10 Anti-immigrant hate speech as propaganda

A comparison between Donald Trump and Santiago Abascal on Twitter

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Introduction

Propaganda is a manipulative form of communication used to obtain or maintain a position of power by an ideological group. Its use increases in times of authoritarian or populist governments to unite people around ideological movements and against a unifying enemy. The rise of right-wing, nationalistic, and anti-immigrant movements in Europe and the United States (U.S.) has heightened the use of propaganda. The current media environment allows users to assume content with which they agree, creating a media echo-chamber, and limits the social regulation that often tempers extreme speech on popular media. Social media facilitates hate speech by doing away with editors and gatekeepers and allowing people with extreme views to rally each other and validate their beliefs. In this chapter we examine the immigration-related tweets by Donald J. Trump, President of the U.S., and Santiago Abascal, President of Spain's Vox political party, both of whom are active on Twitter and stoke the anti-immigrant and nationalistic feelings in both countries.

   Through a structured content analysis, we coded for characteristics of propaganda and hate speech in their immigration-related tweets, and identified similarities and differences between the two politicians both of whom have high activities and large following on Twitter. Specifically, we examine the extent to which Abascal and Trump use propaganda styles (affirmative, negative, or reactive), the identified enemies, a cornerstone of propaganda, referenced in the tweets, and the immigration-associated thematic frames most frequently used by each. This analysis contrasts and compares the style and content of anti-immigrant rhetoric on social media, as applied by two expert social opinion leaders, in two different political realities – one as incumbent and the other as opposition.

Political propaganda

The concept of political propaganda is often used in relation to dictatorial governments, both left and right wing. However, as Domenach (1986) states, propaganda has many forms and unlimited resources. Thereby, propaganda is a communicative message that will adapt to the dominant technologies and resources at any given time. As long as there are political rivalries, there will be propaganda (Domenach, 1986). Thus, propaganda is a transhistorical phenomenon, which is not determined by a specific situation, but rather something that will happen whenever ideology and power are in tandem (Pineda Cachero, 2006).

Many authors have tried to define what constitutes propaganda (Herreros Arconada, 1989; Cunningham, 2002; O'Shaughnessy, 2004; Pineda Cachero, 2006; Huici Módenes, 2010). After World War II (WWII), and because of Nazi Propaganda and other dictatorships, this phenomenon has been linked to a negative use of communication and persuasion, where the receivers are conceived as a big group that behaves in the same way. This was the main idea during the years between the two world wars and the origin of the first research studies about political propaganda as a communicative discipline (Lasswell, 1927; Tchakhotine, 1985; Bernays, 2005; Ponsonby, 2005). In 2006, as a result of a review of the most representative global studies on propaganda, Pineda Cachero (2006) defines it as:

> …a communication phenomenon dealing with content and ideological intent, by means of which an issuer (individual or collective) transmits a message interestedly and deliberately to obtain, maintain or reinforce a position of power over the thought or conduct of a recipient (individual or collective) whose interests do not necessarily coincide with those of the issuer.
>
> (Pineda Cachero, 2006, p. 228)

As a rule, propagandistic messages include an enemy. Domenach (1986) identified simplification and homogenization of the enemy so that there is a notion of a single enemy. This resource was used in an extensive way in Nazi Germany, where messages were launched against Jews. This author wrote his research after WWII, making him a witness of the extensive use of propaganda during this period. Domenach (1986) also highlights that to focus on one person, hope and hate are the most elemental and beneficious way to develop the propagandistic message.

According to the content of the propaganda message and the enemy, Pineda (2008) defines three types of messages based on whether the message focuses on the source's agenda or its opponents: Affirmative propaganda, negative propaganda, and reactive propaganda.

-Affirmative propaganda: There is no explicit enemy in the message. This type of communication just shows positive data about the propagandist, the sender.

-Negative propaganda: There is an explicit enemy in the message, and the information about it is bad. There is no sign of the propagandist in this kind of communication.

-Reactive propaganda: The propagandist appears as a solution against the enemy. Thus, there are two parts in this communication: The propagandist and the enemy. The good against the evil.

