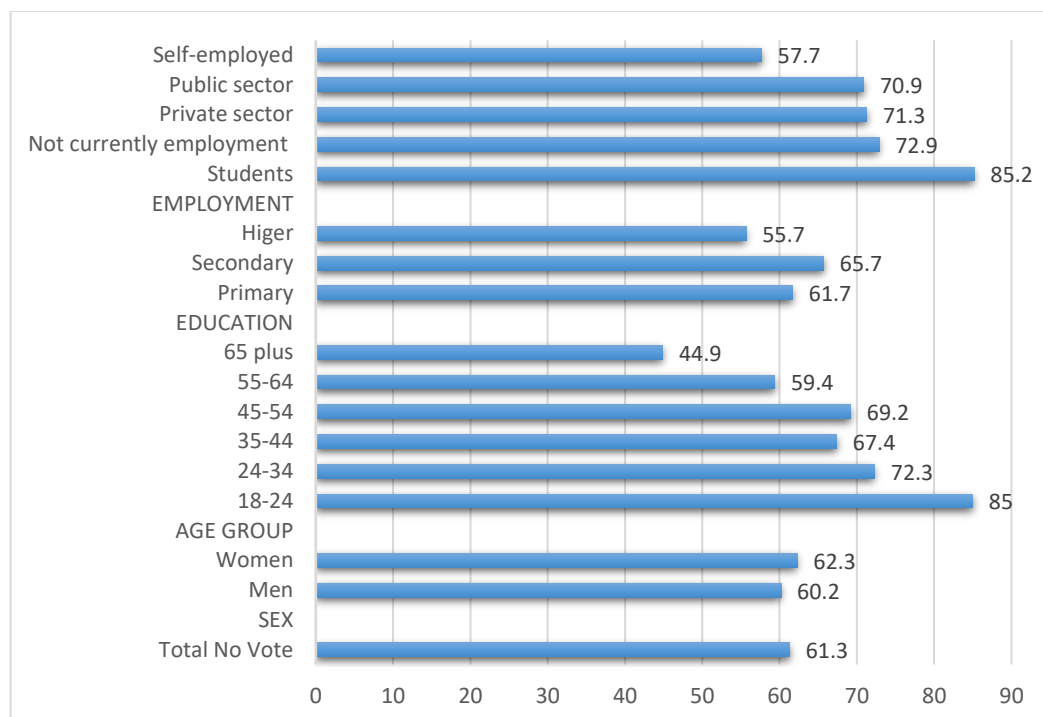
(Public Issue, 2015)

Table 38: Left-right Self-Placement Scale

Category		Value
LEFT-RIGHT SELF-PLACEMENT SCALE	N/A	70.1
	Right	31.9
	Centre-Right	17.2
	Centre	43.9
	Centre - Left	73.6
	Left	91
VOTING INTENTION	Pasok	12.5
	ANEL	91.6
	KKE	83.8
	Potami	2.8
	Golden Dawn	84.3
	ND	8.3
	Syriza	95.9
PARTY AFFILIATION	Pasok	19.6
	ANEL	78.5
	KKE	77.3
	Potami	22.4
	Golden Dawn	77.3
	ND	20.4
	Syriza	87.3
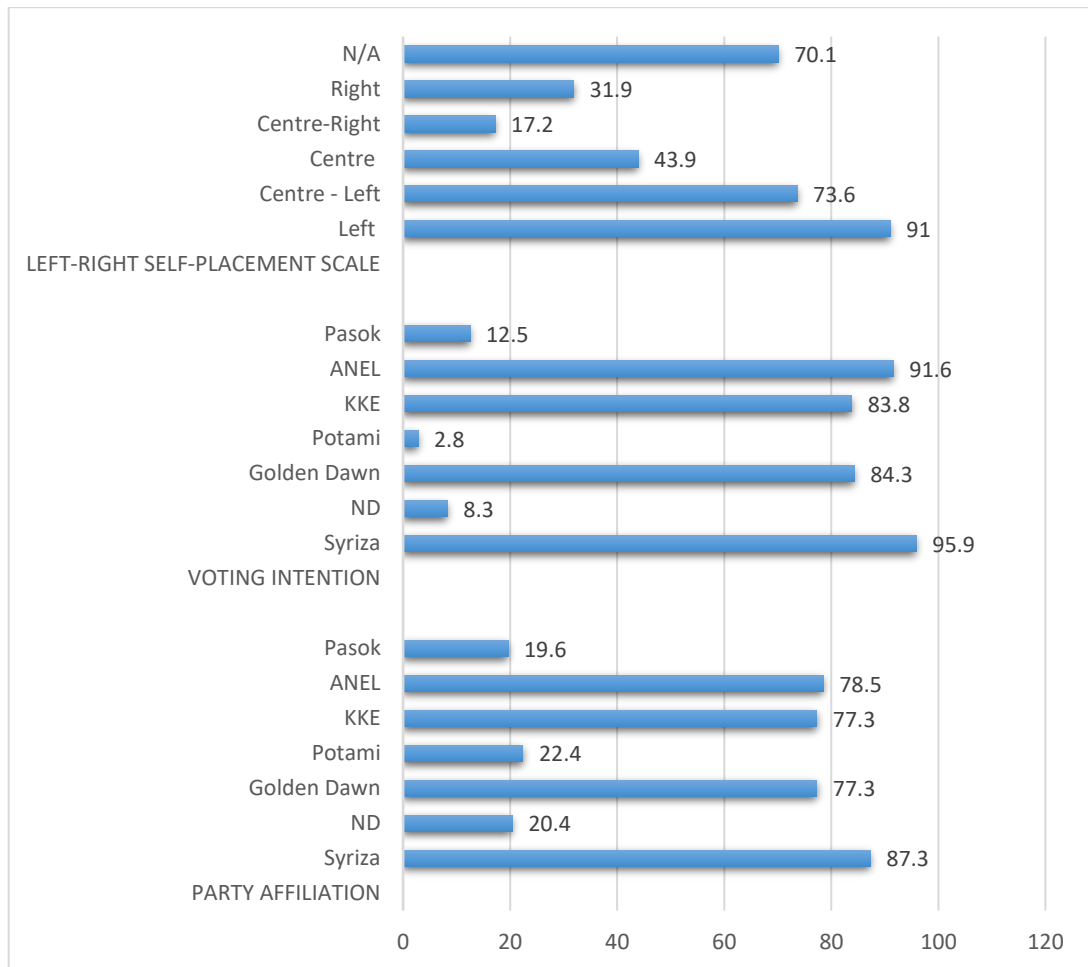
(Public Issue, 2015)

The anti-austerity mobilisation of 17th of June 2015, was organised by the citizens' collective action 'Eurochange Europe – Το εξπρές της αξιοπρέπειας' (Dignity Express) (Euronews, 2015), and called people to protest against austerity, having as slogans 'Democracy cannot be blackmailed', 'Our lives do not belong to the lenders' (Sputniknews.com, 2015), 'We take the negotiation to our hands', 'We put an end to austerity' (Kathimerini.gr, 2015). The anti-austerity mobilisations of 17th of June, which took place in more than twenty-five cities in Greece (Sputniknews.com, 2015), had a significant value, because these were the first mobilisations during the Greek crisis which was both against austerity and pro-governmental.

In contrast, the mobilisations of Thursday, 18th June 2015, were organised as a response to the 17th June mobilisation (Kathimerini.gr, 2015). 'Menoume Evropi', a small collectivity, called for citizens of Athens to gather on Syntagma Square and express their concerns at the government's negotiations with the lenders, taking as slogans 'Greece belongs to Europe', 'Yes to the EU' (Kathimerini.gr, 2015). Again, in this mobilisation, MPs of the ND participated expressing opposition both to the government as well as their consent to the EU and the austerity policies.

Both the anti- and pro-austerity protest organisers used specific hashtags to coordinate the protests (ibid.), #syntagma and #17junegr, in the first mobilisation and then in the second instance, through a comparative analysis of #austerity and #antiausterity. The rationale here is that instead of focusing on the organiser's hashtags (#change4all, #stopausterity, #mazi, #menoumeevropi), the analysis concentrated on keywords and hashtags which were more able to be used by supporters of both of the two different campaigns, developing an insight into how the conflicted ideologies and campaigns were reflected or shaped online, independently of the top-down organisers' discourse.

7.2.1.   Social Network and Semantic Analysis of #syntagma and #17junegr

The hashtags #syntagma and #17junegr were sampled as the most dominant hashtags used for the anti-austerity mobilisation which took place in Syntagma Square, Athens on 17th June 2015, as well as, in other cities of Greece (Fraser, 2015; Waerden and Fletcher, 2015), because they were used for reporting the mobilisation, both in the press and Twitter (ibid.) and were collected on18/6/2016. Even if none of these hashtags was trending on the collection day, however, these hashtags were keywords of the campaigns, heavily used by the mainstream media and the public.

The data crawling was conducted on 18/6/2015, collecting the last 10,000 Tweets and relations, for each of the examined hashtags. While the last 10,000 Tweets and relations were based on the hashtag #syntagma which evolved between 15/06/2015, 15:30:42 and 18/06/2015, 17:17:30; the evolution of 10,000 Tweets and relations of #17junegr emerged between 16/06/2015, 11:04:46 and 18/06/2015, 16:18:22.

Smith et.al, pointed out that on Twitter, if the examined hashtag/topic is political, it is expected to have the formation of separate and polarized crowds, forming distinct discussion groups do not interact with each other much (Smith et al., 2014: 1). Discussion and interaction on Twitter is in most of the cases meaningful on understanding political discourse and the tendency of politically active citizens, which online tend to participate in distinct partisan camps (ibid.). Smith et al (2014) suggested that by looking on size and structure of a network, it is possible to understand who are the influential nodes, in terms of power, and therefore indicated six distinctive structures, Polarized Crowd network structure, as an effective way to understand how crowds and conversations are shaped on Twitter (ibid.) 'Each has a different social structure and shape: divided, unified, fragmented, clustered, and inward and outward hub and spokes' (ibid. 2). In the following networks, two of these archetypes are relevant and could help on developing an understanding on the networks' structures.

Figure 12: #Syntagma and #17junegr Social Networks

#syntagma: 15/06/2015, 15:30:42 - 18/06/2015, 17:17:30			#17junegr: 16/06/2015, 11:04:46 - 18/06/2015, 16:18:22		
Group	Vertices	Unique Edges	Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	217	240	G1	176	163
G2	150	239	G2	174	156
G3	97	124	G3	97	161
G4	86	114	G4	87	162
G5	74	95	G5	33	37
G6	67	67	G6	22	23
G7	63	75	G7	13	14
G8	61	58	G8	11	11
G9	39	42	G9	7	6
G10	38	38	G10	3	3
G11	21	21	G11	2	2
G12	19	19	G12	2	1
G13	15	24	G13	1	1
G14	15	18	G14	1	0
G15	14	14			
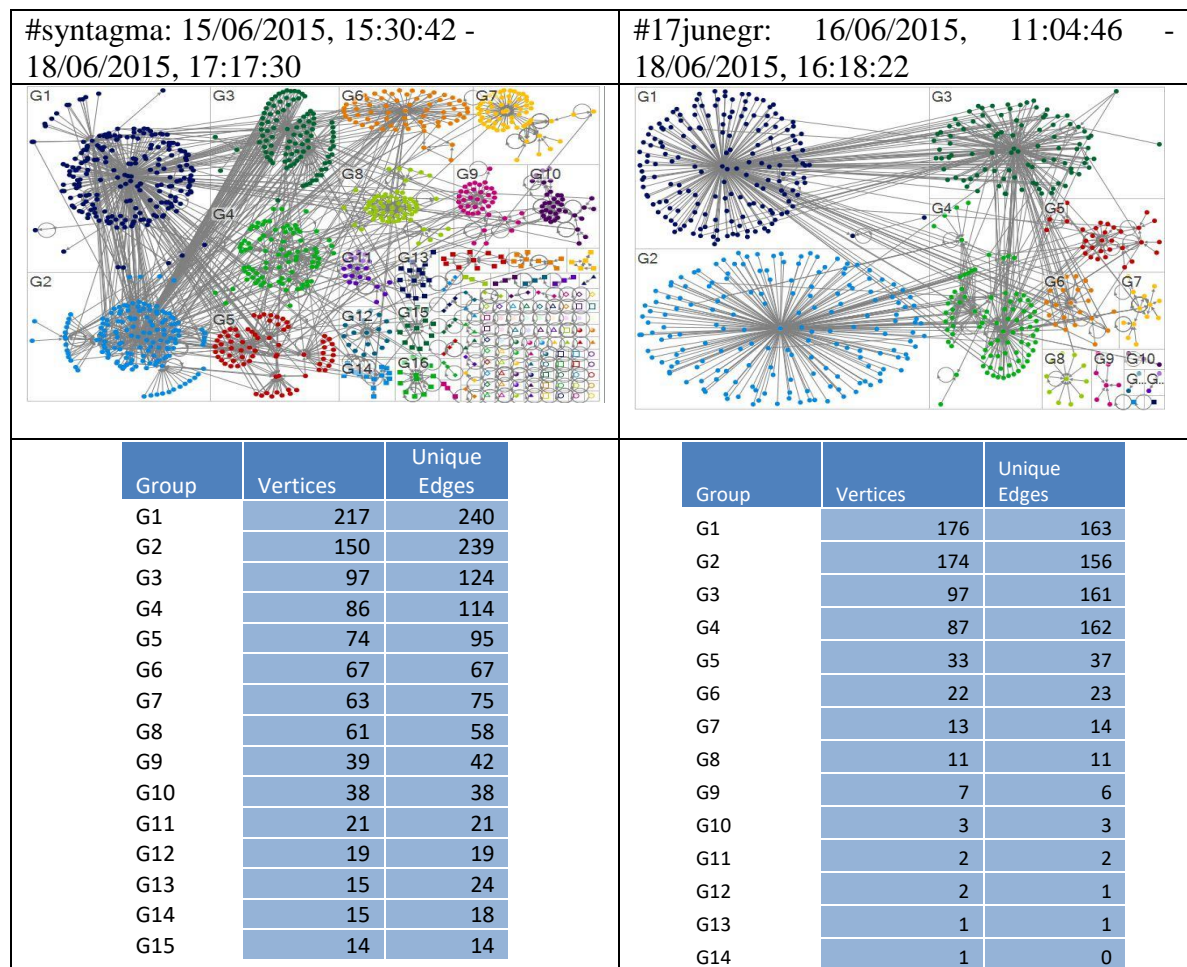
The #syntagma network is comprised of 1,145 vertices and 2,121 total edges, while the #17junegr network consists of only 629 vertices and 1,108 edges, where edges are users and vertices are either users that other users interacted with (i.e. RTs and mentions), or Tweets (i.e. same edge and vertex). The #syntagma network is bigger than the #17junegr network having significant differences in terms of structure. The #syntagma network is comprised of a large group (G1) and a much smaller one, having some isolated users and some linkages between groups, while the #17junegr network is comprised of three similarly sized groups and a few smaller ones.

These characteristics suggest that the structure of the networks have similarities both in terms of the broadcast network archetype and the community cluster archetype of structure (Smith et al., 2014). Both of structures refer to public events and global media topics, illustrative of the way that the #syntagma and #17jungr are discussed online.

The community cluster structure is considered as denoting the quality of networks, in terms of connectivity and groups or users. The broadcast network denotes the contribution of hubs, which consist of social media figures, media agenda setters etc. around whom the groups tend to develop, without though having much interaction among themselves. The broadcast network structure is comprised of one large group and some secondary ones, while the community cluster structure consists of many small and medium groups (ibid., 8). In both the examined networks, there are some larger groups (G1, G2), although, on the other hand, the differences in the secondary groups' sizes are not significant (#syntagma – G2, 3, 4, 5, 6; #17junegr – G2, G3). At the same time, the #syntagma network has many isolated users, as expected by the broadcast network, whereas there the #17junegr networks has fewer isolated users, as expected according to the community cluster structure (ibid. 2). While these two archetypes suggest some characteristics of the networks' structures the identification of top items suggests a more in-depth understanding as regards the formation of communities, influential actors, and discourse. The dominant domains, the dominant hashtags and words/pairs of words lead the analysis on the examination of semantic networks. The calculations of the top items indicate the following dominant domains:

Table 39: #syntagma and #17jungr Top Domains

#syntagma		#17junegr	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
twitter.com	73	rt.com	37
rt.com	73	theguardian.com	14
naftemporiki.gr	17	thepressproject.gr	14
theguardian.com	14	twitter.com	12
instagram.com	10	telesurtv.net	11
mediasoup.gr	10	blogspot.com	4
storify.com	8	stokokkino.gr	3
publicpolicy.it	5	facebook.com	2
co.uk	4	zerohedge.com	1
ert.gr	4		

The dominant domains of the #syntagma network were mainstream media domains (Guardian, Naftemporiki etc.), in contrast to the #17junegr network where both mainstream (RT, Guardian, Telesurtv) and independent media (Zerohedge, The press project, etc.) domains and URLs dominated the network. Taking into consideration differences in the size of the #17junegr network and the #syntagma network, it is interesting that the smaller network had a greater variety in terms of media content and hyperlinks than the bigger one. As expected though, the #syntagma network included domains from different countries (.it, .uk, .com, .gr), whereas #17junegr (.com, .gr, .net) included material mainly from Greek (.gr) and worldwide domains (.com).

The top hashtags, words and pair of words of the examined networks are as follow:

Table 40: #syntagma and #17junegr Top Hashtags, Words and Pair of Words

#syntagma		#17junegr	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**
syntagma	1770	17junegr	868
greece	647	greece	363
stopausterity	424	syntagma	270
change4all	272	stopausterity	142
menoumeevropi	227	change4all	73
17junegr	221	mazi	45
europe	208	austerity	26
grexit	166	athens	25
mazi	115	grexit	22
athens	94	greek	22
Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**
syntagma	1767	17junegr	838
greece	655	syntagma	447
stopausterity	424	greece	374
austerity	420	hibai_	260
athens	399	ronanburtenshaw	221
Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**
anti,austerity	291	syntagma,17junegr	169
stopausterity,change4all	248	anti,austerity	113
syntagma,asking	236	plaza,syntagma	113
asking,stopausterity	236	17junegr,stopausterity	110
austerity,demo	227	venceremos,17junegr	101
rally,syntagma	216	lives,belong	100
nice,warm	205	hibai_,una	99
warm,night	205	una,pancartas	99
night,athens	205	pancartas,más	99
athens,people	205	más,grandes	99

The most used hashtags reveal the contrast between what was later discussed as the #yes and #no campaigns of the referendum. The issue of austerity and Grexit are discussed in both the examined hashtags and as I point out later, these were the main points around which the discourse of the two campaigns developed. At the same time, this reflects the pro-/anti-austerity and pro-/anti-eu debate as it evolved during the Greek crisis and politics. While there are many similarities in the sets of hashtags used in both the examined hashtags, there are clear differences shown by the study of the dominant pairs of words used in the tweets of the examined hashtags.

Figure 13: #Syntagma Semantic Network
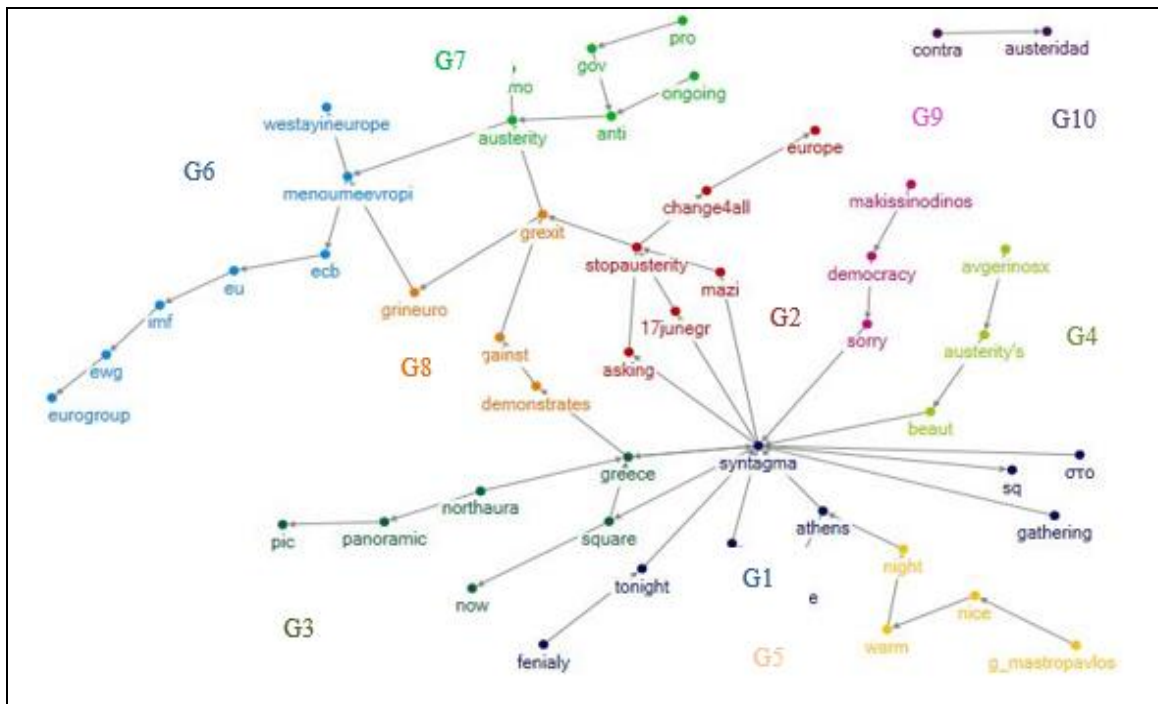
Using the most mentioned dyads of words, a semantic network for the #syntagma detected, and then dominant groups detected as well. The first group developed around updates and information on the mobilisations (tonight, people, athens, gathering, syntagma). The G2 is comprised of keywords related to the purpose of mobilisation, expressing opposition to austerity, both in the national and European context (mazi, europe, austerity, change4all). G2 is directly linked to G8 through the nodes Grexit and stopausterity and this is an interesting linkage highlighting the debate on austerity and the danger of Grexit. While G3 consists of keywords denoting opposition to austerity, Grexit is also linked to G7, which refers to the protest and the pro-/anti-governmental mobilisations at the time. The node grineuro acts as a bridge between G8 and G6, while G8 could also be understood as a bridge between G6 and G2. What is observed here is the linkage between these two debates, which later translated into two rival campaigns in the referendum context. The interesting point here is that while this debate is already observed through the crisis discourse, the tension between these two conflicting perceptions of the austerity policies is clearly reflected in the online discourse, exactly before the referendum announcement. G10 is not linked to the main network and is in

Spanish, while all the other groups are in English and only a few words appear in Greek or so-called Greeklish.

Figure 14: #17junegr Semantic Network
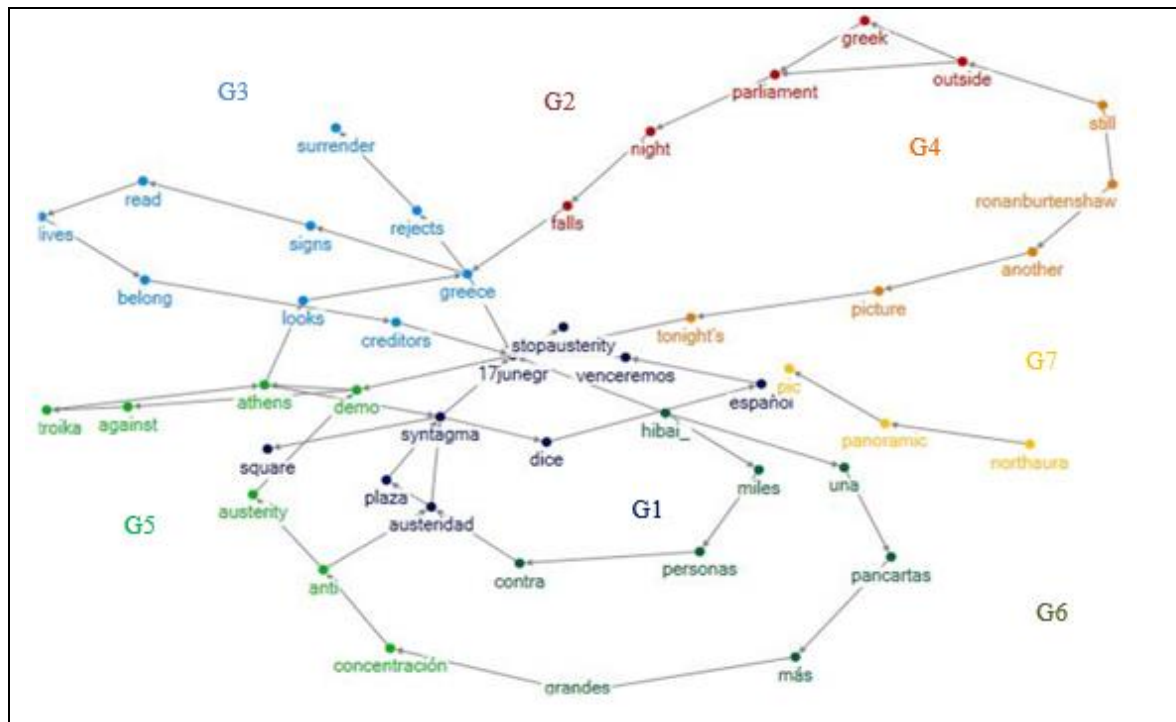
In the #17junegr semantic network there are seven groups. The first group, G1, consists of words both in Greek and Spanish, while words such as venceremos, stopausterity or austeridad draw from the SYRIZA – Podemos coalition and the slogan, 'SYRIZA, Podemos, Venceremos' (Kassam, 2015). During the pre-election period of January 2015, after which SYRIZA finally came to power, the coalition of SYRIZA and Podemos suggested a South-European anti-austerity front of the countries once named PIGS. On 25th of January 2015, Podemos leader, Iglesias, saluted SYRIZA's election with the phrase 'SYRIZA, Podemos, Venceremos' with the two leaders promising change in Europe, 'the name of change in Greece is SYRIZA, in Spain Podemos', 'people speak the same language when they fight, we will win' (Avgi.gr, 2015). While the relationship between these anti-austerity parties could extensively be analysed, each of these was differently and deeply influenced by the Greek referendum and the so-called SYRIZA U-turn (Tadeo and Penty, 2015). More importantly, the discourse of these parties shifted

the centre of the crisis discussion, and from a PIGS' crisis, or Greek debt crisis, the Spanish crisis and so on, they shifted to a discussion of the European crisis, and from there on to a global neoliberal recession.

Groups 2, 4 and 7 refer to the mobilisation (greek, parliament, tonight, picture, etc.), although G7 is not linked to the main network. In terms of meanings and discourse, G5 and G6 can be understood as peripheral to G1, consisting of both Spanish and Greek words, linked around the anti-austerity discussion. G3 indicated the turmoil between the Greek government and the EU, addressing the issue of surrender and rejection (Greece, creditors, surrender, rejection) and pointing out the conflict tension between Greece and the EU. Focusing on the spatial formation of the networks, the nodes greece and creditors develop into two opposite horizontal axes derived from the examined hashtag 17junegr.

7.2.2. #austerity VS #antiausterity

The #austerity and #antiausterity hashtags collection was conducted on 18/6/2015, when one of the first, if not the first, pro-EU demonstrations took place in Athens, as a response to the anti-austerity mobilisation which took place a day earlier. While the anti-austerity protests during the crisis era were not a rare phenomenon, after the election of SYRIZA January 2015, the context of such mobilisation changed and from anti-austerity and anti-governmental mobilisations, turned into pro-governmental, pro-SYRIZA mobilisations, however, still in opposition to austerity. Therefore, after the anti-austerity protests which took place on 17/6/2015, the first pro-EU protest took place on 18/6/2015, in #syntagma (protothema, 18/6/2015).

Using NodeXL, I trawled data on 18/6/2015, collecting the last 10,000 Tweets and relations (RTs and mentions) of each of the examined hashtag while the output and the graphic metrics developed as follows:

Figure 15: Anti-austerity VS Austerity

#antiausterity - 09/06/2015, 21:38:04 – 18/06/2015, 17:14:58			#austerity – 18/06/2015, 08:21:16 – 17:55:12		
Group	Vertices	Unique Edges	Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	111	138	G1	366	620
G2	110	159	G2	355	515
G3	91	110	G3	154	199
G4	71	142	G4	130	159
G5	58	96	G5	114	131
G6	56	56	G6	112	126
G7	53	67	G7	100	109
G8	46	78	G8	95	185
G9	34	86	G9	94	110
G10	19	11	G10	89	95
			G11	89	120
			G12	85	112
			G13	82	108
			G14	77	92
			G15	73	82
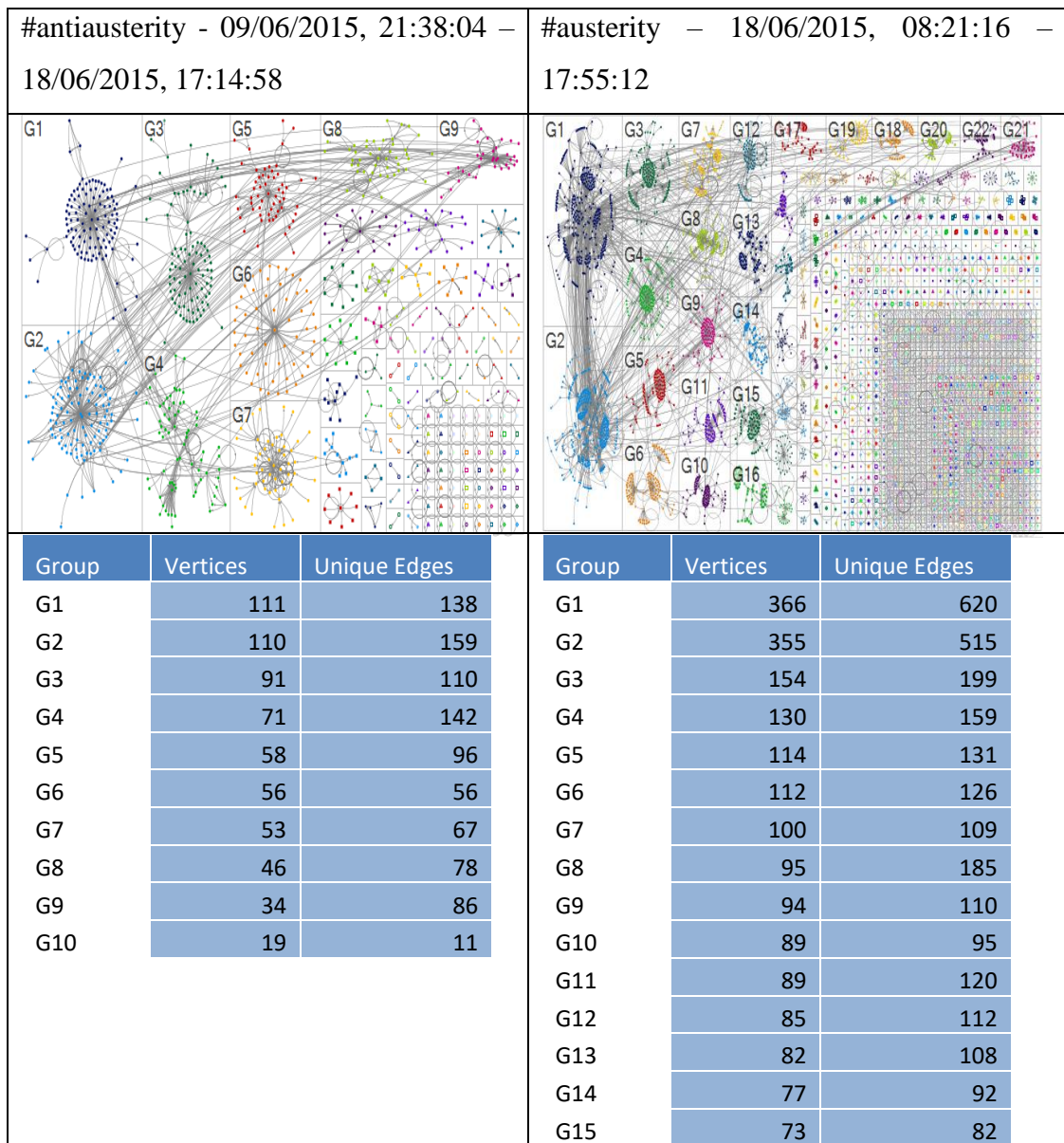
The #antiausterity network is comprised of 1,504 edges and 923 unique vertices, while the #austerity network is comprised of 6,354 edges and 4,530 unique vertices, indicating a significant difference in the size of the two networks. After the calculation of the graph metrics (see Appendix), the data were grouped by cluster and resulted in the network structures as shown in Figure 14. The #austerity network consists of 1,159 groups and the #austerity and the #antiausterity network of 123 groups. Let us examine in more depth what actually occurs here. The calculation of top items of both networks indicated some interesting considerations about the dominant domains, hashtags and word dyads. The

dominant domains of the #austerity network are characterised mainly by mainstream media and actors (WSJ, RT, Guardian, etc.), while there are only a few alternative/independent media and actors (Unite the Union). On the other hand, the #antiausterity network is dominated by social media (YouTube, FB) and many alternative or independent media and actors (The peoples' assembly, Openermedia, etc.). This is not impressive, though, to think that the #austerity network consists of many more actors and users, in contrast to #antiausterity network, which is not only smaller in terms of participation but seems to be more concentrated in terms of audience, focusing on a specific ideological spectrum.

Table 41: #austerity VS #antiausterity Top URLs and Domains

#antiausterity		#austerity	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
youtube.com	201	theguardian.com	556
twitter.com	99	co.uk	419
news786.in	84	wsj.com	233
co.uk	65	twitter.com	222
facebook.com	29	org.uk	161
org.uk	20	youtube.com	99
theguardian.com	15	trib.al	88
soundcloud.com	14	rt.com	63
indiegogo.com	7	facebook.com	60
cityam.com	6	cityam.com	60

The dominant hashtags of the #anti-austerity network concentrate mainly on the UK Labour party and the leadership elections hustings period which started one day before the collection of the data on 17/6/2015 (#jeremyo4leader, #labourleadership, #toriesoutnow, etc.), while few hashtags are directly associated with the Greek mobilisations (#greece, #tsipras). In both cases, though, hashtags such as #endausteritynow, #austerity, and #theleft, highlight the EU debate on austerity politics and the opposition to neoliberal policies. The #austerity network is more directly concentrated on the Greek case (#greece, #SYRIZA, #grexit) and the mobilisations (#mazi, #junedemo). Again, the EU dimension of the political debates of that period is expressed not only through the usage of hashtags related to the Labour elections

(#labourdebate), but related to the #grexit and #eu debate as well (#grexit, #eu, #endausterity, #imf, #austerity).

Table 42: #austerity VS #antiausterity Dominant Hashtags

#antiausterity		#austerity	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
		austerity	764
antiausterity	1101	greece	349
jeremy4leader	238	endausteritynow	336
endausteritynow	140	grexit	137
greece	127	eu	106
tsipras	85	syriza	99
labourleadership	74	labourdebate	91
jeremycorbyn	72	imf	85
theleft	57	junedemo	75
toriesoutnow	52	mazi	72
austerity	35		

The dominant words in the #antiausterity network are focused both on the UK and Greece (antiausterity, jeremy4leader, corbyn4leader, Greece), while the #austerity network is concentrated on the issue of austerity and the express of opposition, including the Greece-EU tension (austerity, Greece, anti, against, eu). *What is interesting here is that #austerity and #antiausterity hashtags are used both in relation to the Greek mobilisations, the EU debate, and the UK Labour leadership election.* At the same time, the austerity debate has blurred boundaries in terms of discourses, even though austerity has a different context in the Greek, the UK and the EU context.

The dominant word pairs both in the #antiausterity and #austerity networks suggest an insight into the networks' discourse, and this is extensively discussed below concentrating on the semantic networks which arise.

Table 43: #austerity VS antiausterity, Top Words and Top Pairs of Words

#antiausterity		#austerity	
Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
Total Words	16453	Total Words	83245
antiausterity	952	austerity	4179
jeremy4leader	232	greece	691
corbyn4leader	145	anti	652
greece	141	against	468
2	118	eu	390
Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
antiausterity,communists	84	anti,austerity	585
communists,occupy	84	against,austerity	392
occupy,greece	84	reason,accept	316
greece,finance	84	accept,austerity	283
finance,ministry	84	austerity,defeated	249
ministry,tsipras	84	end,austerity	247
tsipras,mulls	84	seumas,milne	189
mulls,walking	84	defeated,seumas	167
walking,over	84	austerity,now	153
over,russia	84	austerity,march	140

The semantic networks for each hashtag were completed through the selection of the word dyads which appeared more than 50 times in tweets and relations/interactions in each network. The #antiausterity semantic network which developed, was comprised of 23 vertices and 31 edges, whereas it was grouped by cluster and indicates 6 different groups:

Figure 16: #antiausterity Semantic Network
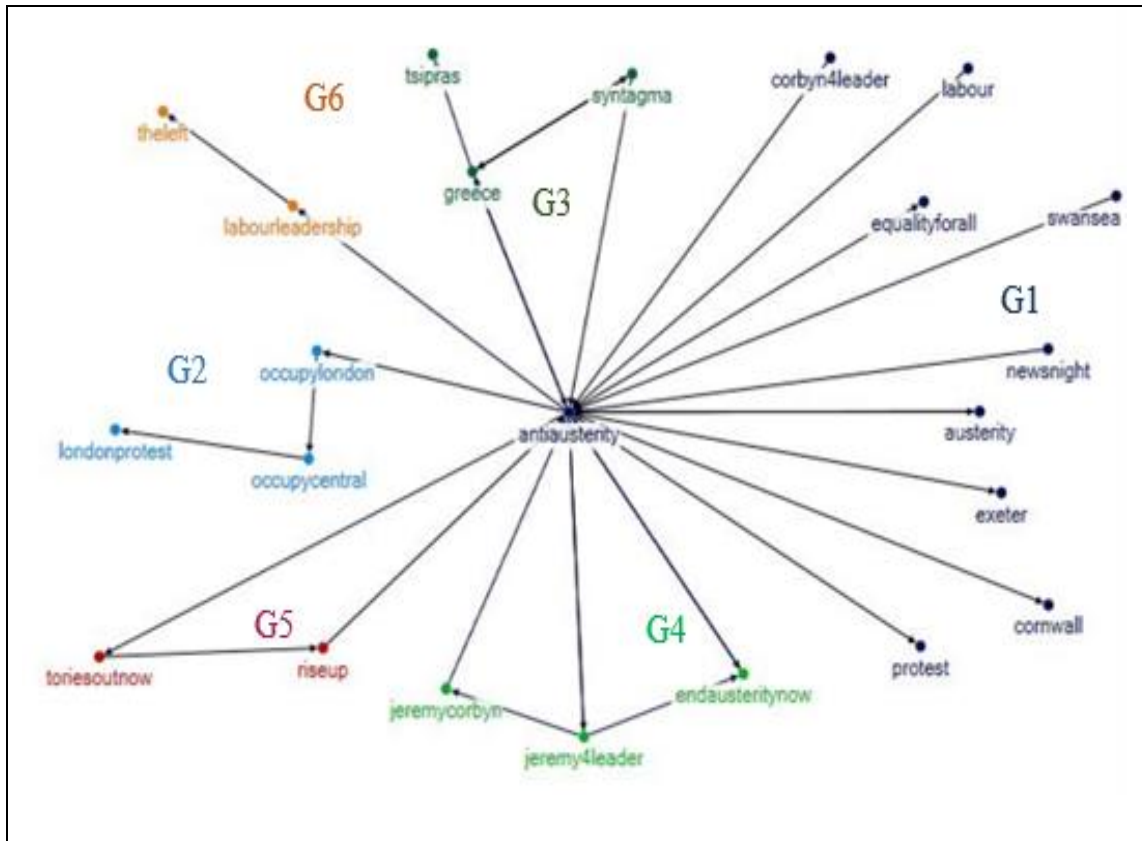
The #antiausterity semantic network indicates that the network was created focusing mainly on the UK Labour leadership election and the Greek mobilisations are referenced to the networks without making up a significant contribution, either in terms of actors or in terms of discourse. The #austerity semantic network is comprised of 88 vertices and 84 edges, grouped by cluster into 16 groups:

What is interesting in both examined semantic networks is that even in the groups where the Greek mobilisations are dominant the Greek language is not used. The #austerity semantic network indicates more discussed issues in contrast to the #antiausterity semantic network. Starting from G1, the network around austerity indicated the multidimensional content of austerity and the interrelationship between different dimensions. Additionally, a discussion on the pro-/anti-austerity and EU is observed around the node antiausterity. What is quite interesting here is that keywords from both the conflicted positions and narrations, as produced by pro-/anti-austerity discourses, appear (menoumeevropi, anti-austerity, defeated-austerity, measures, Grexit, etc.)

G1 is linked to G4, G7, G5, G8, and G9, while Groups 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 are isolated. The multiple approaches and discussion on austerity as developed in G1 are further associated with the linked groups, focusing on policy and debt control, on news

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and mainstream media, on mobilisations as well as on the issue of Labour leadership elections.

7.2.3.   The Social Network Analysis and Semantic Analysis #nai VS #oxi Campaign:

The #nai (yes) and #oxi (no) hashtags data were collected on 5th of July, when the referendum took place. Again, using NodeXL, I collected 10,000 Tweets and relations from each of the examined hashtags. The #nai network is comprised of 8,609 vertices and 9,105 unique edges, while the collected material covers the period from 05/07/2015, 13:59:32 to 06/07/2015, 02:13:51. The #oxi network consists of 8,621 vertices and 10,552 unique edges and the collected material covers the period from 05/07/2015, 23:04:57 to 06/07/2015, 00:22:40. The 10,000 Tweets and relations collected from each of the hashtags and the period that these cover suggest that the hashtag #oxi (no) was used more intensively in comparison to the #nai (yes) hashtag. After the calculation of the metrics, the visualisation developed in clusters as follows:

Figure 18: #nai VS #oxi Social Networks

#Nai (yes): 05/07/2015, 13:59:32 – 06/07/2015, 02:13:51			#Oxi (no): 05/07/2015, 23:04:57 – 06/07/2015, 00:22:40		
Group	Vertices	Unique Edges	Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	946	885	G1	806	1219
G2	521	603	G2	792	884
G3	386	380	G3	366	498
G4	332	337	G4	341	399
G5	317	308	G5	322	374
G6	295	291	G6	295	389
G7	255	304	G7	273	323
G8	184	175	G8	252	353
G9	180	280	G9	248	486
G10	167	188	G10	179	223
G11	148	152	G11	155	167
G12	143	154	G12	145	155
G13	138	160	G13	142	152
G14	137	162	G14	124	160

The comparison between the #nai and #oxi networks indicates that the structure of the #nai campaign is not as tight as the #oxi campaign. The G1 of the #nai campaign is loosely linked to the other groups, while it is the biggest in the network. This group was formed around the user @econcharlesread, a British journalist reporting on the referendum results. Groups 2, 4 and 7 have strong ties between them. Group 2 developed around users tweeting mainly in Greek, commenting on the results of the referendum, on politics as well as on the limitations of exit polls and traditional media to predict the results. The users which dominate this group are popular Twitter users related to the

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media (e.g. a comedian, users who describe themselves as trolls, journalists etc.), SYRIZA members and activists, and ND members (@geogkou10, @fraufotini, @giorgoskyritsis, @alexandrosfl350, @kmitsotakis). The most dominant users in this group refer directly or indirectly to corruption and the structures which support it (media, politics, etc.). G4 developed around the user @kallergisk, a Greek journalist, reporting on the resignation of A. Samaras, head of the ND party, which was then the opposing party. G7 consists of users related to politics (@topotami, @SYRIZAgr, @adonisgeorgiadi), to media (@skaigr, activists (@blockupy) as well as ordinary users, commenting on the results. Groups 9, 11, 19, and 20 consist of tweets in Spanish and French, while mostly there is a balanced relationship between groups in Greek and in English.