Twitter and political communication

In the current media environment, propagandistic messages circulate on the Internet and social networking sites (SNS), just where the target audience is. Political and electoral campaigns are in a phase of post-maturation on the Internet (Davis et al., 2009), where it is common to develop sophisticated websites, and attention is directed to SNS, which became a critical tool after the Barack Obama campaign in 2008 (Towner & Dulio, 2012, p. 96). The Obama campaign was a preamble to the importance that SNS would take on in later election years. An example of this is the role they took in the election campaign of Donald Trump in 2016. The use of the SNS has been linked to the personalization of politics, with Twitter being the most studied SNS (Filimonov, Russmann & Svensson, 2016, p. 3).

Twitter launched in 2006, reaching approximately 200 million accounts in just five years. Users post messages with up to 140 characters ("tweets") that appear both in their profiles and in their followers' feeds. Users can share other users' tweets, giving any individual public tweet the potential to reach far more users than those following the original sender. Users can also share photos and links in tweets. In addition to following other twitter accounts, users interested in specific issues or topics can search for keywords or "hashtags", or terms prefixed with a # symbol.

Social media can be seen as providing access to information, but also as one of the biggest risks to democracy (Persily, 2017), due to the rise of political extremism. The 2016 U.S. political campaign arguably represents the latest chapter in the disintegration of the legacy institutions that had set bounds for U.S. politics in the postwar era. The Trump campaign was unprecedented in its breaking of established norms of politics. Yet this type of campaign could only be successful because established institutions – especially the mainstream media and political party organizations – had lost much of their power, both in the U.S. and around the world (Persily, 2017).

The Trump campaign took advantage of a great social dissatisfaction and the fall of these institutions. Politicians and political parties of different countries, such as the Five Star Movement in Italy, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, the Pirate Party in Iceland, and Marine Le Pen in France, have used SNS to send their messages to the audience. Furthermore, the

achievement of SNS can be seen in the Brexit referendum (Persily, 2017). Between August 2015 and the 2016 election day, over 1 billion tweets were associated with the U.S. presidential race. By election day Trump had accumulated 13 million Twitter followers, with Hillary Clinton trailing behind at 10 million followers. Amplified by retweets, by mid-2016 Trump's social media posts were shared three times more than Clinton's on Twitter. Across media outlets both on and offline, Trump set the news agenda, with his supporters' avid retweeting amplifying discussion of his ideas. Trump soon realized that "incendiary language could command media attention or shift the narrative" (Persily, 2017, p. 67).

Hate speech and immigration

Hate speech is nothing new in propaganda. One example is the demonization of the German enemy in World War I, with the lies and exaggerations about the Germans marking the beginning of the concept known as atrocity propaganda (Barragán-Romero & Bellido-Pérez, 2019). Although there was a reaction against propaganda after this conflict, totalitarian movements had found the perfect tool to spread hate. In fact, it is in part thanks to these propaganda messages that Mussolini and Hitler achieved their powerful positions in the 20s and 30s (Pizarroso, 1990; Taylor, 1990).

According to Kirk and Martin (2017), *hate speech* may be technically defined in legal terms as "written or verbal attacks on an individual or group's race, ethnicity, or gender" (p. 206), and are typically abusive, insulting, intimidating, or harassing, and can contribute to violence, hatred, or discrimination. However, in the U.S. largely due to the First Amendment, there are very few restrictions on political speech, even when it comes to hate speech. Therefore, it is not unusual to find hate speech in U.S. political discourse (Kirk & Martin, 2017).

Beyond the inherent dangers of hate speech in any format, there are the particular amplified dangers that this phenomenon poses on SNS. Given the relevance of SNS in almost all facets of modern society, it is not surprising that modern hate speech leverages them as a perfect way to reach their audiences. "Among the many peculiarities of the 2016 presidential campaign, the most noxious may have been the way it normalized deeply divisive speech in public discourse, including hate speech" (Kirk & Martin, 2017, p. 205). In fact, hate speech can be the perfect way to use the propaganda's simplification rule defined by Domenach (1986). It can also be shown in Donald Trump's policies against immigrants: He has characterized and reduced Mexican migrants as criminals, drug smugglers, rapists, and "bad hombres", among other highly negative attributions (Verea, 2018). This type of language has amplified anti-immigrant sentiment across the U.S.