On the other hand, the network #oxi is characterised by a high density of groups and users, while in comparison to groups there are many isolated users as well. G1 is segmented and comprised of many smaller hubs and accounts/users, who are related to politics (@SYRIZAgr, @anothergreen), bloggers and media accounts (@FunnyR3tweets, @IvorCrotty), academics (@MarkSleboda1) and ordinary users commenting on the referendum. This group developed around Tweets that expressed criticism against EU, Germany, banks as well as neoliberalism.[48] In these Tweets, pointed out by hubs, the referendum results are understood as a victory of the people against banks, 'not a victory of the Greek people but a victory of the whole world against the banks'. There are strong criticisms of elites and austerity politics and at the same time, the division between society and politics in the EU is highlighted.[49] This discussion sits

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[48] RT @IrateGreek: And it is with true pleasure that I go to bed tonight, knowing that I'll sleep better than Angela Merkel and a whole bunch of people, RT @Harriscyprus: It's not about Europe vs Greece. It's about Citizens Vs Bankers, RT @AwakenUnite: #OXI - The face of true democracy #HopeOverFear Greece has put their ppl 1st before banks & corporations, RT @MarkSleboda1: For just 1 heady moment tonight the whole rotten edifice of global neoliberal capitalist system shook, was revealed as not invulnerable

[49] RT @FullonPower: #Oxi is not shocking Europe. Is shocking pro-austerity European governments. Isn't shocking European PEOPLE. Well done, RT @The45Storm: This is not just a victory for the people of Greece, but a victory for all the people of the world, RT @lukeharms: If you're not following the #greekreferendum, the birthplace of democracy is currently giving the finger to the Euroligarchy

alongside the consideration of democracy,[50] while solidarity[51] is expressed here as well. The linkage between Podemos and SYRIZA as an opposition pole to neoliberalism and austerity politics is observed as well.[52] Another interesting observation is that the results of the referendum are directly linked to the Grexit debate and the end, the dissolution of the EU, while there are also justifications of the results.[53] The accounts participating in these groups are from different countries, the EU and international, and the discussion is conducted mainly in English.

The main hub of G2 develops around the user @rcabrero75, who describes himself on Twitter with the phrase 'The crisis has only served to save the French and German banks' 'We are governed by the Mafia. We can and must', in Spanish. Other hubs in this group formed around the users @tsipraseu, around Spanish media and bloggers accounts, while SYRIZA accounts participate too. G2, as well as the smaller groups in the examined network, are shaped focusing on the referendum's results while in most cases the issue of capitalism is fiercely debated. Most of the discussion develops in English and Spanish, while there are fewer tweets in Greek and French. In the smaller groups of the network, @democraciareal there is a hub for one of the non-numbered groups, while US and international accounts are hubs in some of the small and the non-numbered groups. While dominant or influential actors were not discussed on any of the other examined hashtags, taking under consideration that the #nai and #oxi hashtags were some of the most significant and were used independently to political or party affiliation, clearly expressing the contrast between the two conflicted campaign, it was, at this stage, interesting to have a look on who dominated the network, or who were the most influential actors.

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[50] RT @UtopianFireman: The home of democracy is leading the way in democracy. No to austerity

[51] RT @jackieschneider: Oxi is my new favourite word. It's up there with old favourites like "solidarity", RT @Hariri_1987: Congrats! You did it #Greece, you deserve a better future! RT @AVF_Scooby2000: Good on you Greece, huge respect for standing strong

[52] RT @LeftUnityUK: A victory rally in London tomorrow #OXI OXI OXI. Well done Greece! @SYRIZA_gr @SYRIZALondon @ahorapodemos, RT @ahorapodemos: Ευχαριστούμε ελληνικέ λαέ. Είστε παράδειγμα. ¡@SYRIZA_gr, Podemos, venceremos

[53] RT @sukisangh: When you force the most brutal austerity on people already struggling you better believe they're going to rise up!

Table 44: Top Domains #Nai and #Oxi

Nai		Oxi	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
economist.com	1106	twitter.com	401
rt.com	435	youtube.com	381
twitter.com	342	rt.com	218
ypes.gr	218	facebook.com	64
naftemporiki.gr	135	theguardian.com	59
electograph.com	70	economist.com	51
youtube.com	41	ypes.gr	46
ekathimerini.com	37	instagram.com	44
facebook.com	35	bbc.com	38
prognosismedia.info	27	org.uk	34

What is suggested by the dominant domains for both examined networks, is that the mainstream media have a leading role as regards the material and information transferred or discussed in the networks (The Economist, RT). The #nai network includes more Greek domains than the #oxi network (Ypes, e-Kathimerini), while social media platform domains appear in both the examined networks.

Table 45: Dominant Hashtags #Nai and #Oxi

#Nai		#Oxi	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
nai	10121	oxi	10328
oxi	8533	grefenderum	2456
greferendum	2879	greferendum	1589
grefenderum	2206	greece	1528
greece	1707	greekreferendum	1290
greekreferendum	973	syntagma	496
dimopsifisma	688	oxi2015	424
grexit	423	grecia	357
greececrisis	384	grexit	332
eurocrisis	369	nai	237

The most dominant hashtags used in the #nai and the #oxi network have many similarities. Both refer to the referendum, although the #nai concentrates more on the issue of the crisis (eurocrisis, Greececrisis), while the #oxi dominant hashtags include hashtags such as #syntagma, #grecia, #oxi2015 which are also used after the announcement of the results, supporting the celebrations which took place the same day in the Syntagma Square. The #grexit appears in both the examined hashtags, pointing out a major political and social debate which arose based on the threat of the so-called Grexit.

Table 46: Top Words and Pairs of Words #Nai and #Oxi

#Nai

Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
Total Words	180360	oxi,nai	1806
nai	9774	nai,yes	1022
oxi	8458	oxi,61	985
greferendum	2827	counted,oxi	899
yes	2198	nai,38	845
grefenderum	2031	votes,counted	779
		yes,nai	747
		nai,oxi	742
		yes,greferendum	507
		financial,chaos	473

#Oxi

Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
Total Words	161137	grefenderum,oxi	782
oxi	9845	oxi,grefenderum	744
grefenderum	2354	oxi,oxi	489
greece	2165	greekreferendum,oxi	451
greferendum	1474	oxi,greece	389
greekreferendum	1260	oxi,greferendum	380
		syntagma,square	285
		greece,oxi	259
		oxi,greekreferendum	232
		oxi,austerity	223

As well as in top hashtags, top words and dyads of words indicate many similarities relating to the two examined networks and the discourse. The dominant words and pairs of words in the #oxi hashtag appear to concentrate more on the results and the no campaign, while the #nai hashtags and the top words and pair of words include keywords of the no campaign as well. A comparison between the top pair of words of the two

hashtags indicates that the #nai hashtag has been created around the antagonism between yes and no discourse and ideology (yes – no, financial – chaos, nai – yes), as well as focusing on the results (nai – 38, oxi – 61). In contrast, the meaning and the discourse established based on the no campaign concentrates more on the results and the celebrations (syntagma – square, oxi – greferendum).

Selecting the pairs of words which are mentioned more than 50 times, as explained in detail above (7.1.), according to each hashtag network item metrics, the following semantic networks were detected:

Figure 19: #Nai, Semantic Network
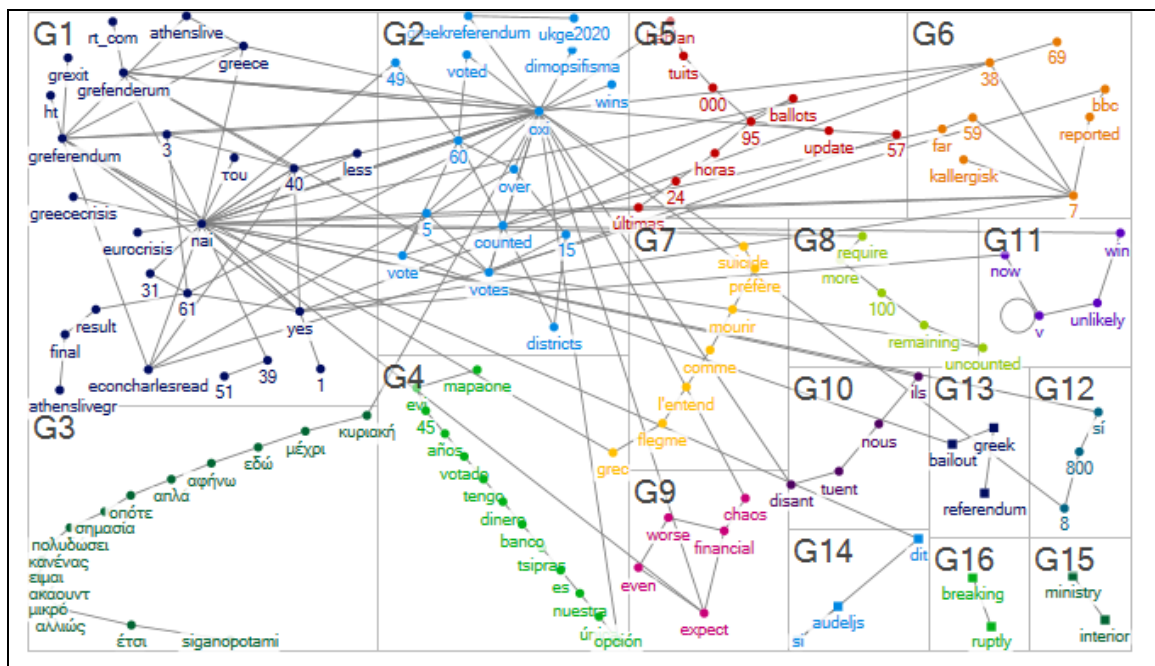
The pair of words used as vertices and edges formed the above semantic network and detected 15 groups, using the Clause-Newman-Moore algorithm. Due to the high number of vertices, the visualisation of the network developed in different boxes for each group. Groups 1 and 2 are strongly linked and both refer to the referendum results, with yes (nai) and no (oxi) being at the centre of each group. Most of the other groups developed following the same rationale and in different languages (G4, G5, G8, G11). G9 is linked

to G2 and has fewer linkages with G1 as well. These groups concentrated on the financial chaos, which was about to follow the oxi campaign's win.

Figure 20: #Oxi Semantic Network
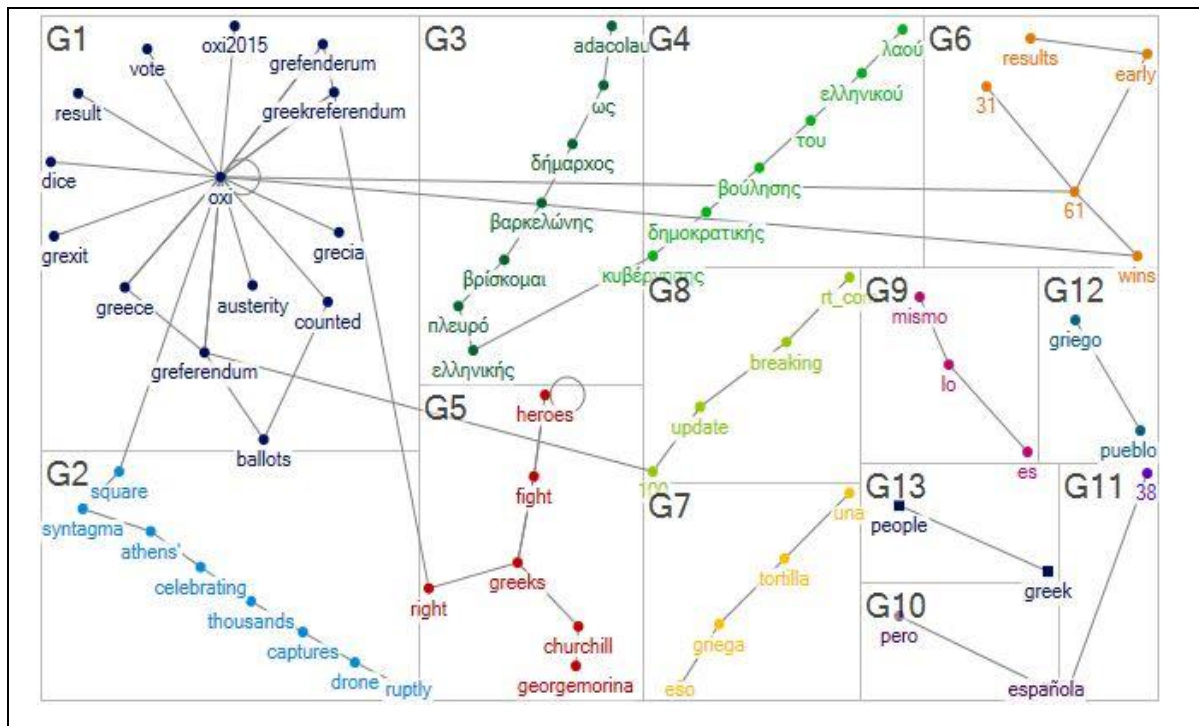
Following the same process as described above, 13 groups were detected in the #oxi semantic network, which, even if they are fewer than for the #nai network, suggest a variety with regard to the discussed themes. G1 develops concentrating on the referendum results, G2 emerges and concentrates on the gathering of people at Syntagma Square, celebrating the win of the no campaign (syntagma, athens, celebrating, thousands, captures, drone). G3 consists of words in Greek, although it refers to Spain and the Barcelona's Mayor, who supported the Greek government (βρίσκομαι, στο, πλευρό, της, ελληνικής, κυβέρνησης – last word in G4). This leads to G4, which concentrates on the democratic will of the Greek people (κυβέρνηση, δημοκρατική, βούληση, του ελληνικού, λαού) and the Greek government (G3). G4 develops in linkage with G1 and refers to a phrase regarding the heroism of Greece, which – as an urban myth – is supposed to have been said by Churchill during WWII. The parallelism between WWII and the EU crisis is already suggested by the early phases of the crisis, at least in the German and the Greek press (Dearden, 2015), (Chapter 3). Groups 9, 11, 12, 13 have

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loose or no ties to the network, while again after English and Greek, Spanish is also noticed in the network.

7.2.4. Evolution of Campaigns Discourse: #menoumeevropi and #oxi

After the examination of keywords and hashtags which supported the examination of the two conflicted political and ideological approaches to the referendum debate, what is also important to examine is the evolution of hashtags and discourse, in juxtaposition to the evolution of events and incidents, both in the Greek and the EU context. This will support a more in-depth understanding of the usage of Twitter, the online discourse and the linkage to the offline discourse and political polarisation.

The evolution of the two antagonistic campaigns is studied focusing on the hashtags #menoumeevropi (we stay in europe) and #oxi (no). The first examined hashtag #menoumeevropi was trending for several days during the referendum period, representing mainly the centre-right, the right-wing and mainstream angle on the referendum debate. The usage of this hashtag was so intense and straightforwardly linked to the right-wing oriented ideological and political view on the crisis debate, that a year after the referendum it is still used, denoting a specific cultural and ideological framework represented by right-wing and conservative parties. On the other hand, the hashtag #oxi (no) is an indicative example of the no campaign, which was used to denote the opposition to austerity.

The study of the evolution of the hashtags was completed through the collection of data on three key dates. The analysis started with the collection of data on 30/6/2015, the day when, after the bailout expiration, Greece defaulted on its creditors failing to make its 1.5bm euro payment to the IMF (Allen, 2015). The second day to be examined concentrated on the day before the referendum and then the last day to be examined was the day after the referendum. While the actual day of the referendum has already been discussed above, what is suggested is that this date concentrates more on the actual process of voting and the results of the referendum, rather than on the political debate. Therefore, the examination of a day before and after the referendum supports the offline and online dynamic relationships and impact of the events.

Following the same process as in the previous examples, 10,000 Tweets and relations were collected for the hashtag #menoumeevropi on the following dates: 30/6/2015, 4/7/2015 and 6/7/2015. The bailout expiration network is comprised of 4,918 vertices and 7,662 unique edges, from 24/06/2015, 20:46:49 to 30/06/2015, 20:58:38. The referendum eve network consists of 5,500 vertices and 8,248 unique edges, covering the period from 30/06/2015, 18:51:19 to 05/07/2015, 00:14:49. Finally, the post-referendum network is comprised of 5,524 vertices and 8,181 unique edges, covering the period from 30/06/2015, 20:33:41, 23:07:57 to 06/07/2015, 23:54:14.
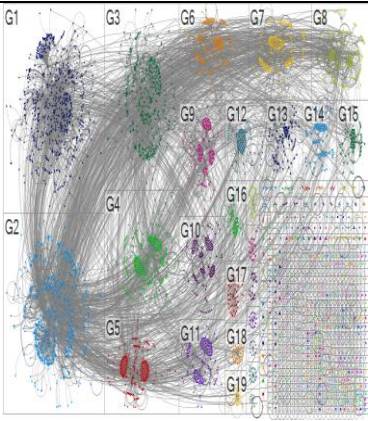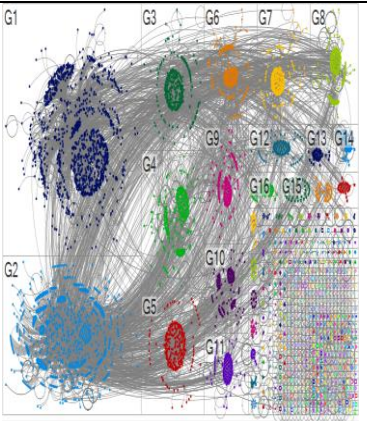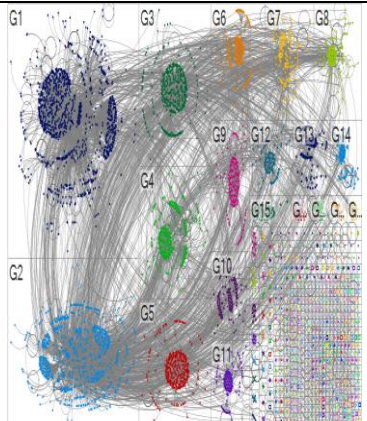
What is interesting here is that the data and the period covered in each examined date in some cases overlap with each other, resulting in the phenomenon of having the same tweets/relations included both on the pre-and post-referendum dates. However, this does not influence the sample of the data, as the analysed data clearly indicates the changes which occurred in the networks and discourse during the examined dates. In other words, what is already suggested here is that the changes in the examined dates are not radical, in terms of participation and discourse, while the examined dates are used as an axis, around which 10,000 Tweets and relations collected each time. *Therefore, as long as the concentration remains on these dates, the different attributes and features that these indicate, e.g. low evolution of data, repetition etc., are still points which should be analysed.*

The data trawling for the #oxi hashtag was conducted on the examined dates (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015) collecting the last 10,000 Tweets and relations for each date. The #oxi bailout expiration is comprised of 6,404 vertices and 8,701 unique edges, giving an insight into the data produced between 30/06/2015, 12:09:01 and 30/06/2015, 23:37:18. The second #oxi network consists of 6,376 vertices and 9,754 unique edges, covering from 04/07/2015, 21:15:08 to 04/07/2015, 23:17:18. The last examined #oxi network is comprised of 9,158 vertices and 10,989 unique edges, for the period 06/07/2015, 17:59:40 to 07/07/2015, 01:04:54.

The output of the data trawling for all the examined dates and hashtags, already suggests the #oxi hashtag was intensively used during the examined dates in contrast to

#menoumeevropi, which was sparsely used. After the calculation of the overall graph metrics, the data were grouped by cluster using the Clauset-Newman-Moore algorithm (Clauset, Newman, & Moore, 2004) and resulted in the following network structures:

Figure 21: #Menoumeevropi Social Network (30/6/2015; 4/7/2015; 6/7/2015)

| Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015 | Eve of the Referendum 4/7/2015 | Post-Referendum 6/7/2015 |

Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	693	1077
G2	667	1059
G3	460	611
G4	303	360
G5	247	289
G6	221	271
G7	201	241
G8	180	223
G9	175	217
G10	157	192
G11	143	166
G12	107	124
G13	94	105
G14	90	101
G15	82	89
G16	56	61

Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	1315	2188
G2	823	1329
G3	347	388
G4	336	387
G5	289	289
G6	241	270
G7	240	264
G8	218	234
G9	202	227
G10	150	162
G11	136	145
G12	103	107
G13	50	55
G14	45	53
G15	44	33
G16	44	80

Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	1230	1994
G2	815	1235
G3	434	498
G4	351	394
G5	344	344
G6	234	252
G7	208	232
G8	207	230
G9	185	195
G10	125	152
G11	123	129
G12	121	139
G13	102	108
G14	88	106
G15	47	36
G16	22	31

On all the examined dates the #menoumeevropi and the #oxi hashtag developed close to the Community Clusters archetype of the network (Smith et al., 2014), which emerges

around global media topics and consists of many small and medium groups, developing moderate connections between them and having a few isolated participants. In this archetype, the importance of the smaller groups and hubs is highlighted, with each one having its own centre of activity, influencers and sources of information. In most of the cases, the multiple conversations illustrate the diversity of opinion and audiences, while this type of network appears based on global news stories (ibid.).

At the same time, the networks suggest some characteristics close to the Broadcast Network archetype too, which is comprised of one large and many secondary groups, having inbound connections between groups and moderated unconnected participants. The similarities of the top items on the network are many, as usually the words, URLs or hashtags used in the groups are raised by the dominant group and its characteristics. The broadcast archetype of the network is formed based on breaking news stories with many network members repeating 'prominent news and media organisations tweets' (2014, p.3). In this type of network, power agenda setters and personalities with many followers have a strong impact on the networks' discourses; however, high numbers of disconnected participants remain, choosing to participate in the online discourse, without interacting with many people or their personal network.

Figure 22: #Oxi Social Network (30/6/2015; 4/7/2015; 6/7/2015)

Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015	Eve of the Referendum 4/7/2015	Post-Referendum 6/7/2015

Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	1055	1583
G2	629	877
G3	558	926
G4	388	519
G5	281	329
G6	277	346
G7	240	234
G8	154	206
G9	141	178
G10	135	126
G11	118	134
G12	102	108

Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	818	1355
G2	814	1333
G3	770	1101
G4	530	971
G5	503	658
G6	417	406
G7	146	147
G8	108	118
G9	102	140
G10	80	104

Group	Label	Vertices
G1	G1	908
G2	G2	602
G3	G3	457
G4	G4	352
G5	G5	348
G6	G6	323
G7	G7	248
G8	G8	206
G9	G9	164
G10	G10	126
G11	G11	110

While the structure of the networks already suggests some characteristics and patterns about the formation of the networks, the calculation and the analysis of the top items supports a more in-depth understanding of the issue. The top domains of the networks indicate the main sources of the transmitted information, while the hashtags and the top words support the analysis of meanings and discourse.

Table 47: Top Domains #Menoumeevropi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015		Referendum eve 4/7/2015		Post-Referendum 6/7/2015	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
twitter.com	629	twitter.com	734	twitter.com	696
skai.gr	56	youtube.com	119	youtube.com	111
tovima.gr	52	indymedia.org	67	indymedia.org	67
youtube.com	48	thepressproject.gr	56	thepressproject.gr	56
blogspot.gr	43	gtp.gr	43	facebook.com	36
protothema.gr	41	protothema.gr	39	athensvoice.gr	31
facebook.com	41	facebook.com	34	protothema.gr	27
gtp.gr	26	athensvoice.gr	32	google.com	27
netakias.com	25	google.com	27	ohchr.org	25
instagram.com	24	ohchr.org	25	instagram.com	23

The top domains of the bailout expiration network consist of social media platform domains (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram), mainstream Greek media domains (Skai, To Vima, Protothema) as well as independent blog domains (netakias, blogspot) and portals of general interest (gtp – Greek Travel Pages). The second network's top domains follow the same trend as the first network and therefore what is observed here are social media platform domains (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook), Greek mainstream media domains (athensvoice, protothema) and general interest domains (gtp – Greek Travel Pages). It is interesting that among the top domains of this network, independent media projects and portals are included as well (Indymedia, thepressproject), while one of the top domains is the United Nations Human Rights domain (ohcrhr). It could be argued at this stage the #oxi campaign hijacked #menoumeevropi. Indymedia URL lead to a post regards to direct actions against the #menoumeevropi demonstrations, while in a similar way, The Press Project published information to criticize the campaign. Additionally, the United Nations Human Rights made an announcement to welcome the Greek referendum and ask international solidarity. On the other hand, on the last examined network, what is noticed is that the Greek Travel Pages' domain, which suggests that the #menoumeevropi campaign is associated and supportive to tourism in Greece, also noticed in the previous network, is now replaced by the Instagram domain, having some differences in the listing hierarchy. At the same time, the second and the third network top domains are almost identical.

Table 48: Top Domains #Oxi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015		Referendum eve 4/7/2015		Post-Referendum 6/7/2015	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
twitter.com	885	twitter.com	841	twitter.com	407
youtube.com	273	youtube.com	387	avaaz.org	267
facebook.com	198	facebook.com	95	youtube.com	213
theguardian.com	180	elmundo.es	58	nytimes.com	93
bbc.com	123	eldiario.es	49	telegraaf.nl	89
indiegogo.com	107	newsit.gr	47	theguardian.com	59
humanite.fr	55	co.uk	46	facebook.com	58
eldiario.es	44	zerohedge.com	36	bbc.com	58
roarmag.org	43	linkis.com	35	co.uk	56
alterecoplus.fr	38	tumblr.com	32	org.uk	49

In the top domains of the #oxi network, domains from different countries are included (.es, .gr, .uk, .fr) in contrast to the #menoumeevropi top domains which are comprised mainly of Greek and international domains (.gr, .com). The first network's top domains are comprised of social media platform domains (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook), mainstream British media domains (The Guardian, BBC), Spanish (Eldiario) and French (Altercoplus, Humanite) media portals as well as the crowdfunding/fundraising site Indiegogo and the independent Roarmag, which focuses on politics. The second network's top domains include social media platform domains (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Tumblr), Spanish mainstream media (Elmundo, Eldario), Greek mainstream media (newsit), as well as British domains (co.uk). While there are many mainstream media domains, only one independent portal is included (ZeroHedge). *What is interesting on this network, though, is the Linkis.com domain, which belongs to a free link customisation service for social promotion.* This domain is about services, which support online presence, especially on twitter, and encourage interaction with their readers. In the network, this domain is associated with a BBC article 'Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize in Economics: "The conditions imposed on Greece are indignantes"' (Originally in Spanish; Fajardo, 2015). The third network has been created similarly to the previous two; therefore, what we see as top domains here are social media platforms (Twitter YouTube, Facebook), while in a high position is the Avaaz.org, a global civil organisation promoting activism and supporting campaigns. Again, mainstream media domains from the UK (e.g. The Guardian, BBC), Netherlands (Telegraaf) and international media

organisations are included too (NYTimes). The information transmitted in these networks comes mainly from mainstream media organisations and social media domains.

Therefore, what is suggested here is that the #menoumeevropi top domains are mainly social media platform domains and Greek mainstream media domains, while in contrast, more international and mainstream media organisations and social media domains are among the #oxi network top domains. The #menoumeevropi includes some independent media and political portals and blogs, while pages which are used for civic organisation, activism and supporting the running of campaigns are included in the #oxi top domains.

Table 49: Top Hashtags #Menoumeevropi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

Menoumeevropi - Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015		Referendum Eve 4/7/2015		Post-Referendum 6/7/2015	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
menoumeevropi	9573	menoumeevropi	10045	menoumeevropi	10017
yeseurope	1201	dimopsifisma	2420	dimopsifisma	2483
dimopsifisma	866	nai	1982	nai	2113
greferendum	593	greferendum	1923	greferendum	1949
nai	560	yeseurope	1762	yeseurope	1506
greece	558	oxi	1063	oxi	1065
menoume_malak es	501	menoume_mala kes	819	menoume_mala kes	701
ναι	438	greece	647	ναι	643
grexit	408	ναι	567	greece	564
syntagma	261	grineuro	515	grineuro	516

The dominant hashtags used in the #menoumeevropi network are related to the yes campaign discourse (yeseurope, nai, grineuro) as well as to referendum-related events and debates (syntagma, Greece, no vs yes, Grexit), while there is a humourous approach to the issue as well (menoume_malakes). Similarly, the top words and pairs of words indicate the same features. What is interesting is that all the examined dates indicate a specific pattern in terms of discourse, without being strongly linked to the evolution of the events.

Table 50: Top Words and Pairs of Words #Menoumeevropi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

Menoumeevropi - Bailout Expiration 30/6/2015		Referendum Eve 4/7/2015		Post-Referendum 6/7/2015	
Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**
Total Words	124533	Total Words	139279	Total Words	139254
menoumeevropi	9572	menoumeevropi	9491	menoumeevropi	9514
rt	6511	dimopsifisma	2330	rt	7661
να	2385	ναι	2047	το	3107
το	2233	nai	1934	dimopsifisma	2385
και	1717	greferendum	1841	να	2354
Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**	**Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph**	**Entire Graph Count**
yeseurope,menoumeevropi	637	greferendum,menoumeevropi	874	rt,paratiritirio_	1065
του,menoumeevropi	432	menoumeevropi,dimopsifisma	809	greferendum,menoumeevropi	1023
οι,menoumeevropi	425	yeseurope,menoumeevropi	683	menoumeevropi,dimopsifisma	883
menoumeevropi,menoume_malakes	394	menoumeevropi,menoume_malakes	674	dimopsifisma,nai	741
το,menoumeevropi	344	dimopsifisma,nai	641	yeseurope,menoumeevropi	641
menoumeevropi,nai	304	menoumeevropi,yeseurope	495	menoumeevropi,menoume_malakes	564
στο,σύνταγμα	284	menoumeevropi,nai	481	οι,menoumeevropi	470
στο,menoumeevropi	282	του,ναι	395	menoumeevropi,nai	470
rt,skaigr	272	του,menoumeevropi	391	rt,akisdadais	451
για,να	268	μένουμε,ευρώπη	384	του,ναι	442

The top hashtags of the #oxi network indicate significant differences in comparison to the #menoumeevropi. While #oxi top hashtags do not indicate significant changes, focusing on the examined dates; still there are some interesting observations raised by the usage of different languages (l6ngreferéndum, Grecia, Greece) and the usage of hashtags expressing solidarity (aveclesgrecs, yovoycongrecia). *In contrast to the #menoumeevropi hashtags and discourse, the #oxi network and discourse develops a multi-layered discussion and meanings, linking the referendum campaign to the notion of solidarity, which in the crisis era is both related to solidarity among countries as well as solidarity initiatives in linkage to the anti-austerity movement. Therefore, instead of the evolution of meanings on the examined dates, there are more references to the evolution of the political campaign and debates, throughout the crisis period, concentrating on EU and the Greek context.*

Table 51: Top Hashtags #Oxi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

30/6/2015		4/7/2015		6/7/2015	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
oxi	11171	oxi	11143	oxi	10097
greferendum	2577	greferendum	2211	greece	1229
dimopsifisma	1712	greece	1655	greferendum	874
greece	1590	dimopsifisma	1019	grefenderum	840
yeseurope	785	oxi2015	926	greekreferendum	680
aveclesgrecs	656	grecia	670	grecia	460
grexit	578	yovoycongrecia	549	abilitatitfa	409
oxi2015	533	freegreece	481	tfalaresistenza	393
yovoycongrecia	446	l6ngreferéndum	472	grexit	349
grecia	445	syntagma	408	eurogroup	288

The top words and the pair of words appear similarly to the hashtags of the network, suggesting a more intense change in the variation of languages and discourse. It is interesting that only in the last network the discourse developed in Greek, pointing to the referendum outcome understood as a potential rift between the EU and Greece.

Table 52: Top Words and Pair of Words #Oxi (30/6/2015, 4/7/2015, 6/7/2015)

30/6/2015		4/7/2015		6/7/2015	
Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Words in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
Total Words	153693	Total Words	154474	Total Words	167131
oxi	10093	oxi	10917	oxi	9222
rt	6932	rt	7963	rt	7630
greferendum	2377	de	2199	de	2824
greece	1601	la	2140	la	2585
dimopsifisma	1580	greece	2005	el	1903
Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Word Pairs in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
oxi,oxi	804	oxi,oxi	1289	rt,rcabrero75	1009
greferendum,oxi	793	oxi,greferendum	598	de,la	587
oxi,greferendum	491	rt,rcabrero75	567	το,οχι	533
dimopsifisma,oxi	473	oxi,oxi2015	544	οχι,σημαίνει	523
dimopsifisma,greferendum	426	de,la	436	σημαίνει,ρήξη	523
rt,blacktom1961	388	greece,oxi	417	oxi,http	515
oxi,dimopsifisma	353	rt,tsipras_eu	336	rcabrero75,el	381
greece,oxi	272	oxi,dimopsifisma	317	abilitatitfa,r	378
oxi,oxi2015	262	rt,gsemprunmdg	308	r,esistono	378
oxi,team_oxi	262	greferendum,oxi	284	esistono,tfalaresistenza	378

Focusing on the top pair of words, a semantic network was formed, for both the examined hashtags and the examined dates, as follows:

Figure 23: #Menoumeevropi – Bailout Expiration Semantic Network (30/6/2015)

Starting with the #menoumeevropi hashtag and the bailout expiration network what is suggested is that the meanings and discourse developed mainly in Greek and provide a snapshot of some of the first reactions and discourse on the referendum debate. G1 suggests an insight into the development of #menoumeevropi and the referendum, indicating the usage of Twitter for organising processes as well as for transmitting information about the campaign (διαδώστε, πορείες, σύνταγμα – spread the information, demonstration, syntagma). At the same time, the criticisms of the referendum and the #menoumeevropi campaign are expressed through humorous or sarcastic comments (slavery_in_greece, menoume_malakes). G2, G3 and G4 develop in this context, commenting on the crisis frame, the new forms of slavery, as this is discussed in linkage to poverty, including comments on wages. G5 and G6 concentrate on the last

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memorandum and the danger of Grexit. G7 focuses on A. Samaras and New Democracy the opposition party, while G8 discusses the issue of dignity and the unity of the Greek people during the referendum, mentioning that both the conflicted political and ideological sides should stay united (ταπείνωση, όλοι, ενωμένοι).

I analyse the #menoumeevropi discourse in comparison to #oxi in figure 23.

Figure 24: #Oxi Bailout Expiration Semantic Network (30/6/2015)

The #oxi semantic network develops differently in comparison to the #menoumeevropi network. What is observed in this network is that the discussion develops in English, Greek and Spanish, while also a multitude of discussed themes characterise this network. Starting with the first group, G1 is composed of three poles; the first one focuses on the greferendum debate, the second one focuses on the yes campaign and the last one on Greek politics. More precisely, the central node, oxi, is directly linked to the referendum and the nodes' capital controls, troikagohome, oxi2015, grexit. Thus, this cluster of nodes concentrates both on the evolution of the incident (capital controls), as well as on the EU

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debate and the danger of Grexit. The next cluster is concentrated on the yeseurope campaign, which in the graph, is presented as being in opposition to the node team_oxi. At the same time, another cluster is concentrated on the politicians who had a leading role in the referendum (Tsipras, teamvaroufakis) and the conflict between the troika, Greece and the potentiality or necessity for change in Europe (troika, Grece, changeeurope, greekcrisis).

G2 refers to the capital controls (atm, queues, showing, large, media) and the referendum vote. G3 heavily criticises the #menoumeevropi mobilisation (εσείς/you, που/that, είστε/you are, στο/at, σύνταγμα/syntagma, menoumeevropi, ξέρετε/you know, ότι/that, βρέχει/it's raining, σας φτύνει/spit on you, όλη/all, Ευρώπη/europe), while G3 is directly linked twice with G1 (greferendum, oxi). G4 is comprised of words in Spanish including references to blackmail (chantaje), change and the braveness of people. G5 is comprised of English and Spanish words, which refer to Greece and the implementation of austerity measures (indignantes/outrageous, son/with, grecia/Greece, impuestas/imposed, condiciones/conditions, ecomia/economy). G6 and G7 refer to general comments and discussion on the referendum and the crisis, while G8 makes a reference to the Greek Junta and G9 to Merkel and the negotiations.

G10 emerges with words which are later used as hashtags or the so-called solidarity campaign, which alongside the #thisisacoup are used for the expression of opposition to the austerity politics and debate on the issue, on a national and transnational level. G11 and G12 develop focusing on the austerity measures and Greece (imf, unfuckgreece) and the negotiations (oxi, σημαίνει/means, τέλος/end, συζητήσεων/discussion) between the Greek government and the troika.

While both the examined hashtags and the examined dates could be analysed on multiple levels and at different depths, the already analysed material offers an insight into how Twitter is used, supporting the development of expressions of conflicting discourses as well as intensifying online political polarisation, which interacts with offline polarisation. Before continuing the study of the evolution of hashtags, what is already suggested here is that before the referendum the #menoumeevropi and the yes campaign developed mainly in Greek and did not manage to amplify political discussion on the referendum

and, in extend, austerity policies. In contrast #oxi users strongly criticise the yes campaign and gain international attention, with participants tweeting in different languages, discussing the issue in different contexts. What is interesting is that except for English which *is a dominant language online, languages from south European countries are strongly used in the networks, pointing out the interest in the issue, as well as linkages or similarities in politics and the hierarchical structures and power relations in the European political scene (Podemos, Austerity politics, PIGS).*

Figure 25: #Menoumeevropi Referendum Eve Semantic Network (4/7/2015)

The semantic network of the hashtag #menoumeevropi one day before the referendum, 4/6/2015, didn't indicate many differences in comparison to the network of the 30th June and the day of the bailout expiration. G1, the dominant group of the network created around the examined hashtag indicating an enriched discourse surrounding the yes campaign, points out that Greece should accept the bailout conditions (yeseurope) and stay in europe (grineuro, menoumeevropi), explaining that this is a 'yes' to Greece's' future (naistinellada/yes to Greece). At the same time, the danger of bankruptcy is

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discussed too. The name of the Olympic gold medallist and PASOK former MP P. Dimas (Πύρρος Δήμας) is included in the group as he was among the supporters of the campaign. Many artists, athletes and public figures straightforwardly supported the campaign, although at the same time this was among the strongest criticisms of the campaign. At the same time, hashtags such as SYRIZA_sano, SYRIZA_xeftiles are part of the main body of the network, in contrast to the 30/6/2015 #menoumeevropi network in which these hashtags appeared isolated and linked together. These hashtags are used to criticise SYRIZA, mocking both the party and its policies; what is interesting is that these hashtags appear together online more than a year later, especially on Twitter conflicts between SYRIZA and the opposition party. *Therefore, considering who was supporting the #menoumeevropi and their identification with mainstream politics a year later, this could suggest a continuity in terms of political and ideological conflict, online and offline.*

In 2010, Josef Schlarmann, a senior member of Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats, and Frank Schaeffler, a finance policy expert in the Free Democrats gave an interview to the German tabloid Bild (BILD.de, 2010). The second group raised by the discussion originated from that article, criticising #menoumeevropi for compliance with the lenders' demands, even by sacrificing parts of the country. G3 develops in the same sarcastic spirit, while G4 comments on the participation in the mobilisations of that time. G5 discusses the disastrous plans and ulterior goal of Tsipras, developing a discourse similar to the conspiracy theory discourses.

Figure 26, #menoumeevropi Tweet Example G2:

Του Τουίτερ ο γιός @GiorgioCFP Follow Έτος 2025 Να δεχτούμε τη πρόταση των δανειστών για παραχώρηση της Ρόδου ΝΑΙ ή ΟΧΙ; - ΝΑΙ #MenoumeEvropi δν είναι ν παίζεις μ'αυτά τα πράματα RETWEETS 148 LIKES 143 10:48 AM - 2 Jul 2015 148 143 ...	Should we take lenders' proposal on conceding Rhodes island YES or No - Yes #menoumeevropi, it is not to risk that kind of things

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Close to G1, G6 criticises the #menoumeevropi and yes campaign as well as public figures supporting it. G6 reminds us of a financial and political scandal in Greece, in which Th. Anastasiadis, a Greek journalist and Publisher was accused of tax evasion and money-laundering but was vindicated by decree in 2015 (Dima, 2015). Anastasiadis was among the 'menoumeevropi supporters, while this was also discussed in G9, linking this discussion to the issue of polarisation and division between Greek people (εθνικό/national, διχασμό/disunity, έχουμε/have, τώρα/now, σύνταγμα/syntagma,). This discussion further develops in G10, making a reference to the politics and polarisation of the 1980s, focusing on the two dominant and antagonist parties, PASOK and ND (Giannarou, 2012), pointing out that what has happened during the referendum is much more intense (βάφανε/painting, καφενεία/coffeehouse, πράσινα/green, μπλε/blue, ήταν/was, εικαστική/art, παρέμβαση/intervention).

G8 and G9 concentrate on the evolution of events, as well as on Europe and the crisis (financial, regime, europe, means). G11 reproduces the G3 group of the #menoumeevropi 30/6/2015 network, which criticises the #menoumeevropi mobilisation (εσείς/you, που/that, είστε/you are, στο/at, σύνταγμα/syntagma, menoumeevropi, ξέρετε/you know, ότι/that, βρέχει/it's raining, σας φτύνει/spit on you, όλη/all, Ευρώπη/europe) with the sarcastic comment 'it is not raining, it's europe spitting on you'.

Figure 27: #Oxi Referendum Eve Semantic Network (4/7/2015)

The #oxi semantic network of 4/7/2015 is composed of groups developed in different languages, similarly to the network of 30/6/2015. G1 focuses on the so-called greferendum (dimopsifisma, nai, oxi2015), on the no-campaign and anti-austerity politics (freegreece, oxi2015, troika), while solidarity is expressed (istandwithgreece, irelandstandswithgreece, yocongrecia, Istanbul, Barcelona, Dublin, today, saying, oxi). Nodes which act as hubs in this groups (oxi, oxi2015, greferendum, dimopsifisma), suggest a strong linkage between the no campaign and the referendum discourse. Throughout the crisis era and especially during the referendum period, the dispute surrounding and disgrace of the mainstream and traditional media institutions were strongly expressed, while the gap between the online and the offline discourse indicates strong points of consideration, both concentrating on the media institutions and its linkages to politics and society. While this will be examined later in depth, Skai_xeftiles refers to the disgrace regarding one of the most popular Greek TV channels, Skai, while this phrase/hashtag is widely used, even now, referring to and commenting on all the Greek TV channels (mega_xeftiles, ant1_xeftiles, skai_xeftiles), denoting mainstream corporate media industry corruption.

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G2 develops around the nodes greece, people and europe, including general comments on the campaign, while solidarity is expressed too (solidarity, vote, streets, yocongrecia, tsipras_eu etc.). G8 concentrates on forms of resistance (fighting, without, swords, bullets) as well as on the Syntagma Square mobilisations, suggesting that the issue of justice is being directly linked to the discussion. G3 to G7 and G9 to G12 develop in Spanish and refer to Greece and Europe, to solidarity and banks (G9, G11), as well as to the Catalan parliamentary elections of September 2015 (BBC 28/9/2015) (G3, G4). G6 highlights that dignity is among the major concerns regarding the referendum (today/all, europa, ante/before, rodillas/knees, ojala/hopefully, especuladores/speculators, Democracia, gone/win), while the antagonistic relationship between Greece and the EU is indicated by G5, which is formed based on the tweet: @yanisvaroufakis: Lo q hacen con #Grecia tiene un nombre: terrorismo/ @yanisvaroufakis: What do with #Grecia has a name: terrorism. Dignity and justice are keywords both in the #oxi campaign, as well as in the pre-election SYRIZA campaign. G7 highlights that the referendum should not be understood in the context of the Greek-EU negotiations, but in contrast, is indicative of and precludes the future of the EU.

Figure 28: Tweet Example Oxi Semantic Network

In Germany, @dieLinke has Project the Greek flag and the slogan #OXI on the Ministry of Finance government #Merkel.

G10 and G12 concentrate on the above tweet (Figure 27), highlighting the online and offline political coalitions and solidarity. What is interesting here are the linkages between the European left parties and at the same time, the extent to which discourse develops in Spanish the night of the referendum, pointing out the political coalitions and polarisation in the EU context, both in regard to the division between south-north and the conflict between neoliberal politics and the left. While these suggest an insight into the pre-referendum discourse, the final examined date, 6/7/2015, aims to indicate changes in the discourse as shaped after the referendum's results.

Figure 29: #Menoumeevropi Post-Referendum Semantic Network (6/7/2015)

The last examined semantic network of the #menoumeevropi develops with a similar pattern as the previous examples. G1 focuses on the referendum, although in this case the contrast between the yes and no campaign (nai, oxi, naistinellada, grineuro ναι/yes, ή/or, όχι/no grexit) as well as criticisms of the #menoumeevropi (menoume_malakes, SYRIZA_sano) dominate the discourse, while the group forms around words/hubs both

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in Greek and English (yes, no, ναι, όχι). G2 is based on two different tweets, with the first criticising Tsipras' statement on the referendum as dividing society. This has been one of the strongest criticisms against the referendum and Tsipras, strongly expressed by the opposition party, both online and in the press (Smith, 2015). G3 users comment on the reaction of the yes campaign to the referendum results. G4 develops around the ND's leaked non-paper with the title *Strategy Curriculum on the Referendum*; the document was published online on an independent, left-wing affiliated portal, days before the referendum, and was supposed to have been circulated for ND internal communication purposes, as a guide on how to propagandise the yes campaign, indicating the role of public figures supporting the campaign as well as the role of media (To Kouti tis Pandoras, 2015; TVXS, 2015). While this was published online before the referendum, it managed to dominate the #menoumeevropi discourse and Twitter discussion after the referendum. On the other hand, G5 suggests the merging of two groups and discourse already existing in previously examined #menoumeevropi networks (G5 and G11, 4/7/2015 #menoumeevropi), focusing on financial scandals and public figure supporters of the campaign, as well as on the debate regarding tsipras' secret plan and the referendum.