Across Europe, immigration is also increasingly contested among citizens. With multiculturalism in decline since the 1990s, pressure has been

placed on immigrants to integrate and conform. Following the economic recession and the resulting deterioration of living standards and increased competition for public resources between social groups, anti-immigrant attitudes have escalated. Immigrants have faced the very real consequences of the labels that have been attributed to them in public discourse (Milioni, Spyridou & Vadratsikas, 2015). A recent study of hate speech in Finland found three distinct hate-related themes when discussing asylum seekers. These were related to imported violence, economics, and cultural identity. Hate speech was targeted towards specific ethnic groups and religions, which reflected the immigration and asylum seeking context in Finland. Interestingly, hate speech around immigration extended beyond asylum seekers into Finnish society (Insiders), to include negative speech towards government and groups that support immigration (Kaján, 2017).

In the U.S., Kirk and Martin (2017, p. 210) have established four specific kinds of appeals that carried overtones of hate in Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton's languages during 2016 presidential campaign: (1) Those that try to inflame the emotions of the followers; (2) those that fight for denigrate the outclass; (3) those appeals that try to harm the opponent; and (4) those whose main goal is to conquer.

Hate speech and immigration in the U.S.: Donald Trump

Following Trump's election victory in the U.S., public discourse has become increasingly intolerant, bigoted, and sympathetic to social abandonment. It is expected that this discourse will not remain isolated, but will instead seep into several other realms of society. This moment in politics and culture has leveraged ignorance to create an alarming anti-intellectualism that gave way to the rejection of critical thought and reflection. Throughout his election campaign, Trump's weaponization of lies left language devoid of meaning and credibility, and set the stage for a post-truth culture where deciphering opinions from facts is at times incredibly challenging. His seemingly endless stream of tweets has made it difficult for the public to piece coherent narratives together, while also seeking to dismantle trust in the very institutions attempting to hold him responsible for his words and actions – the media and free press (Giroux, 2017, p. 890).

Sensationalism, manipulation of emotion, and rambling have become staples of Trump's language, with his unflinching and unwavering disregard for the truth and reality leaving no space for, and actively discouraging or ignoring, valid criticisms or discussion. This landscape where falsehoods are the only constant has made it challenging to disentangle what Trump actually knows and means when he speaks about any issue, as he refuses to take responsibility for his words or actions politically, ethically, or socially. What, at surface level, may register as ignorance and incoherence, goes beyond that. Trump's disconnect with reality and even rationality have tapped into the everyday fears and moral panics associated with earlier periods of

fascism (Giroux, 2017, p. 890). "Make America Great Again" was a sentence of division: The winning and the losing side (Kirk & Martin, 2017, p. 211). Again, showing that propaganda works with simple messages. There are two sides, and the propagandist always chooses the good one. The big groups of identified enemies are, inevitably, the contrary of us and the big problem of our nation.

Hate speech and immigration in Spain: Santiago Abascal

In Spain, Vox and its leader, Santiago Abascal, work in a similar way. This is a right-wing extremist political party that grew dramatically in the 2019 elections, going from 24 representatives to 52 in just a few months. His speech has been described with ideas of authoritarianism, nationalism, reaction to cultural change, and unit against Catalonia (Anduiza, 2018).

Vox was born as a political party in 2013. "Vox" comes from a Latin word that means "voice". The majority of its political leaders came from Partido Popular, a conservative party that ruled Spain, with Mariano Rajoy as President, from 2011 to 2018. Abascal, Vox's leader, has belonged to Partido Popular from the 1990s to 2013, when he established Vox along with José Antonio Ortega Lara, Cristina Seguí, José Luís González Quirós e Ignacio Camuñas. This new party was created to defeat Mariano Rajoy's right-wing policies. Two years earlier, Abascal wrote a book called *En defensa de España. Razones para el patriotismo español*,[1] a text signed by DENAES Foundation for the Defense of the Spanish Nation. The main idea of Vox is around Spanish unity and nationalism. Thus, they affirm that the otherness is responsible for the crisis and the collapse of patriotism. Vox and Abascal send messages everyday through their SNS where they demonize immigrants and refugees, arguing that they are rapists, criminals, and so on. Vox has pointed them as the responsible for crimes and violent acts, even citing false data (El País, 2019). Alfonso Aya, delegated prosecutor in hate crimes, has determined that some messages sent by Vox are attacks against minorities (EFE, 2019).

Samprieto and Sánchez-Castillo (2020) have studied the success of Santiago Abascal (the Vox candidate) on Instagram, where he has 566,000 followers (the biggest number of followers among Spanish politicians). They found Abascal shows the Spanish flag and the Vox logo in almost half of his Instagram pictures and uses the word "Spain" in the text frequently, highlighting his nationalistic agenda on SMS. Abascal uses pejorative words such as "golpistas" (coup leaders), "derechita cobarde" (coward little right), and "progres" (progressives) trying to catch media attention (2020).