G6 highlights how the #menoumeevropi, which literally means we stay in Europe, was satirically and sarcastically converted to 'we stay slaves (μένουμε δούλοι, μένουμε σκλάβοι)', producing a counter-discourse and campaign against the yes campaign. G7 repeats the G2 of the #menoumeevropi semantic network, 4/7/2015 discourse, concentrating on the yes campaign's consent to lenders and the Troika's demands, sarcastically drawing on the Bild's original discussion about selling monuments, islands or national sovereignty and the debt. G8, G9 and G10, similarly, concentrate on financial scandals and the case of Anastasiadis as well as on the sociopolitical turmoil and polarisation making references to the 1980s.

Figure 30: #Oxi Post-Referendum Semantic Network
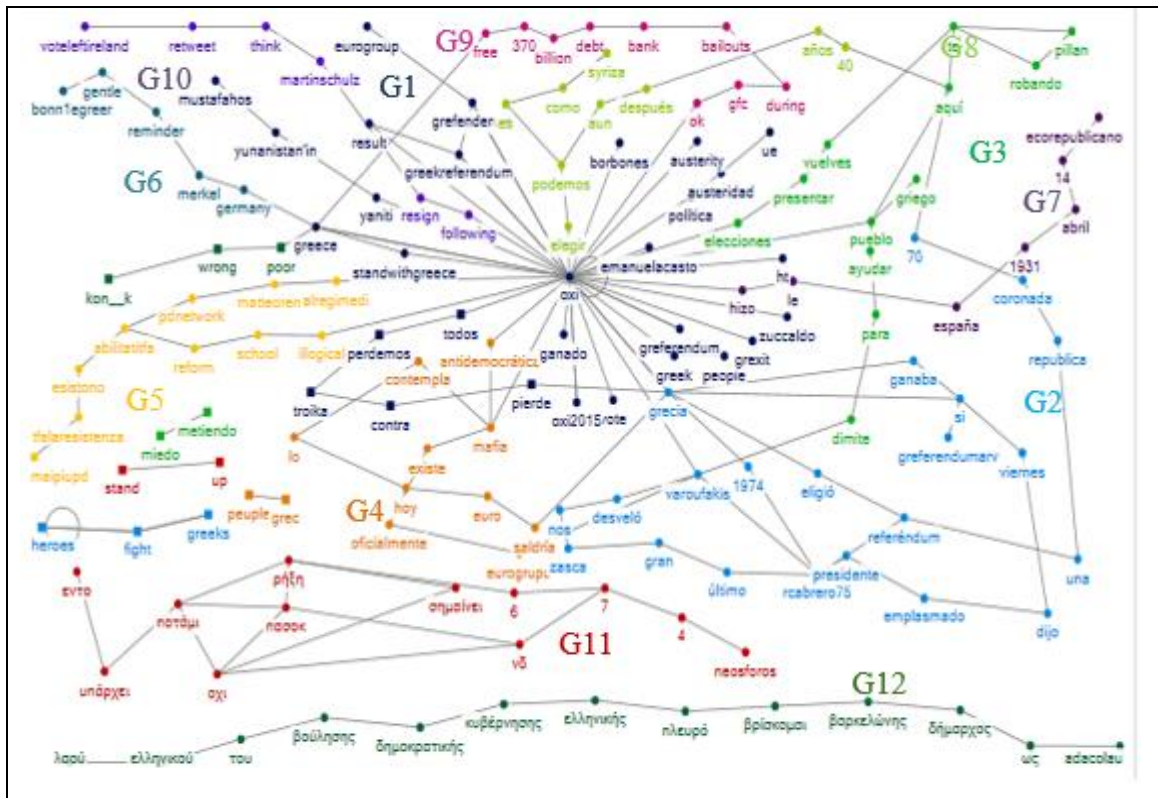
The last examined #oxi semantic network, develops in English, Spanish and Greek. G1 concentrates on the austerity debate and the solidarity campaign, as produced and expressed both online and offline (istandwithgreece, austeridad, grexit, troika, greferendum), pointing out the polarisation and the division between European countries and in Greece. G2 to G5, G7 and G8 develop in Spanish and focus on the austerity and referendum. Among the most interesting points in these groups is the discussion about the mafia, euro, antidemocracia (G4), the linkage between SYRIZA and Podemos (G8) and the political coalitions and solidarity (G12). At the same time, G3 and G7 refer to the elections of Catalonia. Another interesting point in these groups is the historical references as observed in G2 and G7 which emerge from the following tweets:

| In 1974 Greece, a referendum for democracy chooses no to the crown 70 % .. Here 40 years later we still cannot choose #OXI | On 14 April 1931, Spain vote #OXI for the Borbones. |

These tweets point out historical references, linking the 1974 Greek referendum, the 1931 Spanish referendum and the 2015 Greek referendum, which in this context is understood to focus on the historical continuity of events, ideologies and conflict. At the same time, a parallelism between the cases of Greece and Spain is suggested focusing both on the historical events and on the austerity politics. In contrast to the a-historical context in which the EU crisis and the neoliberal policies are often located, these tweets re-locate the referendum and the crisis cases in a historical context and continuity.

7.2.5. #greferendum

Data trawling was conducted on 27/6/2015, 30/6/2015 and 5/7/2015, collecting the last 10,000 Tweets and relations for each of the examined hashtag. After the calculation of the overall graph metrics, the data were grouped by cluster using the Clauset-Newman-Moore algorithm (Clauset, Newman, & Moore, 2004) and resulted in the following network structures:

Figure 32: Referendum Announcement, Bailout Expiration and Referendum Network

Referendum announcement network (27/6/2015)			Bailout expiration (30/6/2015)			Referendum network (5/7/2015)		
Group	Vertices	Unique Edges	Group	Vertices	Unique Edges	Group	Vertices	Unique Edges
G1	895	1301	G1	801	1150	G1	985	1592
G2	665	1246	G2	665	919	G2	851	828
G3	561	951	G3	421	583	G3	469	530
G4	295	376	G4	223	260	G4	305	506
G5	250	311	G5	211	273	G5	249	404
G6	173	260	G6	184	210	G6	238	293
G7	143	206	G7	173	245	G7	203	221
G8	121	135	G8	165	254	G8	187	262
G9	98	105	G9	145	176	G9	185	95
			G10	135	170	G10	147	212

The examination of the #greferendum and the online networks as developed on Twitter during some of the most critical moments of the referendum period suggest an understanding relating to hierarchies, structures and communities. The referendum announcement network is comprised of 5,793 vertices and 8,424 unique edges, and the collected material of 10,000 Tweets and relations includes data which evolved from 27/06/2015, 11:17:08 to 14:07:26. The bailout expiration network consists of 7,400 vertices and 9,400 unique edges, describing data produced from 30/06/2015, 18:24:57 to 01/07/2015, 00:23:59. Finally, the referendum network is comprised of 8,194 vertices

and 9,904 unique edges, covering the period from 05/07/2015, 23:07:57 to 06/07/2015, 01:24:43.

The examined network consists of one large and many small and medium groups, having many isolated users. Even if the examined networks do not indicate significant differences between the larger and the secondary groups, all the networks are characterised by strong linkages between groups and users, as well by different characteristics and top items of the groups. However, there are also slight differences between the networks. The first network structure is designated by rich linkages between groups and users, in comparison to the later networks, which are characterised by a lower level of density.

At this point, a major consideration focuses on whether the dominant actors are average users or accounts with media and political content. At the same time, what would also be of interest would be to test whether the dominant users interact repeating the mainstream media's tweets and political material or produce alternative discourses and content. After the calculation of the graph metrics and especially concentrating on betweenness centrality, it is suggested that the nodes with a strong influence on the network, bridging different clusters and nodes, are as follow (Cherven, 2015:195):

Table 53: #Greferendum Influential Nodes and Actors According to Betweenness Centrality:

Referendum announcement network (27/6/2015)		Bailout expiration (30/6/2015)		Referendum network (5/7/2015)	
Betweeness Centrality		Betweeness Centrality		Betweeness Centrality	
greekanalyst	5386582.377	Gmourout	3859344.271	thereaibanksy	9566801.754
jodigraphics15	2548635.424	Manosgiakoumis	3081082.932	aaronsidewhite	2993516.158
j_dijsselbloem	1876819.417	jodigraphics15	2917609.984	harryslaststand	2845342.945
kkarkagiannis	1297625.742	joannap___	2890669.594	suttonnick	2837699.045
lilyinfidel	1295131.207	Ertsocial	2044886.148	futiledemocracy	2389302.762
atsipras	1218250.532	Irategreek	1829207.267	georgemorina	2340222.020
traynorbrussels	1040374.242	Prognosismedia	1663936.887	sickjew	2175195.558
		Atsipras	1582314.108		
		Markospoulakis	1568339.158		

The most influential nodes/actors in the examined networks are politicians (j_dijsselbloem, atsipras, gmourout, etc.) and media-related users (ertsocial, suttonick, kkarkagianis, traynorbrussels.), while only a few users are related to activism and independent or alternative media (lilyfindel, markopoulakis, jodihraphics15, joannap___, irategreek, sickjew), including political and media analysts (prognosismedia, greeknalysist, etc.). Most of the dominant nodes/actors are accounts from Greece (e.g. politicians, activists, media, etc.), although there are also dominant nodes/actors from other countries as well (e.g. UK).

These were the most influential accounts that acted as hubs, around which groups and sub-networks developed. The examination of the dominant domains is an interesting point of analysis too, indicating the source of the transmitted information, giving an insight into how different platforms and media sources relate to the Twitter discourse.

Table 54: #Greferendum Dominant Domains

Referendum announcement network (27/6/2015)		Bailout expiration (30/6/2015)		Referendum network (5/7/2015)	
Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Domains in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
twitter.com	739	twitter.com	699	twitter.com	292
naftemporiki.gr	137	referendum2015gov.gr	147	trib.al	203
youtube.com	94	theguardian.com	144	youtube.com	123
newsit.gr	72	youtube.com	119	gu.com	79
piraeusview.gr	62	commonspace.scot	86	co.uk	77
facebook.com	53	facebook.com	75	facebook.com	64
antenna.gr	50	naftemporiki.gr	61	nytimes.com	63
bloomberg.com	47	instagram.com	52	bbc.com	59
ilfattoquotidiano.it	45	megatv.com	50	cnn.com	50
protothema.gr	38	ert.gr	45	theguardian.com	46

In all three examined networks, the dominant domains consist mainly of mainstream media platforms (antenna.gt, bloomberg.com, theguardian.com, naftemporiki.gr, bbc.com etc.) and social media platforms (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram). A comparison between the three networks suggests that the Greek domains appear mainly on the first and the second network; however, the international domains and platforms

have a significant role in all the examined networks. It is quite interesting that, in contrast to the dominant actors, which are mainly from Greece, most of the dominant domains of the networks are international or from countries other than Greece. This is a point which draws attention to the considerations regarding the role of Greek and the international media, both online and offline, and their contribution/representation of the Greek referendum (e.g. announcement of the referendum and media representation, exit polls, etc.) and the Greek crisis (Antoniadis 2012; Mylonas 2014; Theocharis et al. 2015). At the same time, such discussion should be situated within the wider debate regarding the Greek media system and the crisis, both in terms of structural characteristics (ownership, corruption, media crisis etc.) (Doulkeri and Terzis 1997; Sims 2003; Smyrnaios 2010, 2013), as well as in terms of crisis representation (how crisis is mediated, Greek/EU representation and differences).

After understanding the networks, what is important is to understand the kind of information which was spread through these networks, including questions of ideology and over time, identities. This approach suggests a multidimensional analysis, although what is important at this stage, is the overall understanding of the semantic networks, as raised by the study of dominant hashtags, dominant words and pairs of words, suggesting an insight into the discourse as shaped online. The top hashtags of the network are as follow:

Table 55: #Greferendum Top Hashtags

Referendum announcement network (27/6/2015)		Bailout expiration (30/6/2015)		Referendum network (5/7/2015)	
Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count	Top Hashtags in Tweet in Entire Graph	Entire Graph Count
greferendum	9681	greferendum	9998	greekreferendum	10057
dimopsifisma	2014	greece	2198	oxi	1711
greece	1243	dimopsifisma	1784	greece	1116
grexit	733	grexit	1616	grefenderum	719
vouli	698	yeseurope	1217	austerity	508
eurogroup	531	oxi	1192	grexit	341
yovoycongrecia	225	greececrisis	838	greeks	323
tsipras	221	oxi2015	506	greferendum	236
topotami	206	tsipras	358	greececrisis	235
referendum	205	team_oxi	338	oxi2015	222

Considering that the collection of data was conducted by searching for the hashtag #greferendum, it is not surprising that this hashtag appears in all the examined networks, although on the last network it appears in a lower position than in the first two. Indeed, the political and social considerations, as well as, the media discourse indicate significant changes parallel to the evolution of the incident, while the day of the referendum could be perceived as being a turning point as regards the political debates and discourse.

In the first network, the dominant hashtags are related to the referendum (Greferendum, dimopsifisma, referendum), the Eurogroup negotiations and the negotiations/debates of the Greek parliament (vouli). At the same time, the discussion and the hashtag #grexit are in a high position among the dominant hashtags and heavily used by the press, supporting the evolution of political turmoil. Focusing on Grexit, both the pro-/anti-austerity debates are established, as well as relevant political debates originating from the 2008 turmoil and the rapid development of the crisis (Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2013).

The hashtag #yovoycongrecia is part of the online campaign #istandwithgreece, which was created based on this phrase translated into different languages, circulating on twitter for days, expressing solidarity with Greece. Later, this campaign was linked to the campaign and trending hashtag #thisisacoup expressing not only solidarity but opposition as regards the political turmoil and austerity politics. Even if these campaigns expressed solidarity, a more detailed study of the referendum hashtags could highlight who participated and supported the campaign, dominating the online discourse, revealing whether and how this developed as a bottom-up process. Hashtags related to the Greek political scene, such as #tsipras and #topotami, appear very often in the network, rapidly changing positions according to current affairs developments and incidents (e.g. parliament speech during the data collection, etc.).

On the second network, the debate and the contrast between the Yes/No campaigns is clear. This debate could be understood as a transformation of the anti-/pro-austerity debate, which before the referendum, was expressed through the anti-/pro-governmental mobilisations organised on 17–18/6/2015 (Fraser, 2015, Waerden and Fletcher, 2015). While the anti-austerity protests during the crisis era were not a rare phenomenon, after

the elections of SYRIZA in January 2015, the context of such mobilisations changed from anti-austerity and anti-governmental mobilisations into pro-governmental, pro-SYRIZA mobilisations, which continued to express opposition to austerity.

After the anti-austerity protests, which took place on 17/6/2015, the first pro-European protest (menoumeevropi) took place on 18/6/2015 in Athens and other cities (Protothema.gr, 18/6/2015). The anti-austerity mobilisation and campaign, which was partially a pro-SYRIZA and pro-governmental campaign, was linked with keywords and hashtags such as #oxi (meaning no in Greek) and #oxi2015, which could be considered to suggest a symbolic parallelism to the historical usage of the words (e.g. WWII and the national celebration of 'OXI'). On the other hand, #yeseurope and #menoumeevropi, which means we stay in Europe, were among the keywords and hashtags representing the yes campaign. These hashtags were also criticised in terms of symbolic meaning and historical continuity (e.g. the discussion on capitalism and neo-colonialism).

As expected, the dominant hashtags of the last network straightforwardly refer to the referendum and the result. Hashtags related to the #greekcrisis, the #grexit and #greferendum have been observed in the previously examined networks, although the hashtag #austerity appears again among the most dominant hashtags, pointing out the debate on austerity during the referendum period. After a brief discussion regarding the dominant hashtags, the examination of pairs of words will suggest a more detailed understanding of the meaning and ideas noticed in the examined networks. A major difference between the dominant hashtags and the dominant words, or pairs of words, is that the hashtags are used as descriptions or title, selected by the users, who themselves describe or categorise their statement/tweet. Even if each hashtag can be used and understood as having multiple content and purposes (e.g. usage of hashtag denoting irony, facts, humour, etc.), there is a specific direction in terms of meanings. In contrast, the dominant words or pairs of words reveal more information regarding meaning and discourse, without denoting or suggesting any direction in terms of understanding.

After the overall graph metrics' calculation and the calculation of the top items, then, the calculation of top words and top pairs of words supported the development of semantic networks. These networks developed through the examination of the most mentioned

words and pairs of words, which were perceived as nodes and edges, suggesting an in-depth study into how meaning and discourse were produced.

Figure 33: Greferendum – Referendum Announcement Semantic Network (27/6/2015)

The searched hashtag #greferendum is at the centre of the semantic network and the strongest connected node. This is clearer when the visualisation is not developed in groups and boxes; however, this approach highlights the differences between groups and discourse. The different languages noticed in the network pointed out the international interest regarding the referendum, highlighting the participation of countries which, directly or not, are involved in the political turmoil and the austerity debate, as well as the north-south debate/discussion (Freire et al. 2014). Capital controls (G1, G2) and the banks (G2, G8) appeared on the graph, mainly due to users who insert up-to-date information on the issue as well as due to criticisms and comments regarding the issue.

At the same time, the historical importance of the period is highlighted mainly through a humorous approach (G1, G11).

While there are many groups, which developed politically oriented discussions and debates, Group 3 includes significant keywords which denote the political debate of the time and the yes/no campaign (yesman, coup, drachma, etc.). G9 keywords are related to the discussion regarding austerity and democracy as well as the people who should rise, close to the SYRIZA rhetoric (Protothema.gr, 2014). This was close to the pre-election SYRIZA campaign rhetoric, as well as the rhetoric adopted by different left European parties, which in most cases highlighted the austerity effect on democracy and democratic values.

An overall evaluation of the semantic network indicates that the discourse developing after the announcement of the referendum was characterised by a 'carnivalisque' and satirical sentiment (Kaika and Karaliotis, 2014: 10), in a way similar to the observed development in the case of the Greek Indignados. In a similar way to what Rieder (2012) describes as 'refraction', referring to the space between identical reproduction and total heterogeneity of information, the political debates and the ideological division of the time are visible, however, the limited political discussion and the 'carnivalisque' character of the discourse indicates the danger of not having a revolutionary moment reinforcing democratic politics, but instead developing an urban fest similar to the example of the Greek Indignados (ibid.).

Figure 34: Greferendum – Bailout Expiration Semantic Network (30/6/2015)

The second date of the referendum developed in consequence and with many similarities to the previously examined semantic network. As expected, the searched hashtag #greferendum, has a central position in the graph (G1), although, on this network, the hashtag #dimopsifisma (referendum), also has a highly linked position in the graph too (G11). The larger group, G1 consists of words both in Greek and in English, while the content of the meanings developed in the group is related both to the development of the incident giving information and updates, as well as to the expression of solidarity. At the same time, hashtags in different languages (aveclesgrecs, yovoycongrecia, istandwithgreece) are used as a statement supporting Greece, indicating the way that the European solidarity campaign developed.

Throughout the graph, the division and the debate raised by the #yes and #no campaign are expressed much more strongly than in the previously examined semantic network (G3, G5, G9, G8, G10). The #no campaign expressed strong critiques of the #yes

campaign, indicating, once again, that the referendum vote was an issue related to dignity (G3, G9). This is understood at a national level as regards the Greek government negotiations with the troika, as well as focusing on the impoverishment and the crisis era.

At the same time, there is a strong linkage between the #no campaign and the discussion regarding the troika, European politics and the effect on Greece (G5, changeeurope, troika, unfuckgreece), which developed both in Greek and in English. Once again at this point, the nature of the crisis as problematic can be examined, focusing on austerity and the crisis as having both Greek, European or other dimensions (G5, G2). The debt is discussed as a medium of controlling and enslaving countries (G2), while the necessity for changing Europe is highlighted too (G5), developing a parallelism to the contemporary political rhetoric and debates (e.g. Euroscepticism, change Europe and European left, SYRIZA, etc.).

Again, the #yes campaign did not manage to express specific ideas, critiques or considerations of the online discourse. Instead, its position in the graphs indicates that keywords related to the campaign are either points of critique or part of news and updates regarding the progress of the event (G5, G3, G8). Another interesting point indicated by the graph is the strong linkage between the referendum and the so-called Grexit (G11). G13 highlights the dispute in the mainstream media, pointing out the structural problems of the sector (e.g. ownership, corruption). At the same time, the role of the mainstream media as an institution and its contribution to democracy as well as its relationship to society, in terms of representation is arguably present throughout the crisis and the referendum era.

Figure 35: Greferendum – Referendum Semantic Network (5/7/2015)
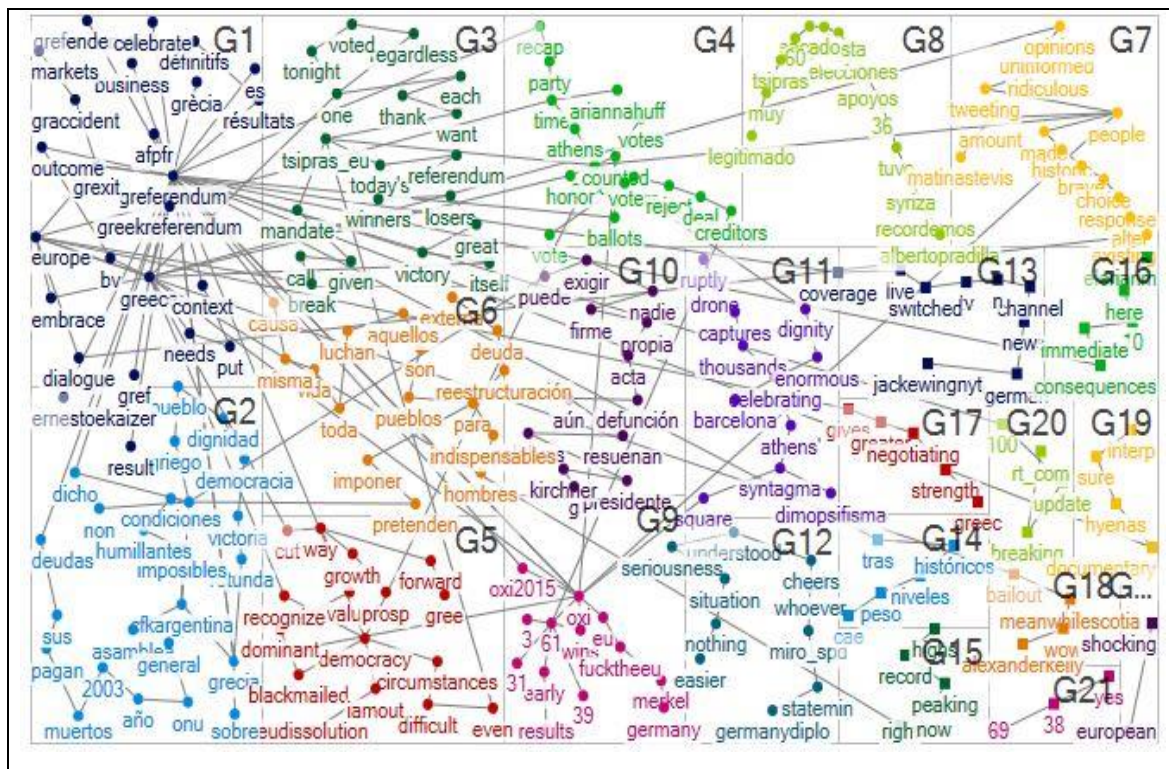
The evolution of the hashtag of the #greferendum on the examined dates shows that there are many more groups and themes of discussions as the events evolved. The graph of the semantic network, as shaped by data produced on the day of the referendum, suggests a more plural and rich discourse, in comparison to the two previous semantic networks, developing a quite noisy graph with high density. Also, there is a change regarding the languages used in the discussion, where English and Spanish are the dominant languages in contrast to Greek. Indeed, on the day of the referendum the international interest was high, and therefore it is not completely unexpected that there are fewer groups and discussions in Greek.