Othering through framing

Public opinion of migration and migrants is greatly influenced by media frames (Lakoff & Ferguson, 2006). Framing is a way to write or speak

about an object or issue calling attention to specific aspects or characteristics. Specifically,

> to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.
>
> (Entman, 1993, p. 52)

Through framing, the author or editor of a text transfers the salience of specific attributes about an object via the selection and emphasis of particular interpretations of reality. Framing draws attention to the process of deciding who and what is important in a situation or story. Framing the concepts of politics and policy serves the purpose of creating societal meaning.

The words used to describe immigrants and immigration, as well as the issues and concerns made salient when speaking or writing about them, frame and highlight aspects and suggest angles from which to consider the issues. SNS have become a powerful tool for ideological framing because they allow direct communication between a source and an audience, without the filter of an editor or gatekeeper, and without the rigor of fact checking and citing sources. Also, since social media allows users to follow those accounts they are interested in, it gives ideologues a platform to reach large groups of people who already agree with them and reinforce their beliefs.

Discourse about immigrants often draws attention to ethnic and cultural characteristics, presenting them as "alien" to native populations and having the potential to disrupt the political and cultural order of a country or society by threatening its "purity" and "authenticity" (Triandafyllidou, 2000). Ter Wal (1996) referred to the "threat" frame specifically as a risk to public health. The "enemy" frame is also frequently seen in the media, presenting migrants as competitors taking the jobs of natives (Grobet, 2014).

Lakoff and Ferguson (2006) identified an "otherness" frame, which sees immigrants as threats to the culture, language, and values of the society, and found it to be a frame employed frequently by the media. Millioni et al. refer more specifically to the "victim frame" (e.g. exploited/helpless), a "threat" frame (e.g. criminal, alien, burden, etc.), and an "active agent" frame (e.g. worker, investor, member of society).

A recent study analyzed more than 7 million tweets using hashtags such as #refugee, #refugeecrisis, and others, and found the dominant frames revolve around security and safety on the one hand and humanitarianism on the other (Siapero et al., 2018). The study also found that some explicitly racist hashtags were associated with the security and safety frames. In general, the refugee issue on Twitter was found to be politicized and often used to further political interests. Siapera et al. (2018) also found that the

more politicized frames around immigration revolved around the rhetoric of Donald Trump and the growing anti-immigration voices in Europe (Siapera et al., 2018).

Research questions

The main objective of this chapter is to analyze the similarities between Abascal and Trump on Twitter, as they are both politicians that have used SNS as the perfect tool to spread their rhetoric of hate. Based on the literature reviewed above, we posed the following research questions:

RQ 1: Is there a difference in the type of propaganda used by Trump and Abascal in immigration- and nationalism-related tweets?
RQ 2: Is there a difference in the perceived enemy named by Trump and Abascal in immigration- and nationalism-related tweets?
RQ 3: Is there a difference in the frame-related themes used by Trump and Abascal in immigration- and nationalism-related tweets?

Method and sample

The sample consisted of a random sample of 204 tweets from Donald Trump (@TheRealDonaldTrump) and Santiago Abascal (@Santi_Abascal) that included keywords related to immigration and nationalism between January 1 and October 31, 2019. The API (Application Programming Interface, which allows access to resources only available on the server) provided by Twitter has led to the proliferation of data services and software tools for searching based on keywords, scraping vast amounts of text data, and conducting automated sentiment analysis and sophisticated social media analytics. Social media data can be used in a variety of academic disciplines, including innovation management, stakeholder management, and content monitoring. Data can be tracked using APIs based on keywords, specific actors/authors, and specific URLs. Data can then be coded based on structural attributes (generally machine coded); sentiment, which can be machine coded or human coded; and topic- or trend-related coding. This study uses theme and topic coding for content analysis and identifying trends (Steiglitz et al., 2014).

Meltwater Explore is a social media listening tool that enables keyword searches to help monitor and analyze social media activity on several social media platforms. In a 2014 case study comparing Meltwater with two other social media monitoring tools, Meltwater was found to be the most extensive when searching for posts based on the selected keywords, particularly due to its ability to search retroactively given date parameters. This allowed for a greater reach and retention when finding posts by keywords (rather than hashtags, for example) in a past time period (Adi & Hobby, 2013).