On this semantic network, the searched hashtag #greferendum is in the same group and strongly linked to the keywords Grexit and Greece (G1). The main discussion developing in this group is related to the referendum results and consideration regarding the banks and the markets, while terms such as 'graccident' appeared for the first time in a very high position in the graph (G1), although, throughout the Greek crisis and especially during the referendum period, the discourse of fear was a dominant strategy, both for

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media and politics, justifying the implementation of austerity politics. Thus, concepts such as Grexit, or the implementation of anti-austerity politics are the main political debates since the beginning of the crisis, defining the restructuring of the Greek political scene after the collapse of the two party-system. At the same time, focusing on the dangers which could arise due to an accidental or organised Grexit, the political parties which appear in the crisis context (SYRIZA, Golden Dawn, An.El.., Potami, etc.) develop according to their position within the pro-/anti-austerity debate and Euroscepticism.

A major consideration which is raised during the period of the referendum is how the political and social polarisation of the #yes and #no supporters are expressed in the offline world and in the post-referendum era. The ideological and political division raised by the referendum is the basic point of critique. Thereby, it is not unexpected that G3 is dominated by keywords from Tsipras and SYRIZA statements regarding the referendum results, stating a victory for democracy, both concentrating on the national and European level and independent of the conflicted sides and votes (winners, loosers, great, victory, itself, Tsipras eu, todays, winners). G2, G6, G8, G10 and G14 develop in Spanish, reflecting the strong political affiliation between the voters' concerns and the parties of SYRIZA and Podemos, as well as the common consideration regarding the crisis and the austerity politics in the countries of the European South (luchan, which means fight, grecia, dignidad, reestructuracion, legitimado, tsipras, general, assembles etc.). This is also suggested by G11 (Athens, Barcelona, dignity, drones, captured, celebrating, syntagma, etc.)

In G5 the word democracy is in a central position and strongly linked to keywords such as recognise, dominant and blackmailed. This is an interesting observation especially considering that the #thisisacoup hashtag was trending in the days after the referendum (17–18/7/2015). This hashtag raised strong debates and discussion, both within academia and in the press, regarding democratic values, the EU and austerity politics. Similar considerations are also expressed in G9, where the word oxi is in a central position in the sub-graph. This group includes words such as oxi, oxi2015, eu, fucktheeu, merkel and Germany, highlighting the dispute over the European project and austerity policies. The meanings developed in G5 and G9 are linked to G1, while there are many linkages with

other peripheral groups too. In these groups, the political polarisation is high, expressing strong criticism and conflict of interest between EU politics and the people. G17 highlights that the referendum could be an asset for negotiations with the troika (strength, negotiating, Greece), G12 highlights how critical the situation is (understood, seriousness, situation, voting) and G21 suggests that the referendum and its results might be unexpected (shocking, european).

7.3.   Discussion and Concluding Remarks

The examination of Twitter during the referendum era indicates some interesting points of consideration focusing on the usage of this platform both in relation to the two antagonistic campaigns as well as in relation to the online and offline evolution of the events. The selection of the examined hashtags develops an insight into the two antagonistic campaigns and the political and ideological conflict between them. Concentrating on the theoretical framework of cyberconflict, the conflict between the #yes and #no campaign is understood as a sociopolitical conflict, borrowing, ast some extend, elements and characteristics that are also met in ethnoreligious cyberconflict (e.g. references on Greekness, Greeks VS others, EU, etc., discourse of inclusion and exclusion)

After the social network and semantic analysis of the examined hashtags what is observed is that each of the two campaigns developed different attributes and characteristics, regarding the mobilising structure and the usage of Twitter, the framing processes, as well as the political opportunity structure (Karatzogianni, 2006: 88). Starting with the #syntagma and #17june hashtags and the mobilisations taking place before the announcement of the referendum, the issue of austerity and the danger of so-called Grexit are the main debates which dominated the online discourse. In the #syntagma network, which is a prelude to what was later discussed as a #yes campaign, was developed mainly by mainstream and international media, which transmitted information and reports on the protest. In contrast, the #17junegr network, which was a prelude to the no campaign, developed via left-wing-oriented media as well as international and independent media. In terms of content and discourse, the #syntagma included key hashtags related to the

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#menoumeevropi rhetoric and to the austerity/anti-austerity debate. The #17junegr content and discourse indicated the SYRIZA – Podemos coalition, making references to the SYRIZA – Podemos – Venceremos slogan.

In both the examined hashtags, independent or alternative actors do not manage to dominate the networks and to challenge offline hierarchical structures, creating an alternative online public sphere. Instead, the two examined hashtags indicated that the frameworks relating to the crisis and the pro-referendum political turmoil had a different impact on the users' engagement and participation in the online discourse. The anti-austerity discourse attracted many more users than the pro-austerity discourse, developing a multi-themed discussion on the issue of austerity. At the same time, the high participation of users in the anti-austerity discourse pointed out the way the examined platform provided an alternative space for participation in the public debate, at the same time as mainstream media were concentrating on the pro-austerity debate.

The examination of the #antiausterity and #austerity hashtags indicated the way that the austerity debate manifested itself in different countries, pointing out that instead of concentrating at the national level, austerity should be understood in an EU context. The #antiausterity network was dominated by hashtags and keywords related to the UK labour party leadership elections and Corbyn, which took place during the same period as the Greek referendum. The semantic network of this hashtag includes considerations on Grexit, the IMF and the EU as well as SYRIZA. At the same time, keywords on this network such as communists, occupy and Greece, make historical references to the contemporary Greek history as regards the notion of the so-called communist peril, especially as this was understood during the civil war and, later, during the Cold War.

The examination of the #nai and #oxi hashtags highlighted the way in which the conflict between the two-antagonist campaign developed. While the mainframes and debates of the two-antagonist campaigns were already observed in the online discourse before the announcement of the referendum, the two-antagonist campaign, as shaped after the announcement of the referendum, reinforced the ideological and political conflict. It is quite interesting that the two-antagonist campaign didn't develop new frames or debates,

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but instead, these arise from the already existing ones, which were originally created through different proccedures and during the crisis evolution (collective and direct actions, social movements movements, and so on).

The #nai network was dominated by Greek media and newspapers in contrast to the #oxi network which included mainly domains of British and international newspapers. The #nai network pointed out the national and European character of the crisis, as well as the strong linkage between a potential Grexit and the greferendum. In contrast, the #oxi network concentrated more on propagating the goals and the rationale of the campaign. On the last examined network, the #nai network concentrated on the referendum results, while the #oxi network developed around the organisation of the mobilisation in Syntagma Square.

Following the already suggested characteristics of the two-antagonist campaigns, #menoumeevropi hashtag analysis indicated the strong contribution of social media platforms, of mainstream Greek media, as well as of some independent media and political actors. In the #oxi hashtag, international and mainstream media, as well as civic organisation groups supported the formation of the network. The discourse of the #menoumeevropi concentrated on the yes campaign framework, while the evolution of the examined dates was not followed by an evolution of discourse, repeating the already existing debates on austerity. The semantic network of the #oxi hashtag indicated the international attention that the campaign gained, including expression of solidarity from different countries. In contrast, the #menoumeevropi discourse was limited to the national context, with users commenting mainly in Greek.

The #menoumeevropi discourse developed including sarcastic comments and criticisms of neoliberal policies, on poverty and on the crisis in both the European and Greek context. On the other hand, the #oxi campaign included more themes, raising a multilayered discussion and debate regarding austerity. A major limitation of the #menoumeevropi campaign is that it didn't manage to develop a narration before the referendum, but instead, it concentrated mainly on commenting on and criticising the antagonist campaign. Throughout the examination of the #oxi hashtag, the crisis effect

on the division between the south and north in the EU is apparent, focusing on political coalitions, on austerity politics in the countries of the south as well as on the understanding of left-wing and neoliberal politics. Finally, concentrating on the Greek referendum (Greferendum), Grexit and the pro-/anti-austerity debate, which dominated the online discourse, while mainstream and social media platforms, as well as Greek actors, dominated the networks.

8. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

This thesis explored the impact of digital media in contentious or radical politics in Greece during the period 2008 – 2015 (1.2.; 1.3.). This included the examination of four different online media platforms, concentrating on a seven-years period or in three different periods (2008; 2011-12; 2015-16). Below, I will provide an overview of the most important findings of the three examined periods and the four examined online media platforms (Chapter 5; 6; 7), answering the Research Questions (1.3). This chapter begun with a review of the main Findings of the research (8.1.) and the Digital Media Evolution and Political Transformation of the examined period (8.2.). The section 8.1. and 8.2. provides and insight on how digital media used in the crisis context, and on how *cyberconflict and digital activism evolve in* Greece (online networks, online coalitions to the offline world and vice versa). At the end, the projects completed with a discussion of the futures, the limitations and the contribution of the research (8.3.).

8.1. Findings: Three periods and four online media platforms

The impact of digital media in contentious politics in Greece between 2008 and 2015, as well as the influence of the political economic sphere on the formation of the digital mediascape can be understood focusing on the following points. At the same time, the findings of the research suggest an insight on the way that the digital media used in the crisis context, focusing on the individual and the collective actions. In a final stage, the findings offer and understanding on how cyberconflict and digital activism evolve in Greece, focusing on the linkages of online networks, online coalitions to the offline world and vice versa.

Starting with December Riots (Chapter 5), this was among the first examples which illustrated the importance of digital media in the emergence of collective actions and contentious politics in Greece. The research began with the examination of Indymedia (5.4.1.) and YouTube (5.4.2.) as the two most important platforms that supported the development of the event (5.1.;5.2.). Looking at YouTube and Indymedia, the thematic analysis of the online data, indicated that the December Riots, denoted a new era on the usage of new media and technology in collective action in Greece. Indymedia and

YouTube, were already used quite a lot of time before the December riots in Greece, however the way and the scale in which they used in the examined case, suggested that the two examined platforms provided a new space for political communication and debate, while at the same time, offered new tools and possibilities on the organization of protests internally and externally. Starting with the internal communication and Indymedia, this platform used to organize and coordinate actions, in a quicker and direct way than previous technologies and methods did in the past. Activists and politicized people who had access online started organizing actions almost in a real-time with the actual, offline, development of the event. At the same time, in terms of communication in an external level, participants to the mobilizations had the opportunity to provide a self-representation of the protest, having a strong impact on the traditional media processes (i.e. representation of the event, etc.) and the state's reaction to the riots.

While digital media indicated its potentiality on communication and organization processes (e.g. challenge mainstream media and dominant discourse), however, during the examined period, digital media in Greece were still at an early stage, and the issue of digital divide was still crucial (3.4.). Digital media supported real-time communication among activists and participants to the protests, helping the coordination and organization of solidarity actions across throughout Greece and in Europe. At the same time, online media platforms used to spread the information and coordinate actions both online and offline, overcoming geographical or other limitations. The protests and the mobilizations were real-time reported online, while at a later stage, this was among the first times in which mainstream media adapted the online media representation and narratives (i.e. shooting video scene; 5.1; 5.4.2). However, as an overall, digital media did not dominate over mainstream media narratives, supporting the development of a new public sphere, but instead illustrated how digital media develop fragmented (online) sub-public spheres.

This period suggests that while the examined events developed on a pre-crisis era and discourse, still digital media used to express concerns and debates, which, a year later, shaped the crisis discourse and context both online and offline. In terms of cyberconflict, both sociopolitical and ethnoreligious conflict were observed in the examined platforms. The sociopolitical cyberconflict concentrated on issues related to politics and

social/cultural debates (i.e. inequality, youth and the state, capitalism and globalization, and others, see 5.4), while the ethnoreligious cyberconflict raised as an extension of sociopolitical conflict. Issues and debates on ethnic/religious matters (i.e. migration and so on) were discussed in extension to sociopolitical debates (i.e. poverty, inequality, wages and so on) and further developed based on the division between left and right-wing politics. While the actual events of December Riots were characterized by sociopolitical debates, the way that these reflected and further developed online, suggest that up to, a very limited, extend the sociopolitical debates transformed to ethnoreligious debates and conflict.

In the December Riots, the two examined platforms used to provide a space for debate and conflict on issues, which pre-existed the examined case, and were further developed online. Therefore, the re-mediation of issues/debates on migration, corruption and inequality, and state violence, was influenced by the December Riots context and the examined media platforms. However, the December Riots and the online conflict did not offer completely new debates or any solutions, to the already existing ones.

In terms of participation, this era was characterized by the digital divide debate and during the December Riots, online media users were young, well-educated and living in urban centres (3.4.). Online media provided a space for communication and participation to the public debate and sphere, developing further the gap among different audience's sub-groups and the fragmentation of public sphere. At the same time, because of the features of each platform, each of the examined online media platforms attracted online users with different characteristics. Indymedia, which already before December Riots was associated with the anti-globalization movement and the Seattle protests was used by users with specific political orientation in contrast to YouTube which targeted the general public. Therefore, Indymedia was used for in-depth discussion and arguments over the development of the Riots, in contrast to YouTube which used for more general discussion and various types of conflict, which were expressed in a more direct and conflictual way. In Indymedia users interacted based on a common interest and similar ideological orientation, debating on more political and movement-oriented discussion. On the other hand, YouTube provide a space for conflict among users with various interests and ideologies. Therefore, while Indymedia provided more of a formation of a

polarized online community, YouTube provided the space for general debate. In YouTube, the December Riots debates soon turned to conflict about other issues and events, indicating an association between sociopolitical and ethnoreligious cyberconflict, which shaped on the axis of the contrast between left and right-wing politics (Chapter 3).

So, to sum up, this period denoted a new era on the use of digital media in collective actions and social movements in Greece. Participant to the mobilizations tool advantage of the new technology. Internally they use that for organization and real-time reports on the event, while externally they use digital media to develop their own representation, which in many cases was in contrast to mainstream media representations. While this indicated some significant change raised by the use of digital media, still digital media representations and narrations did not dominate over the mainstream media narratives. Therefore, digital media here did not contribute to the creation of a new public sphere, but instead to the development of a fragmented one. December Riots can be decoded through the motion of sociopolitical cyberconflict, with most of the debates having social and political context. However, already since 2008 discourses on inclusion/exclusion, historical references and debates on national identities and Greekness, could suggest some similarities to the ethnoreligious cyberconflict. At the same time, some of the issues which later dominated the crisis public discourse, where already debatable online since the examined period (e.g. migration, corruption, inequality, etc.). While this period brought back traditional debates (e.g. state violence, corruption, left and right, etc.), still did not resulted to the emerge of new debates or solutions, but recycled the already exited discussion. It is important to keep in mind that in this period the digital devide is decisive. Finally, Indymedia supported the in-depth discussion over the organization of the protest, with users having common ideological background, while YouTube provided space for more general discussion and various types of conflict, with users having various ideological backgrounds. These points suggest a contribution to the field, as these help us to understand in more depth and through a different approach the use of digital media during the examined period.

The second examined period concentrated on Facebook and the development of the anti-austerity movement in Greece (Chapter 6). Starting with the case of Aganaktismenoi and, then, the case of SYRIZA, what is discussed here is the association among EU and

National context politics, as well as the association among mainstream and non-institutionalized politics. What is observed at this case is that there is both an ideological kinship between movements in national and EU context (Chapter 3; 6), as well as a clearly observed online kinship developed through networks. The different ways in which the anti-austerity movement emerged and manifested online and offline, in various EU countries, pointed out the multi-dimensional character of the examined period. The Aganaktismenoi mobilizations developed in hybrid mode (online and offline) as a form or resistance against austerity politics, which during the examined period was not discussed in a transnational context, but instead, focusing on the 'P.I.G.S.' narration. In the terms Karatzogianni and Schandorf (2016) discuss this, the order of dissent started from a national anti-corruption narrative, moving on to the regional anti-EU mode and ending up to jumpscale to an international anti-globalization order of dissent. In Greece, this narrative constructed focusing on the Greek laziness and the division between the European north and south. At the same time, December Riots was one of the first cases in Greece, which illustrated how the mainstream media and the dominant discourse was possible to be challenged by the usage of digital media. However, in the Aganaktismenoi case, the difference between the mainstream and digital media discourse is more clear and intense, pointing out the digital media impact on public sphere, which now is in a clearer way fragmented. At the same time, the network of Aganaktismenoi suggested strong linkages between SYRIZA and An.El. party online, before these formed a coalition governance in 2015.

The first examined network offered an understanding on how the Aganaktismenoi network developed, through online coalitions and sub-networks. This was decoded concentrating on cyberconflict and analysed in reference to the offline world (Chapter 3) and the debates indicated by the December Riots event. The historical continuity of the events and the debates was clear, while this platform indicated completely different attributes in comparison to the previous examined platforms. It should be noted that a full comparison across platforms could not be conducted, because of the different attributes and usages of each platform, the difference on the collected and analysed data, focusing both on networks and discourse. Thus, a full comparison of the examined platforms could only be conducted after a content-oriented analysis of Facebook pages.

The examination of networks developed an insight on how these platforms used from a more top-down and hierarchical development of the movement. What was analysed in this period was how Facebook used by social movements and mainstream, or semi-mainstream politics. Then, this was discussed in reference to the political turmoil resulting to the rise of SYRIZA, the far-right and populist politics. The examined networks and sub-networks pointed out the way that ideology and identity developed and differentiated, across networks and in the wider spectrum of politics, constructing the so-called 'politics of extreme'. After the bankruptcy of the politics of the centre and the neoliberal mainstream political scheme, new actors dominated both the online and the offline networks/scene. Thus, what is observed online is that while there is some kinship between the Aganaktismenoi network and the December Riots, the debates and conflict were further developed and enrich through different political and ideological directions in juxtaposition the development of the crisis. Then, focusing on the rise of SYRIZA and the analysis of the Facebook network, it is observed that this network developed based on the Aganaktismenoi network. Thus, there is a strong kinship between the two networks, in terms of structure and involved actors, as well as in terms of online coalition, both as regard the left and right-wing politics. The SYRIZA network developed based on the Aganaktismenoi network, riding the mobilization wave, offering a platform and promising representation of all the included actors.

While in the case of Aganaktismenoi the network developed in extend to the December Riots debates (e.g. corruption, inequality, ideology, etc.), the SYRIZA network borrowed element of the Aganaktismenoi, and was strongly associated to the left-wing and to right/populist mainstream and institutionalized politics, as these emerged in the crisis context. The Aganaktismenoi network indicated strong linkages to the transnational social movements, in contrast to the SYRIZA network, which linked to the transnational mainstream political scene and actors. The Aganaktismenoi network suggested an insight on how populist ideas adopted by both left and right-wing politics, filtering the relation between groups and sub-groups (6.3.1.; Figure 10). At the same time, the SYRIZA network offered an insight on the EU crisis and its evolution. SYRIZA was strongly linked to the EU left wing politics and academic circles (6.4.1), with both pointing out the necessity for change in Europe (Podemos, Die Linke, etc.).

Focusing on the national context, SYRIZA's pre-elections campaign of 2012 and 2015 developed in opposition to New Democracy rhetoric, which indicated the division between Us and the Them, regards to the pro-/anti-austerity debate. Therefore, SYRIZA's linkage to social movements and the European left, suggest the formation of a unitary political front with dynamic from 'below'. *The evolution of social networks, from the Aganaktismenoi case to the case of SYRIZA highlights the evolution of the crisis. The contrast between the discourse and the themes discussed from the December Riots to the Greferendum period, indicated the semantic and discursive transformation of the debt crisis of 2008 to the multi-layered crisis after 2015.* At the same time, both the Aganaktismenoi and the SYRIZA network indicated strong linkages to the pre-crisis and international social movements, their association to contemporary collective actions and movements, such as environmental mobilisations (Skouries), solidarity initiatives (social clinics) and linkages to the antifascist movement.

In contrast to Indymedia and YouTube platforms which suggested an insight on how digital media used by politicized people and activists, Facebook showcased how digital media used in a more collective based orientation, focusing not on the individual, but on the development of collective and social movements. Then, the examination of Twitter demonstrated how digital media used both by individuals, collectives and social movements as well as mainstream actors. What was examined in this platform is both discourse and networks. Focusing on the Greferendum period, what was tested was whether and up to which level, digital media challenged or shaped public sphere, hierarchical relations and online coalitions. At the same time, this platform offered an insight into the political and ideological polarization as well as on the domination of actors, (i.e. political actors, media actors, or mainstream and non-institutionalized actors).

To sum up, the Aganaktismenoi and the SYRIZA network indicated an ideological kinship between movements in national and EU context, while both were associated with movements emerged before and during the so-called crisis. The Aganaktismenoi movement could be understood as being developed in a hybrid mode, both online and offline, as a form of resistance against austerity politics, similar to the anti-austerity and ant capitalist movements of those days (e.g. Occupy Movement, Indignados, etc.).