Using the Meltwater social media monitoring tool, we used the following Boolean phrases to identify tweets that directly addressed immigration, refugees, or nationalism. The terms contraband and trafficking were included because both study subjects used this term in the context of illegal immigration. For the Trump sample the Boolean search phrase was: Author: "Donald J. Trump" AND (immig* OR alien OR wall OR undocumented OR Mexic* OR traffick* OR violen* OR refuge*). This resulted in 346 tweets (264 Unique hits). For the Abascal sample, the search criteria were: Author: "Santiago Abascal" AND (inmig* OR espan* OR violen* OR refugiad* OR contrabando*). This resulted in 381 unique tweets (241 unique hits). These specific search terms were selected after testing other combinations that resulted in different combinations of immigration- and non-immigration-related tweets. These search terms were selected for highlighting common topics around the current discourse of immigration and nationalism in the U.S. and Spain.

After eliminating retweets and tweets that were unrelated to immigration or nationalism, about half of Abascal's tweets were eliminated creating markedly different sample sizes for analysis (225 for Trump and 124 for Abascal). We then selected a random sample of 120 tweets from each candidate using Excel RAND function. Kim et al. (2018) found that a simple random sampling is more efficient than a constructed week sampling in terms of obtaining a more efficient and representative sample of Twitter data. Researchers eliminated duplicates (Abascal tends to share his own tweets), as well as any tweets that were determined not to be related to the issue under study (for example, some tweets about the Mexico trade deal referred to immigration and others only had to do with commercial trade). This yielded a final sample for analysis with 116 tweets by Trump and 88 tweets by Abascal.

Coding

The three main variables of interest for the research questions were propaganda type, perceived enemy, and frame-related theme. The coded variables are detailed below. We used an iterative process of pilot-testing and refining the codebook. The two investigators agreed on the criteria for the variable codes and conducted an inter-coder reliability test on the equivalent of 10% of the content in the study. For all variables where there was not perfect agreement between coders in the pre-test, we resolved all points of disagreement through consensus and clarified definitions for the codebook.

Inter-coder reliability was assessed by double-coding 20 tweets (an equivalent of 10% of the sample) and calculated Cohen's Kappa. The resulting coefficient of 84.5 exceeded the threshold for almost perfect agreement using the guideline outlined by Landis and Koch (1977), where the strength of the kappa coefficients = 0.01–0.20 slight, 0.21–0.40 fair, 0.41–0.60 moderate, 0.61–0.80 substantial, 0.81–1.00 almost perfect, according to Landis and Koch (1977). Of the 16-variable coded themes, 1 had moderate agreement, 5 had substantial agreement, and 11 had almost perfect agreement.

Type of propaganda

Propaganda referred to the three types proposed by Pineda (2008): Affirmative, negative, and reaction. A tweet was coded as *Affirmation Propaganda* when the entirety of the tweet was pushed the agenda of the author's party or ideology, without referring to any opposing viewpoint. A tweet was coded as *Reaction Propaganda* when the message presents the author's agenda after explicitly presenting the opponent's agenda or when their own agenda was juxtaposed to an opponent's agenda that was explicitly mentioned in the tweet. A tweet was considered *Negation Propaganda* only the opponent's views are presented and/or critiqued explicitly and the propagate's view is implicit. The Cohen's Kappa coefficient for inter-coder reliability for the variables was 0.87.

Identified enemy

One of the tools of propaganda is the demonization and oversimplification of a common enemy (Pineda, Macarro Tomillo & Barragán Romero, 2012). We coded tweets that explicitly or implicitly identified an enemy using criteria based on the concept of portraying enemies: Negatively framing the so-called enemy in moral terms, and depicting the relationship to the opponent as a struggle of good against evil. Specifically we set out to determine if the immigrant enemy was identified by country or region of origin, or some other characteristic, or whether immigrants and refugees were enemies as a group. As such, we coded tweets that referred directly or indirectly to an enemy using the following codes: (1) Arab/Middle Eastern; (2) African; (3) Latin American; (4) Catalan; (5) Unspecified immigrants; (6) Unspecified refugees; and (7) Non-immigrant enemy. Political rivals (i.e. competing politicians or the opposing party in general) were not coded as enemies. However, some internal (non-immigrant) groups were framed as the evil side in a fight between good and evil, and portrayed as morally at fault. The Cohen's Kappa coefficient for inter-coder reliability for the variables was 0.86.