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Focusing on order of dissent, what started here as a national anti-corruption narrative, soon moved on to the regional anti-EU mode and ending up to jumpscale to an international anti-globalization order of dissent. Facebook supported the top-down and hierarchical development of the movement (as regards to the framing process), which though is still rhizomatic (in terms of spatial online/offline organization). The Aganaktismenoi network developed in extend to the December Riots debates, while the SYRIZA network borrowed elements of the Aganaktismenoi, highlighting the continuity of movements and discourse. The SYRIZA network was clearly associated to the left-wing and to right/populist mainstream and institutionalized politics. The evolution of these two networks would describe the evolution of crisis, pointing out the discursive transformation of the debt crisis of 2008 to the multi-layered crisis after 2015. Again, these points should be understood as contributing to the field by helping us to understand the use of digital media during the examined period. This period indicated how the transition to the digital media completed. Here we understand how the use of digital media became mainstream in juxtaposition

The third examined period analysed focusing on the usage of Twitter. The examination of Twitter concentrated on the two antagonistic campaigns of the so-called Greferendum and developed through the analysis of keywords/hashtags and rending hashtags, illustrating the ideological and political conflict of the two antagonistic campaigns (#Menoumeevropi and #Oxi; 7.2.). Focusing both on social and semantic networks, what is suggested is that online the conflict between the two campaigns was already formed online before the announcement of the referendum (7.2.1.), preluding the greferendum debate and constructing the politics of fear (i.e. grexit, austerity vs anti-austerity). At the same time, already before the announcement of the referendum, the coalition between SYRIZA and Podemos, and the development of a left-wing coalition of the EU south and the countries affected by the crisis is observed through both the semantic and social networks.

In terms of discourse and public sphere, what is observed in the examined hashtags is that, in most of the cases, independent or alternative actors (e.g. domains, actors, URLs, etc.) did not manage to dominate the networks, challenging offline hierarchical structures and creating an alternative online public sphere. At the same time, looking on the contrast

between social vs mainstream media and discourse, Twitter was dominated by the anti-austerity discourse, in contrast to mainstream media which directly supported the pro-austerity campaign. Therefore, public participation and representation on Twitter was not only direct, but also more accurate and effective, in contrast to mainstream media. The pro-austerity discourse, which supported by mainstream media, developed in contrast to the online anti-austerity discourse. Thus, Twitter offered an alternative space for public engagement, developing a multi-themed discussion on the issue of austerity. The pro-/anti-austerity discourse online was shaped in a EU rather than national context, indicating the blurred boundaries on the national- EU crisis public sphere and the crisis context. In terms of historical references, the left and right-wing politics were discussed in reference to the 'communist peril' and the Civil War and Cold War narration.

The announcement of the referendum didn't develop debates, but instead, supported the further development of the already existing ones, which were originally created by different procedures (collective actions, social movements, etc.) and throughout the crisis evolution. The online networks indicated that the dominant media actors online on the pro-austerity campaign were mainly Greek media actors, while in contrast the dominant media actors online in the anti-austerity campaign were mainly British and international media actors. The pro-austerity campaign developed focusing on the danger of Grexit, while the anti-austerity campaign concentrated on ideological and political debates, propagating the goals and the rationale of the campaign. A significant characteristic of the pro-austerity campaign is that it didn't manage to develop a narration before the referendum, but instead, it concentrated mainly on criticising the anti-austerity campaign. Throughout the greferendum period, the division between the south and north in the EU is apparent.

To sum up, the examination of Twitter indicated that the online conflict between the two antagonistic campaigns of the referendum, was actually developed online before the announcement of the referendum, preluding the greferendum debate. Even before the referendum networks and discourse indicated a strong linkage between SYRIZA and Podemos, something which during the referendum was even stronger. In terms of discourse, Twitter had a contrasted narration in comparison to mainstream media and provided an alternative space for public engagement, but this, didn't manage to dominate

the media public discourse. At the same time, the pro-/anti-austerity discourse shaped in a EU rather than national context, pointing out the multidimensional linkages between the national- EU crisis public sphere and the crisis context. The referendum debate was characterized by the historical references, (e.g. 'communist peril', Civil War and Cold War narration), in a similar way as this observed in the previous examined platforms and periods. Therefore, the announcement of the referendum and the debates raised afterwards, didn't suggest anything new but instead supported the further development of the already existing debates, as observed throughout the crisis evolution. Finally, while the pro-austerity campaign was mainly supported/discussed by Greek media actors, while in contrast the anti-austerity campaign was dominated by mainly British and international media actors. The pro-austerity campaign didn't develop a narration but concentrated only on criticising the anti-austerity campaign.

As an overall, based on the significant characteristics of each online platform, each of these used for different purposes supporting the sociopolitical transformation and turmoil of the period 2008 – 2015.

8.2.   Digital Media Evolutions and Political Transformations

The development of the Greek digital media occurred in juxtaposition to the evolution of the crisis. However, the development and the adaptation of digital media use in the Greek context followed the EU pattern. While at the beginning digital media were used by users, which for different reasons were familiar with technology, later digital media not only became mainstream, but were converted to a valuable tool for institutionalized communication (e.g. mainstream media, political actors and parties, and so on.).

The research indicated that in the 2008 and the December Riots, Indymedia and YouTube attracted different types of users for different communication purposes and processes. In 2008, Indymedia attached users having a shared interest and ideology, and used the platform as a trustworthy source of information, or as a tool to organize and coordinate actions. On the other hand, YouTube attached the so-called general public, users who had access online and wanted to interact, exchange ideas and communicate. At that point

of time, the internet was not yet dominated by mainstream media and actors, but instead the online environment was yet to be explored and shaped. The development of the digital communication in Greece emerged in a point of transition, or in an end of an era, as this shaped in Greece after the Greek Olympic games and the promised prosperity, in EU after the French riots, and later in global scale with the 2007 US election campaign and then, the Global recession. In a less mainstream environment, the internet had already formed the internet culture, focusing on the debate on commons, the right to information as well as the potentiality of digital media in journalism and politics (e.g. Iraq War).

In 2011-12, the Greek online environment had significant differences in comparison to 2008. Again, the digital inequality and division is an important debate, however, the evolution of the digital communication in terms of infrastructure and cost, had already make the internet more attractive and accessible to the public. At the same time, the outbreak of the global recession and the emergence of social and resistance movements suggested the way that digital media could be used in the crisis context (OWS, Indignados, Arab Spring and so on). Social movements and collective actions, which at that point of time were much organized by activist and young people, took advantage of the digital media features, supporting the organization of collective actions and protests.

While this is a significant moment about to the evolution of the crisis, this is also a significant moment for both the mainstream and traditional media too. The crisis deeply impacts the mainstream media through a variety of ways, including considerations on journalism and ethics, freedom of speech as well as regarding corruption. At that point of time, while the traditional sociopolitical structures in Greece collapsed, mainstream media acted in favour of the already existed system and politics, without managing to represent the people who were already reacting and organizing alternative and new structures and initiatives, to resist and overcome the crisis limitations. At that point, the further development of digital media supported these initiatives and brought together people who shared same a similar understanding on the new sociopolitical environment as this shaped by the crisis. Digital media supported the development not only online networks, but most importantly offline networks, indicating the importance of alternative structure in these new conditions. This had a strong impact on the fragmentation of the public sphere and, in a greater extend, on the emergence of alternative – shadow

structures, which replaced the role and the limitations of the institutionalized actors (i.e. media, political parties, welfare state, and so on).

The development of social movements and collective actions, including initiatives and solidarity networks, or the so-called third sector, altogether with the evolution of digital media, created alternative structures, overlapping the inefficient response of the state and the institutionalized actors. In a way, digital media and the social movements of that era developed a shadow – state, which for a while, not only overlapped the limitations of the state, but indicated new political actors, challenged the public sphere offering the space for the development of anti-austerity narratives, and at the same time, provided actual solutions to problems raised by the collapse of the welfare state (i.e. social kitchens, social clinics, and so on.). This is the point where the Aganaktismenoi network offered the base for the development of the SYRIZA network, which made these structures more mainstream and which later on the party institutionalized. Therefore, indeed, the shadow-state or the shadow-structures, filled the limitations of the crisis context and the state's incapability to efficiently respond the new sociopolitical conditions. However, these alternative or shadow structures soon adapted the vulnerabilities of the mainstream and institutionalized structures (e.g. limitations on ideology, interrelated interests, and so on.). SYRIZA is among the most indicative examples which illustrates the route that grassroots actions followed, before transformed and incorporated to the mainstream and institutionalized structures.

Until 2015, digital media had been developed and the debates on the usage of digital media in crisis contexts, as raised by different cases (OWS, Indignados, etc.), had been started being relevant to the case of Greece. Following the EU trend, in the case of Greece digital media supported the political polarization, providing the opportunity to users to develop their opinion close to the echo chambers effect (Chater, 2016). This polarization should be understood both in terms of conflict, as well as in terms of turmoil, with a potentiality to indicate new sociopolitical structures. In the case of the referendum, polarization helped to the formation of less fluid identities online and offline, which further developed on the division between the political Us and Them. The platform based on which these identities developed were not political or ideological oriented, but instead it was shaped according to the conflict context. This is not related only to the rise of far

right and non-parliamentary left, but instead, it refers to any form of opposition, leading to ideological and political conflict. In this context, conflict did not manage to suggest alternatives or produce new debates and procedures, but instead conflict confined its cycle of action and impact over issues of domination (i.e. online and offline networks, networks with different ideologies and interests).

In the crisis context, and especially focusing on the three examined platforms, the internet used a magnifying glass, pointing out conflict, opposition and supporting polarization. While there were many opportunities and a strong potentiality on the internet's impact on social movements, still the limitations of collective actions and social movements, which can be found on their origins and the historical background, did not manage to conclude to social or political change. Internet challenged mainstream media and dominant discourse, but still followed mainstream procedures on the production of narratives, on the development of semi and crypto-hierarchies, and at a later stage, on their association to institutionalized actors and structures. This resulted into two conflicted fronts, which both acted in terms of mainstream and institutionalized procedures and results. None of these two conflicted fronts supported the creation of new structures, but instead, conflicted the traditional limitations (i.e. hierarchies and so on), conflicted over the question of domination. Therefore, while the crisis supported the collapse of the already existed sociopolitical system and structures, the internet supported the development of new ones, which though were not genuine in terms of ideology, goals or suggested solutions to current limitations, but, in contrast, they had identical characteristics and limitations with the collapsed one.

8.3. Futures, Limitations and Contribution

This project developed focusing both on the evolution of the crisis and the digital media communications in Greece. While the research begun in 2013, having slightly different in aims and purposes, finally it shaped following the development of both political transformation and digital media usages. That offered a great set of data and many research opportunities. This a major element of both the strengths and the limitations of this research.

Starting with the digital media evolution, the research begun in September 2013, when, YouTube and Facebook where two of the most contemporary and popular social media platforms in Greece. At that point of time, the idea was to develop my research concentrating on Blogs, as a sample of alternative online mediums, and then focusing on contemporary and popular social media platforms, as a sample of mainstream online media platforms. The evolution of the digital media communications though, indicated that apart the contrast between alternative and mainstream online media, other points on the development of the digital media in Greece would be also interesting to be examined. Thus, at the next stage, the research concentrated on the examination of various online media platforms, including Indymedia, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. The examination of online material platforms, required a real-time collection of data parallel to the development of events. That was a very difficult process, which required specific skills on the usage of software and apps, as well as, special skills regard to the research techniques which were finally applied. Therefore, the research design of the research was cultivated and re-organized throughout the research and according to the events evolution and data collection, reflecting the development of my research skills, and limitations on researching online material. The unconventional development of the research design, was indeed a very challenging process, which though helped to in-depth and in in-practice understand the demands of researching the fast-changing online media environment.

Apart the difficulties raised by the research of the online media environment, another set of limitations and difficulties raised by the evolution of the crisis, both in national, EU and global context. My keen interest on researching the online media usages, focusing on, what was then discussed and understood as Greek crisis. However, the different manifestation and evolution of the crisis throughout the years, indicated additional considerations regards to the multiple crisis manifestations. Thereby, I tried to limit the research concentration on a specific time-frame (2008-2015), offering a snapshot of the digital media usage in key moments and events (December Riots, Aganaktismenoi, Greferendum). This project reflected the evolution of the sociopolitical debates and the political transformations emerged in the Greek crisis context, which in a few words, could be described as follows: the anti-/pro- austerity debate and the euro-vs-drachma/or grexit discussion, which soon transformed to the anti-/pro-governmental debate, and later

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expressed through the anti-/pro-European discourse. In a later stage, this transformation/evolution included the development of the far-right (GD trial), the refugees' crisis and other post-referendum debates. This project concentrated on the December Riots (2008), the Aganaktismenoi case and the rise of SYRIZA (2011-2012), as well as the Greferendum era (2015), pointing out the necessity for a follow-up research.

The December Riots signalled a new era for the autonomous initiatives and organizations, which, founded during that period and were further developed during the crisis evolution. Such initiatives included the creation of online and alternative media projects, the occupation of social public spaces and squats, as well as neighbourhood assemblies. These formed a conducive pre-existing environment of (offline and online) networked dissent, which at the crisis period supported the formation of alternative and solidarity structures and initiatives. For a moment, these initiatives and solidarity networks, formed a shadow – state, providing a platform, based on which crisis' movements, initiatives and mobilisations emerged. A very critical and a turning point the on the development of these initiatives was the Aganaktismenoi mobilizations supporting the formation of the so-called 'creative resistance' (2011-2012). During that period, more than 550 active groups and collectivities (Petropoulou, 2013: 73-76) were active in different sectors (i.e. education, welfare, health, housing squats, neighbourhood assemblies and others). Therefore, while this period was the Aganaktismenoi case was extensively examined in this project, I believe that a limitation of this research is that it could not provide an in-depth examination and discussion on the usage of digital media by these initiatives (e.g. housing squats, social kitchens and clinics, and so on). Another important issue that was not in-depth examined in this project, but, still, was quite significant in the examined period is the development of the far-right, which in the future should be examined focusing both on the usage of online media platforms by far-right groups as well as, focusing on the usage of digital media and the formation of far-right discourse (see Appendix, Figure 59). I suggest that even of these are some of the limitations of the research, still these are issues that should be examined in follow-up researches.

Another limitation of this project raised by the examination of Twitter and the rich corpus of the collected data (see Appendix). The period 2015 – 2016, offered some very interesting political development of the crisis (i.e. elections 2015, GD trial, Skouries, #Wikileaks – #Ypoklopes - #Tsalikidis, #samesexmarriage, #idomeni, #refugeescrisis and others, see Appendix). While the collection of online data collected for many of these events, it was not possible to include at this project a more detailed examination of the post-referendum era and the multiple manifestations of the crisis (2015 elections -Table, 58; refugees' crisis- Table, 59; GD - Table 59), as such an extended research could not be included in the limits of the PhD research. Therefore, a follow-up research should concentrate on these latest manifestations of the crisis and at the same time, should also reflect the latest developments of the media and political environment, as this is still shaped in the crisis context.

Working on this direction, I have already started developing a number of small collaborative research projects as follows. Firstly, I'm working on a research paper with Charis Gerosideris (PhD Student, Keele University), which concentrated on the examination of Twitter during the case of Skouries, and the Greek environment movements (to be presented at the ECPR Conference in September 2017). Secondly, I'm working with Dr. Nguyen (Hogeschool Utrecht) on two different projects which examine the usage of digital media in the refugees' crisis ('#Migrantcrisis: "Tagging" the European Migration Crisis on Twitter', forthcoming at the Journal of Communication Management; 'Twitter and Instagram during the refugees' crisis', to be presented in the Migration Conference in Athens, August 2017).

In terms of contribution to the field, this research offered a longitudinal study on the usage of digital media during the Greek crisis, by providing snapshots of key event and platforms, of the digital media and crisis evolution. This is a very extended research on the Greek digital media environment, although further research should concentrate both on differentplatforms (e.g. comparison among platforms, content and networks), events (e.g. refugees' crisis, the rise of far-right and networks) and uses (e.g. different actors, individuals and groups, organization and communication).

It terms of research methods and the theoretical framework, this research employs the cyberconflict theory, which used for the examination of various case studies (Karatzogianni, 2006; Olabode, 2016). This framework developed for the examination of digital media during the pre-social media era and as also explained above (2.1.), here it was enriched with the theoretical; element of connective action, so to efficiently support the study of digital media and especially the examination of social media platforms. In other words, what was here suggested as an enriched version of Cyberconflict theory, is the use of this theory in combination to the Bennett's connective action (2012). The outcome of this combination was a rich theoretical framework which supported the in-depth study of conflict as this emerged in social media platforms, taking under consideration the impact of social media to the so-called personalized politics and their engagement to social networks, or event protest networks. Overall, the connective action helped the discussion regards to the organizational impact that social media are having to collective action and social movements. This was a great asset, taking under consideration that up to know Cyberconflict concentrated on social movements theories and media theories, without looking in depth on political engagement and personalized information through social networks. This extended version of cyberconflict will be a helpful tool for other researchers who want to research cyberconflict and social media, while at the same time, I hope that this will be a good example on how to update and enrich this theoretical framework, so to be used for the examination of new social and digital media platforms.

The second innovative element of the use of cyberconflict was the use of digital research methods. Instead of the usage of CDA and interviews which traditionally used in this framework (ibid.), this research proposed the analysis of digital material on online data, different approach to the examination of cyberconflict events. Again, this will help other researchers to start exploring the different options on using digital research methods for the study of cyberconflict, as well as a good start on exploring the multiple options regards to digital research methods (e.g. platforms, computational and analytical tools).

Therefore, this is the first time that the Cyberconflict used for the study of social media, and to do so, the theory enriched with additional theoretical elements. At the same time, this is the first time, that this theoretical framework is supported with the use of digital

research methods. The use of digital research methods here, had both advantages and disadvantages, as discussed in the methodology and the empirical chapters, which should be under consideration in future studies. The use of the selected computational and analytical tools, for the study of four different online media platforms covering a seven years period, indicated both strengths and limitations, which in a follow up research should be under consideration (e.g. equipment, familiarity with software and apps). What is learned here thought, and could potentially help other researchers as well, is how the selected software and app was used supplementary, developing a rich corpus, which, based on the research aims and research questions each time, could be discussed and interpreted through different approaches. This research is a good example on how NodeXL, Netvizz, Gephi, NVivo and NCapture used to support the study of different online media platforms, and at the same time, a good example on their limitations (e.g. access on archive material, open/close access, small and big corpus – small and big data, etc.)

Thinking about future researches, it would be interesting to test how the use of digital research methods and other research methods, traditionally used for the study of cyberconflict, could be combined developing an even more detailed analysis of cyberconflict. Certainly, such a combination could be tested only in larger scale projects with researchers specialized in different research methods and techniques.

Considering, the two above points as the major contributions of the research tp the field, another contribution should focus on the literature regards to Digital Media in Greece. Lately the literature on this topic is getting richer and richer, with many interesting studies, but still, most of the researches concentrate on either a case study (e.g. event) or an online media platform. Therefore, this research could be a helpful tool for those who want to study the digital media in Greece, as it provides an in-depth study of various platforms and events, starting from the transition to the digital era in media and communications in Greece (2008), and covering some of the most significant sociopolitical events raised in the so-called crisis, up to 2015.

While the above are the two significant contributions of this research, policed sections of this project, also, suggest some contribution of this research to the field. My first

publication (Ferra, 2016) at the edited volume 'The digital transformation of the public sphere' (Karatzogianni, Nguyen and Serafinelli, 2016), discussed the research gap based on which this research developed. Focusing on the sociopolitical, historical and media background of Greece, this chapter suggest that the Greek digital media should be examined both as an alternative space for communication and political participation, and also, as a tool which supported the development of alternative structures, which replaced the institutionalized and mainstream ones, that collapsed during the crisis Additionally, part of this research has also been published at the forthcoming 'Transformations of Protests in Greece' (Stathopoulou, forthcoming). In chapter 'A Tale of Cyberconflict in Greece: Polarization and Mobilization for the Greek Referendum on Twitter', which I co-authored with my supervisor, Dr. Karatzogianni, the usage of Twitter and the political polarization as reflected through the usage of the #referendum hashtag, was in depth analysed.

This project is a systematic research on the digital media in Greece, which developed through the examination of different online media platforms and focusing on key moments/events in the crisis. While, there is already enough collected material for further research, I believe that the digital media usages in the Greek crisis, should further developed systematically, focusing on various platforms, actors and usages, as well as through a comparative approach of the Greek case to other crisis contexts and environments.