Frame-related themes

Themes were coded according to the presence or absence of specific frame-related topics in the main text of the tweet. Frame-related themes were based on the themes identified in the literature and inductively after open coding of test tweets (prior to 2019 time period). The final frames and themes were chosen after open theme coding in a preliminary pilot-test, and pre-testing the codebook with tweets from other time periods. We kept the most frequently occurring themes for the final analysis. We set out to code for frames that could contribute to anti-immigrant politics and support the rhetoric of hate and exclusion, but also frames that lauded the

moral superiority of the author's agenda or ideology. A single tweet could be coded for more than one of the themes and thus fall under more than one frame. This resulted in the following themes grouped into three main frames:

-Immigrants as a Threat Frame: This frame included instances where the issue of immigration was presented around themes of crime, violence, danger, terrorism, invasion, or loss of culture. It also included references to "golpe de estado" (coup d'etat), or "golpistas" (rebels) in Spain, typically referring to Catalan separatist protesters.

-Law and Defense Frame: This frame was used when the tweet focused on issues of laws and deterrence as the response to immigration. Tweets were coded under this frame if they referred to borders, walls, illegal immigration, or immigration laws.

-Preserving Values Frame: Themes under this frame brought attention to what could be lost if immigration increases. Tweets were grouped into this frame if they were coded as including the themes of homeland, national security, and fairness. The Cohen's Kappa coefficient for inter-coder reliability for the variables was 0.83 for primary and secondary frame, and 0.86 for tertiary frame.

Data analysis

Data were entered directly into IBM SPSS® Version 20 for statistical analysis. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were obtained for all coded variables. The differences in propaganda type, enemy, and frame-related themes were assessed using chi-square.

Results

Types of propaganda

Almost half of Trump's coded tweets (49.1%) were designated as affirmation propaganda, meaning that they only pushed his perspective or agenda without referring to an opponent's views. Only 27.3% of Abascal's tweets were of this type. An example of affirmation propaganda by Trump on October 2, 2019, stated:

> Massive sections of The Wall are being built at our Southern Border. It is going up rapidly, and built to the highest standards and specifications of the Border Patrol experts. It is actually an amazing structure! Our U.S. Military is doing a GREAT job.

Abascal's most common type of propaganda approach was reactionary (45.5%), where he specifically mentioned an opponent's position and presented his agenda or perspective as superior. Trump used this kind of

message in his tweets (35.4%). An example of reactive propaganda was posted by Abascal; in response to a news item about violent protests on October 28, 2019: "This is the multicultural Spain that the progressives of all parties want, from PP to separatists. Only VOX defends the immediate expulsion of illegal immigrants and legal ones that commit serious crimes".

Negation propaganda or messages that were limited to criticizing an opponent's position without presenting the author's agenda were used least by Trump, with only 15.5% of his tweets falling in this category. An example of negation propaganda include this one by Trump in reaction to tweet calling for Congress to ratify the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement on October 3, 2019: "The Do Nothing Democrats don't have time to get it done!" Abascal used negation propaganda in 27.3% of his tweets. An example of negative propaganda by Abascal is a tweet dates August 19, 2019, attacking a pro-immigrant non-governmental organization:

> Open Arms is not an NGO, is the operating base of the extreme left working with the great multinationals and banks. When they attach Italy, they attach the sovereignty, identity and coexistence in Europe. Immigrants are their political commodity. Nothing more.

Abascal's reactive and negation propaganda is associated with the framing violence. His messages cite violent actions of the enemy to present himself and his party as the solutions. As seen in Table 10.1, violence is used in almost 50% of Abascal's tweets.

Table 10.1 Frames and Related Themes

Immigrant as Threat	Trump	Abascal	Chi-sq value; sig
Crime	22.4%	5.8%	10.871; $p = 0.001$
Violence	2.6%	50.0%	61.361; $p < 0.001$
Golpe/Golpistas (Coup/ Rebels)	0.0%	22.1%	27.618; $p < 0.001$
Terrorism	0.9%	9.3%	8.035; $p = 0.005$
Invasion	3.4%	12.8%	6.018; $p = 0.014$
Law and Defense	**Trump**	**Abascal**	**Chi-sq value; sig**
Border(s)	52.6%	7.0%	47.523; $p < 0.001$
Wall(s)	53.4%	1.2%	64.152; $p < 0.001$
Illegal immigrants	25.9%	23.3%	0.266; NS
Immigration laws	13.8%	4.7%	4.839; NS
Preserving Values	**Trump**	**Abascal**	**Chi-sq value; sig**
Homeland	9.5%	24.4%	7.825; $p = 0.005$
Fairness	0.9%	7.0%	5.357; $p = 0.021$

Source: Author's own.