Appendix:

5.1. Table 56: Media Groups, Media Interest & Non-Media Interest

	Vardinoyannis Group	Lambrakis Press Organization	Tegopoulos Group	Bobolas Group	Alafouzos Group	Kyriakou Group
Media interest	•Mega Channel (TV) •Star Channel (TV) •Nea Mesimvrini (newspaper) •On audio-visual video distribution company • audio visual post production, •distribution of Walt Disney products • Netor Company products for the Internet •Madame Figaro (magazine) • Playboy (magazine) •NewsPhone audio text company •AT&T main collaborators in Greece for telecommunication hardware supplies •ACE computers company •Partnership with one of the two companies who is introducing cinema multiplexes in Greece (after 1997)	•Mega Channel (TV) •The largest publishing company in Greece, which owns: a) Ta Nea, b) To Vima (Highest circulation newspapers) •Lambrakis is National Union of Athens Newspaper Publishers •Specialized magazines •ATA studio - TV productions •Partner with INTRACOM, the biggest telecommunication hardware company in Greece •the audio text market with Data Bank company and computer educational programmes. •INTRACOM, as the main supplier of the Greek Telecom OTE and in 1996 entered joint projects with IBM and the media Baron Rupert Murdoch.	•Meg Mega Channel (TV) •Eleftherotypia-Epsilon (Newspaper – Magazine) •T.V. productions •The Post Reality—New Technologies company •Epsilon Net •Internet productions •MediaTel, audio text company.	•Mega Channel(TV) •Ethnos (Newspaper) •TV Zapping (Magazine) •Max(Magazine) •Elle(Magazine) •Car & Driver (Magazine) •Lipon (Magazine) •Emerisia (financial newspaper) •Anosis TV production company.	•Mega Channel (TV) •Sky T.V •Kathimerini (newspaper) •three radio stations •Sky Phone (audio text company)	•Antenna TV •Antenna FM •Antenna Cyprus •Antenna Radio •Antenna Satellite TV Audio Text Company.
Non-media interest	•Moto Oil Hellas (best-selling motor oil in Greece) •Panathinaikos (one of the richest soccer clubs in Greece) •several shipping companies	Travel Plan, one of the largest travel agencies in Greece	•Road Editions, maps for car drivers, •Encyclopaedia Domi together with Vardinoyannis group, they own Synergon Consulting, a company specialised on European Community programmes for High Technology.	•Ektor construction company (one of the biggest construction companies in Greece and one the biggest State contractors)	•Several shipping companies	•Shipping

(Based on Doulkeri and Terzis, 1997: 126-7):

Figure 36: Media Ownership (In Greek, Original Diagram, Smyrnaios, 2013):
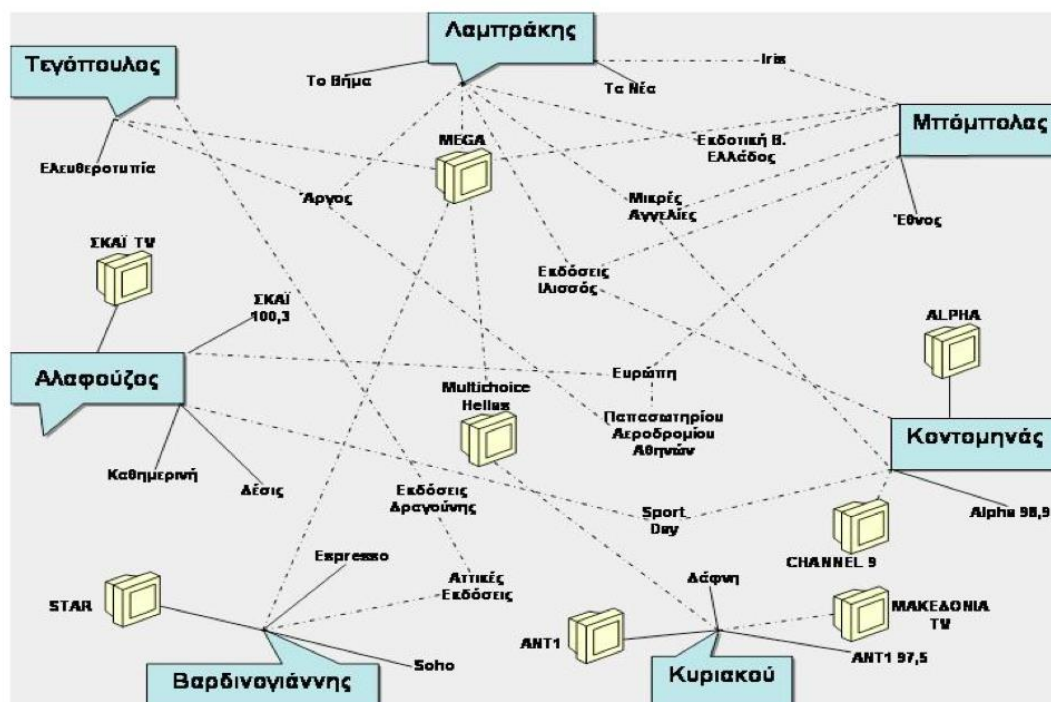
Απλοποιημένο σχήμα διακλάδωσης των βασικών παραγόντων της ιδιωτικής τηλεόρασης

Συμμετοχή ----------------   Ιδιοκτησία ———————

Figure 37, Media Groups and Ownership – Mapping:

• The anthropomorphic figures represent Families of Businessmen			
☐	= TV Channels	◯	= Media Groups or companies in cultural industry
(in Colour)	= Radio Stations or Press	⟶	= Ownership or Partnership
▭	= Companies with non-media interest	---------	= Other relationship or ex-participation Further details in Appendix
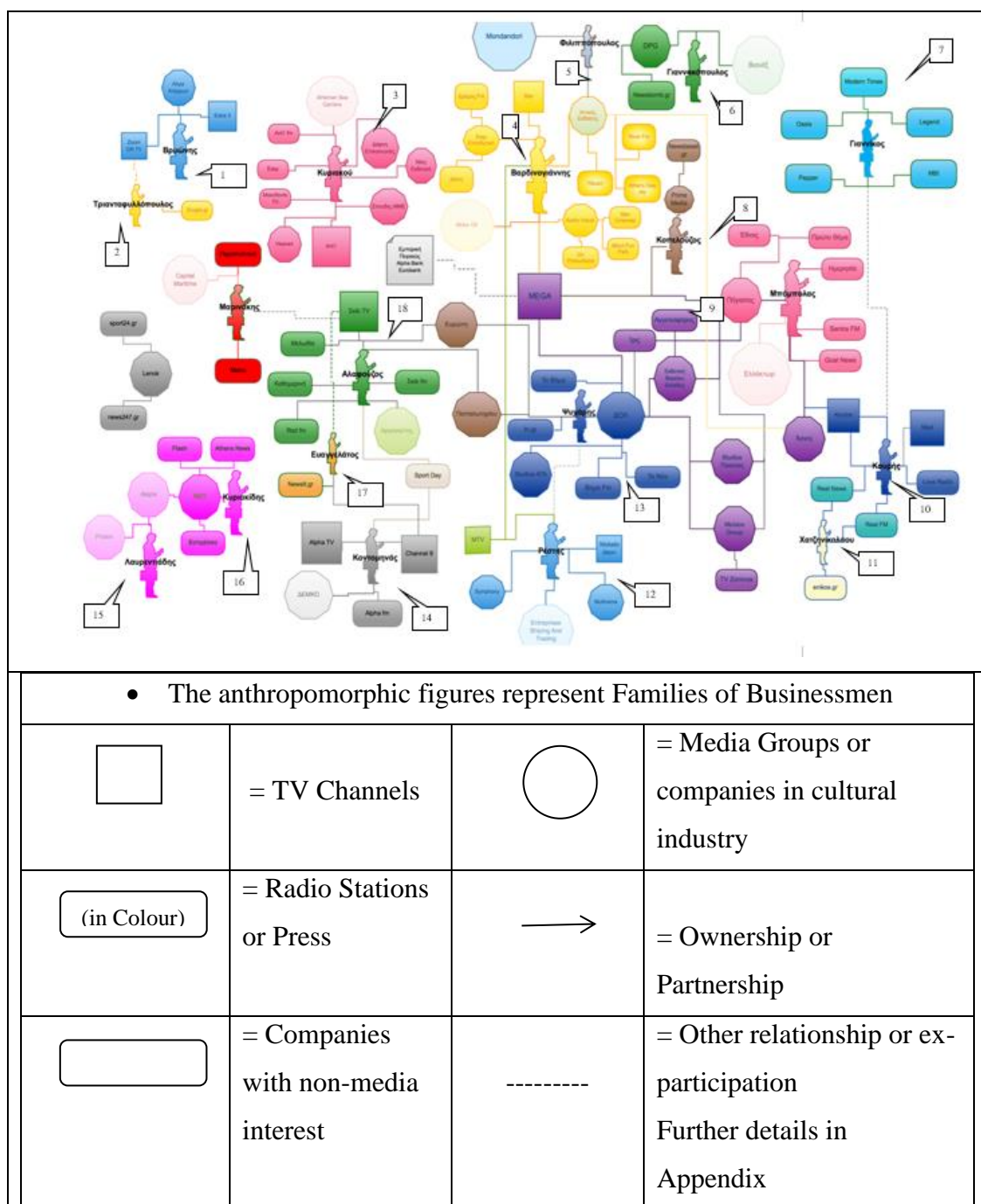
(Smyrnaios, 2013)

1) Vryonis: Extra 3 (TV), Zoom GR TV (TV), Alma Atermon (Construction and advertising). According to the press Vryonis was related to the E Channel (ex 902) which was sold by the Communist party to an off-shore company in Cyprus (Enikos 2013, Efsyn, 2013).

2) Triantafyllopoulos: Zougla.gr (news web portal). Triantafyllopoulos is also related to Vryonis' Zoom GR TV.

3) Kyriakou: In 1988, Kyriakou Family established one of the largest media groups in Greece, Antenna Group. According to Smyrnaios main activities and members of the groups are the ANT1 FM [54] (Radio Station), ANT1 TV[55], Easy Radio, Makedonia TV, Heaven[56] (Record Company and event planning, promotion), Antenna Media School [57](Media studies, founded in 1991), Dafni Publications[58], Niki Publications[59] (Smyrnaios, 2013). The activities of the groups are also related to Ant1 Satellite[60], Ant1 Europe[61], Ant1 Pacific[62], Ant1 Prime,[63] and Ant1 Cyprus[64], ANT1 Radio Thes.[65]. Ant1 Groups is partner of ANT1 Radio Cyprus and Rythmos 94,9 FM, ANTENNA INTERNET (internet and new

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[54] One of the first steps of ANTENNA Group was the creation of ANT1 FM 97,2, established on 1988. http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/radio/154861.aspx

[55] ANTENNA TV founded on 1989. http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154862.aspx

[56] Heaven was founded in 2001. Heavel Music is a record company and Heaven planning focuses on event planning, artist's promotion etc.

[57] Founded in 1991

[58] Daphne Publications, publish the magazines "OIKIA & DIAKOSMISI" (focusing on decoration), "ASTROLOGOS" (focusing on astrology), "PAIDI & NEOI GONEIS" (focusing on childhood and parents), "FORMA" (focusing on the "fitness" concept), "DIVA'S WEDDING" and some special annual editions.

[59] Niki Publications was founded in 1997 to cover the needs of Daphne Communications although it developed in a strong autonomous printing company.

[60] ANTENNA SATELLITE, was the first Greek TV station which connect Greeks abroad to homeland. The Channels started with an 8-hour daily program, while nowadays broadcast on a 24-hour basis, in U.S. and Canada. (http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154859.aspx)

[61] Digital Television broadcasting in Europe, - except Greece and Cyprus -. (http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154869.aspx)

[62] Broadcasting in Australia since 1996. http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154858.aspx

[63] ANT1 Prime is available on US, broadcasting the most successful series and shows of Greek Television, as also Greek Super League Championship and Greek Cup. http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154851.aspx

[64] ANT1 Cyprus supposed being the only channel with free Broadcast Licence, while it broadcast since 1993. (http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/tv/154855.aspx)

[65] ANT1 Radio 97,2 FM Salonica, founded in the second bigger city of Greece, in 1988. There were important personalities of entertainment whoparticipate – mainly on the firsts steps of Ant1 radio. http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/radio/154865.aspx

technologies services, founded in 1995), Audiotext (founded on 1995), ANTEL Advanced Communication Systems S.A (telecommunication services of digital data), Epikoinonia[66]. The group is in cooperation with Emporiki Bank, creating ANT1 Visa.

4) Vardinoyannis: Star Channel (Broadcasted in 1993), Dromos FM (Radio station), Diesi (Radio station), Athens Dee Jay (Radio Station, member of Attica Publications), Lampsi (Radios Station), Rock FM (Radio Station, Member of Attica Publications), Sport Investments, Audio Visual, On Productions, Ster Cinemas, Allou Fun Park[67], Attica Publications (Publications, in partnership with Filippopoulos), Motor-oil (Founded in 1970).

5) Filippopoulos: Mondadori[68] and Attica Publications[69]. 'Attica publications' is in partnership with Ionidios publications, Emfasis Publications S. A, G. Dragounis Publications S.A., Tilerama S.A, Tiletheatis S.A, Argos (Press distribution), Alpha Records. In the recent activities of Attica Publications are the foundation of Attica Media Bulgaria LTD, Attica Media Serbia LTD and Civico LTD. Moreover 'Attica publications' is the main distributor of Playboy TV and Spice Channel in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Croatia and Serbia. Attica publications provide new media services as well.

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[66] Founded in 1988 and focused on news and radio content mainly regards to periphery (http://www.antennagroup.gr/www/en/companies/others/154846.aspx)

[67] Founded in 2001 by Greek stakeholders Hellenic Entertainment Parks SA. Although, in 2004, AudioVisual Company became a major partner.

[68] In 2004 40% of the Attica publications was sold to Berlusconi's Mondadori. (http://www.kathimerini.gr/197796/article/oikonomia/epixeirhseis/sth-mondadori-toy-omiloy-mperloyskoni-perase-to-40-twn-attikwn-ekdosewn)

[69] Founded in 1994, publishing more than 19 magazines. Members of the Attica publications are the radio stations, Athens Radio DeeJay, Rock FM, (http://www.atticamediagroup.gr/group.php?id=7)

6) Giannakopoulos: Vianex [70](Pharmaceutical Company), DPG[71] (Advertising & online services), Newsbomb.gr (news web portal).

7) Giannikos: Modern Times (Publications), Oasis (Radio Station), Pepper (Radio Station), MBI (Record company), Legend (Record Company). Giannikos was arrested for outstanding debts in taxes (1,2 million euro). [72] Giannikos is related with Kouris business activities (e.g. Alter).

8) Copelouzos: Prime Media[73] (Interactive media), Newsbeast.gr. Copelouzos Group, founded in 1972, focusing on manufacturing buses, vehicles, etc. Nowadays the group focuses in the energy sector, electricity production and renewable energy sources. Other activities of the Group focus on real estate, infrastructure projects, and so on. Moreover, companies of the Group focus on Advertising, Project and Facility Management.

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[70] Vianex founded in 1971, although Giannakopoulos was involved to the medicine industry since 1924. http://www.kathimerini.gr/197796/article/oikonomia/epixeirhseis/sth-mondadori-toy-omiloy-mperloyskoni-perase-to-40-twn-attikwn-ekdosewn. Vianex own four factories and activities of the company focuses on research as well. Vianex collaborate with international companies such as Merck & Co, Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited and Sanofi Pasteur MSD (Vaccines). (http://www.vianex.gr/Default.aspx?ID=40, http://www.vianex.gr/Default.aspx?ID=59)

[71] Some of the portals which belong to DPG are astrology.gr, queen.gr, Onsports.gr, Gossip-tv.gr, while one of the latest collaborations with Yahoo. (http://www.queen.gr/SYMBAINEI-STON-KOSMO/item/34904-H-%C2%ABYahoo-%C2%BB-symmachei-me-thn-DPG-DIGITAL-MEDIA)

[72] In Greek. (http://www.iefimerida.gr/news/26675/%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82-%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9-%CE%BF-%CE%BA%CF%8E%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%AF%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%82, http://www.copelouzos.gr/en/flashback/)

[73] Prime Media consist by News.gr, Newsbeast.gr, Weather.gr, Animal.gr, Aromamarket.gr, Baby.gr, Alepouditsa.gr, Sidagi .gr,

Hashtag #	Trending: when was trending in Greece		Collection: Collection 10.000 Tweets/relations per hashtag/per day
1. Greferendum	Worldwide trending: 27-30/6/2015 5-6/7/2015		27-29/6/2015 1-9/7/2015
2. Nai –			3-5/7/2015 9/7/2015
3. Austerity			18/6/2015
4. Anti-austerity			18/6/2015
5. oxi			1-10/7/2015 15/7/2015 30/6/2015
6. Tsiprasleaveeusummit			12-3/7/2015
7. Stand with greece			3/7/2015
8. Yeseurope	30/06/2015 1-3/7/2015		30/6/2015 5/7/2015
9. Juncker	29/6/2015 7/7/2015		29/7/2015
10. Diaggelma	1-2/7/2015		2/7/2015
11. Grexit	3/7/2015 13/7/2015	29/7/2019 (to grexit) 28/9/2015 (grexit)	28/6/2015 30/6/2015 1-30/7/2015
12. Tsakalotos	6-8/7/2015 22/8/2015		10/7/2015 22/7/2015
13. Haikalis	18/7/2015 19/7/2015		18/7/2015 19/7/2015
14. Stoppopulism	17/7/2015		17/7/2015
15. Erttsipras	15/7/2015		14/7/2015
16. Boycott Germany	13-14/7/2015		14/7/2015
17. Draghi	16-17/7/2015		16/7.2015 18/7/2015
18. Scaublexit	12/7/2015		
19. Explain no to Juncker	7/7/2015		9/7/2015
20. Samaras	5/7/2015		6/7/2015
21. Mnimonio3	10/7/2015 11/7/2015		10-17/7/2015 22/7/2015
22. Greekparliament	16/7/2015		16-19/7/2015
23. Greekment	13-14/7/2015		13-15/7/2015
24. Menoumeevropi	29/1/2016		2-4/7/2015 6/7/2015 9/7/2015 4	18-19/7/2015 30/7/2015
25. Greececrisis	28/6/2015 2/7/2015		30/6/2015 2-4/7/2015
26. Capitalcontrols	28/6/2015		29/6/2015
27. Anasximatismos	16-19/7/2015		16/6/2015 18/7/2015 19/7/2015

28. Oxi2015	29/6/2015 4/7/2015		29/6/2015
29. Syntagma	3-5/7/2015 16/7/2015 22/7/2015	3/7/2015 10/7/2015 15/7/2015	22/7/2015 29/6/2015 30/6/2015
30. Thisisacoup	13-14/7/2015		12-19/7/2015
31. Tsipras	10-11/7/2015 15/7/2015 30/7/2015		5/7/2015 7-9/7/2015 11-15/7/2015 30/6/2015
32. Varoufakis	6-7/7/2015 14/7/2015 26-28/6/2015		6/7/2015 14/7/2015
33. Vouli	27-28/6/2015 11-13/7/2015 16-17/7/2015 23/7/2015		10-12/7/2015 15-23/7/2015
34. Mega xeftiles 35. Skai xeftiles 36. Ant1 xeftiles	28/6/2015 30/6/2015 1/7/2015 3/7/2015	5/7/2015 17/7/2015 (only for #Ant1 xeftiles)	2/7/2015 4/7/2015 6/7/2015 (for every #)
37. dimopsifisma	26/6/2015		5/7/2015
38. greece	26-27/6/2015 30/6/2015 1-4/7/2015	11/7/2015 18/7/2015 30/7/2015	1-30/72015
39. Yesgreece	3/7/2015 4/7/2015		3/7/2015
40. Grineuro 41. 17junegr 42. Stopausterity 43. syntagma			18/6/2015 (for every#)

Table 58: Collected Data - Elections Sept. 2015, September – August 2015:

Hashtag #	Trending: when was trending in Greece	Collection: Collection 10.000 relations per hashtag/per day	
1. Meimarakis	22/8/2015	1/8/2015 3/9/2015 6-7/9/2015	9/9/2015 11/9/2015 20/9/2015
2. Tsipras		3/9/2015 28/8/201 1/8/2015 20-25/8/2015 30/8/2015 5/9/2015	7/9/2015 9/9/2015 11/9/2015 13-14/9/2015 16/9/2015 20/9/2015
3. greece		1/8/2015 3/9/2015	13/9/2015 14/9/2015

Hashtag #	Trending	Collection	Collection
		5/9/2015 7/9/2015 9/9/2015 11/9/2015	16/9/2015 20-25/8/2015 20/9/2015 28/8/2015
4. nd		1/8/2015 3/9/2015 6/9/2015	7/9/2015 9/9/2015 20/9/2015
5. Lafazanis	15/7/2015 16/7/2015	9/9/2015 6-7/9/2015 3/9/2015	24-25/8/2015 28/8/2015 30/8/2015
6. Kammenos	13/7/2015	9/9/2015 20/9/2015	
7. Laiki_enotita	21/8/2015	24-25/8/2015 28/8/2015 30/8/2015	1/9/20153/9/2015 9/9/2015 13/9/2015 20/9/2015
8. An.El.		9/9/2015 20/9/2015	
9. Etdebate2015	9-11/9/2015	9/9/2015 11/9/2015 14/9/2015	
10. Sygentrosi kke	16/9/2015	17/9/2015	
11. kke		9/9/2015 20/9/2015	
12. koutsoumbas		9/9/2015	
13. PASOK		9/9/2015 20/9/2015	
14. Fofi		9/9/2015	
15. genimata		9/9/2015	
16. Ekloges2015_round2	20-23/8/2015	1/8/2015 3/9/2015 5/9/2015 7/9/2015 9/9/2015	11/9/2015 13/9/2015 20-25/8/2015 30/8/2015
17. ekloges		1/8/2015 20-25/8/2015 28/8/2015 30/8/2015 3/9/2015	7/9/2015 9/9/2015 11/9/2015 13/9/2015 16/9/2015
18. xryshaugh		20/9/2015	
19. enosikentroon		20/9/2015	
20. Topotami	22/12/2015 23/12/2015	20/9/2015	
21. Theodorakis		9/9/2015	
22. SYRIZA		9/9/2015, 20/9/2015	

Table 59: Collected Data - After the 3rd Memorandum Era, December 2015 – April 2016:

Hashtag #	Trending: when was trending in Greece	Collection: Collection 10.000 relations per hashtag/per day
1. 1 xronos aristera 2. 1 xronos SYRIZA		29/1/2015 (for both #)
3. Simfono		23/12/2015

4.	Vouli		22/12/2015	
5. 6. 7.	Ethniko Ethniko theatre xiros		29/1/2015 (for every #)	
8.	Agrotes	12/2/2015	12/2/2015	
9.	Remember2015	8-9/12/2015	12/12/2015	
10.	Idomeni	6/12/2015 9/12/2015 24/2/2015	1-2/3/2015 6-8/3/2015 11-12/3/2015	14-16/3/2015 18/3/2015 25-29/2/2015
11.	Lesvos	14-15/3/2015	25-28/2/2015	
12.	migrants		1/3/2015 25/2/2015 27-29/2015	
13.	refugees		1-2/3/2015 6/3/2015 8/3/2015 11-12/3/2015	14-16/3/2015 18/3/2015 25-29/2/2015
14.	Refugeescrisis		1-2/3/2015 26-29/2/2015	
15.	Refugees welcome	3-4/3/2015	2/3/2015 25-29/2/2015	
16.	Safepassage		1-2/3/2015 25-29/2/2015	
17.	Migrantcrisis		1-2/3/2015 25-29/2/2015	
18.	refugeesgr	26-27/2/2015	1-2/3/2015 7-8/2013 11-12/3/2015	14-16/3/2015 18/3/2015 25-29/2/2015
19.	Se periptosi polemou	24/11/2015	24/11/2015	
20.	Equalitygr	22/12/2015 23/12/2015	22/12/2015	
21.	Asfalistiko	28/1/2015	4/2/2015	
22.	Apergia	4/2/2015	4/2/2015	
23.	Roupakias	18/3/2015	18/3/2015	
24. 25. 26.	Fyssas Goldendawn Pavlosfyssas		18/3/2015 (for every #)	
27.	killahp	18-19/9/2015	18/3/2015	
28.	Wikileaks	2/4/2015	2-3/4/2016	
29.	IMF		2-3/4/2016	
30.	Skouries	24/8/2015 5/3/2015 24/8/2015	24/8/2015 5/3/2015 14/9/2015	
31. 32.	Tsalikidis ypoklopes		29/9/2015 (for every #)	
33.	6dgr	6/12/2015	6/12/2015	
34.	4fgr		4/2/2015	

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