Enemy

Trump's and Abascal's tweets were coded for the enemy that they put forth in their tweets. Enemies were presented as morally defective in that they caused or contributed to the problem of immigration as an existential threat. The most frequently identified enemy in Trump's tweets were "unspecified immigrants/refugees" (62%, compared to 28% for Abascal), while for Abascal, the most frequently identified enemy were non-immigrant enemies (42%) usually referring to leftist groups and politicians. Almost 1 out of 5 (18%) of Abascal's tweets in the study period referred to the Catalan separatists as the enemy, rather than immigrants or refugees, cited a group that went against Spain's interests.

Frame-related themes

Frames were defined based on specific related themes (See Table 10.1). Abascal used the *Immigrant as Threat* frame more frequently than Trump. Half of the tweets by Abascal referred to danger, and just over one-fifth related (synonym) directly or indirectly to "golpistas", or people involved in a movement against the government [MOU1]. He often called them terrorists (12.8% of tweets) and conflated these three themes to represent immigrants as threat. Abascal wrote:

> This is the Smiles Revolution. A new episode of the *golpistas'* violence. Here in Spain, we do not abandon the people who suffer through violence for defending their flag. My support to this poor woman and my contempt for the coward who hit and threw her to the floor. Along with this text, there is a video of a woman holding a Spanish flag and being attacked by another person.

Another example reads:

> Could you imagine that there is a plan to introduce terrorists as "refugees" in Europe through the connection between irresponsible governments-mafias-NGOs? They did that already in 2015. Bataclan's terrorists entered as refugees, as have many others. This is very well proved. And very well hidden.

Abascal tweeted "Against the irresponsibles that talk about the benefits of multiculturalism and the massive immigration, Vox claims surveillance and forcefulness against the Islamism that threatens our culture, our freedom and our own lives" and

> Four German tourists are beaten and one left with a broken leg in a mugging in Barcelona. They were assaulted by a group of maghrebis (Northern Africans). Again. But the progressives continue with their open door policy to illegal and massive immigration.

Under this frame, Trump was more likely to bring up crime (22.4% of his tweets) than any other threat. He often mentioned drugs and human trafficking, but also an increase in crime in general as an expected outcome of immigration. For example, Trump tweeted "Great unity in Republican Party. Want to, once and for all, put an end to stoppable crime and drugs! Border security and Wall. No doubt!",

> 23% of Fedarl inmates are illegal immigrants. Border arrests are up 240%. In the Great of Texas, between 2011 and 2018, there were a total of 292,000 crimes by illegal aliens, 539 murders, 3,200 assaults, 3,426 sexual assaults and 3,000 weapons charges. Democrats come back!

and "…This will supersede USMCA. Likewise I am looking at an economic penalty for the 500 Billion Dollars in illegal DRUGS that are shipped and smuggled through Mexico and across our Southern Border. Over 100,000 Americans die each year, sooo many families destroyed!"

Another recurring theme was the notion of invasion by foreigners. Almost a tenth of Abascal's tweets used this theme to frame immigration as a threat. Trump used this frame, but much less frequently (4%). An example of tweets using this frame is the Abascal's tweet: "In Rome, a very positive working meeting with @matteosalvinimi in the Italian Senate. We agree fully on the need to protect Europe's borders from massive immigration, and the respect for national sovereignty – and unity – of the EU member states", or when Trump tweeted:

> …travesty that is taking place in allowing millions of people to easily meander through their country and INVADE the U.S., not to mention the Drugs & Human Trafficking pouring in through Mexico. Are the Drug Lords, Cartels & Coyotes really running Mexico? We will soon find out!

Trump was significantly more likely to use themes related to the "Law and Defense" frame referring to illegal immigration (as a violation of law), and defensive measures or structures including immigration laws, borders, or walls. More than half of Trump's tweets referred to the wall and the border, where Abascal used these themes in fewer than 7% of his tweets (1.2% for wall). Trump was significantly more likely to mention immigration laws (13.8% compared to 4.7% by Abascal). These mentions could be about specific laws being discussed by the legislations or referring to the need for reforming immigration laws.

Abascal was more likely to appeal to themes that called for the preservation of lifestyles of values that could be lost with increased immigration. Almost a quarter of Abascal's tweets referred directly or indirectly to Spain as the homeland that needs to be guarded and celebrated. Trump used this

theme in fewer than 10% of his tweets. Abascal also appealed to fairness and the perceived injustice against law-abiding Spaniards and people trying to protect the homeland. This is illustrated by Abascal's tweet:

> This is the multicultural and progressive society that the left imposes and followed by the easily influenced. This is a precursor to the Chavismo (referring to Venezuela's leftist authoritarian regime) where honest Spaniards are left defenseless before mafias and the violent. Only Vox proposes the robust reforms that the situation requires.

Conclusions

The tweets by Trump and Abascal analyzed for this study meet the definition of propaganda established by Pineda Cachero (2006) because they, as politicians, use them to achieve or maintain a powerful position. As Domenach (1986) stated, propaganda is polymorphous and uses many resources, social media being one of them. Trump and Abascal use social media because it is the most effective way to reach their target audience. While SNS are the mediums of choice today, radio and television were the protagonists' mediums years before.

With respect to the first research question posed above, there were clear differences in the type of propaganda used by both men. About half of Trump's immigration-related tweets qualified as affirmative propaganda, meaning that they exalted Trump or his allies. Over a third (35%) of Trump's tweets were reactive, where he mentioned an opponent's views or actions and then refuted them. He was less likely (15%) to only attack without referring to his side of an argument in the same message. Abascal's most common form of propaganda was reactive, where he mentioned an opponent's ideas or actions and refuted them. This accounted for 45% of Abascal's tweets, followed by 27% of his tweets being negation propaganda, where he specifically attacks another person or group without presenting a counter argument in the same message. These results are in line with Donald Trump's personality and brand of bravado and self-promotion, and support the notion that Abascal's rhetorical strategy is primarily about attacking opponents, rather than only promoting his view.

As far as the second research question, there was one main difference between the subjects. The majority of Trump's tweets (62%) identified immigrants as the enemy, while Abascal was more likely to identify leftists and separatists as the enemy. In other words, Trump identifies the enemy as external, and someone that has to be "kept out". Abascal more frequently identifies internal enemies that are "among us" and trying to cause trouble. As discussed previously, identifying an enemy to rally your followers and channel their anger is a key tool used in propaganda. These two opinion leaders provide clear enemies to blame and foster fear and protectionism.

Finally, the third research question dealt with thematic frames around the issue of immigration. As presented in Table 10.1, Abascal was most likely to frame his statements around the immigrant (or separatists) as a threat, particularly a threat of violence. He was also more likely than Trump to focus on values, in particular the protection of the homeland and patriotic values. On the other hand, Trump was most likely to lean on frames around law and defense, with a particular focus on protecting the border and building a border wall. This difference is most likely due to their impression of their audiences and what they expect will be more likely to resonate. Trump frames his anti-immigrant propaganda around enforcing laws and borders, and Abascal highlights the threat to the homeland from violent outsiders.

Abascal and Trump both use social media as a way to promote negative feelings against immigrants framing them as threats, implying that they are responsible for crisis, crimes, and violent acts. This fits with the goal of propaganda to oversimplify a common enemy. As far as propaganda types, Trump was more preoccupied with advancing his agenda than putting down opposition agenda, although still used negating or reaction propaganda, where the majority of Abascal's tweets focused on the opposition's ideas by criticizing them or contrasting with his. The analysis of themes led to the conceptualization of frames that extend beyond previously identified frames around immigration: Law and Defense and Preserving Values.

The primary limitation of this study is the time period and the impact of different events affecting the two subjects (Trump in the U.S. and Abascal in Spain) at that particular time. The specific context would naturally affect the focus of immigration-related tweets. There are always challenges with content analysis of social media content based on keywords, since there could be relevant content that did not include any of the selected search terms. Finally, we conducted human coding of the content as opposed to machine coding of text. This limits the sample size but allows for more researcher interpretation of results based on context and images.

Future research on social media as a vehicle for anti-immigrant hate speech and propaganda, it would be important to examine how the content shared by leaders such as Abascal and Trump impacts others' communication about immigrants, and conduct broader cross-national comparisons to identify global trends in anti-immigrant propaganda.

Note

1 It can be translated as *In defense of Spain. Reasons for the Spanish Patriotism.*

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