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#Germancinema in the Eye of Instagram: showcasing a method combination

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> "Cities are made up of the accumulated memories of people, which have the power to transcend their own time" — The beautiful, semi-imaginary, infinitely detailed Tokyo of Akira Yamaguchi

Introduction

The phenomenon of platformization (Nieborg and Poell, 2018) has drastically changed society and the ways we interact with each other; and social media have become fundamental spaces of socialization. In times of Instagram, the shapes of the public sphere are also changing - already almost a decade ago Rainie, Brenner, and Purcell (2012) stated that photos and videos constituted most of all the social interactions between younger users. On the other hand, "Cinema was once heralded as the art of the 20th century" (Sontag, 1996, p. 60), and after a long century of political and social transformation, of technological development, cultural and aesthetic articulation the cinema industry is today's multimillionaire. Furthermore, while the cinema industry has embodied capitalism, the film industry has also played a strategic role in the shaping of national public spheres (Hansen, 1993; Wong, 2016). Germany, for instance, has systematically supported its film industry to promote German culture, at national level within its borders, but also at global scale. This paper builds on the prevalence of cinema as one of the sectors through which German culture is more actively promoted by tracing the activity on the social media platforms; Platforms and social media, in this case Instagram, are, still blind hotspots - there is shared assumption about their relevance but very little knowledge about how to incorporate the activity on platforms in the discussion about cultural interventions. Considering whether Instagram, and the social media platforms, are more a response to the institutional creative efforts of the state; or if instead, they are its continuation. This chapter checks the role of Instagram as a space of social activity around German cinema.

The analysis shows that the representations of cinematic "Germanness" (Hake, 2008, p. 23) on Instagram take place beyond the German borders across the world, and across languages such as Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, English, or French; and that these understandings of German cinema involve some significant historical references, about past creative periods of the German culture. However, the tool developed here also 1) innovates on the current strand of Instagram research; by showing methodological possibilities and limitations of a tool to collect and analyse Instagram activity; 2) checks the social participation as possible response to the promotion of German cinema by German cultural institutions is received as a chance for the organisation and assessment of the state driven cultural interventions; and 3) links the network and geography of social interactions around #Germancinema to the concept of communicative space. These three contributions align with a broader research program on the public sphere in times of social media.

Public sphere

Civic participation and engagement are fundamental pillars of democracy. The state national and international authority and body of laws sit on the legitimacy provided by the public's will expressed in public debate. Public sphere is a vast concept explored early by Walter Lipmann, Hannah Arendt or Juergen Habermas, among many others (Benhabib, 1997) or recently by Benkler (2006) with the "networked public sphere" to explain this triple condition: first, the existence of a community of people collectively engaging; second, a shared space of open and free debate in which all community-related topics can be discussed (communicative space); and third, a frame of power that transfers the debate outputs into laws binding the members of the community. These three normative and theoretical aspects of the public sphere are problematic when brought into practice, or onto empirical research (for a complete exploration of the topic see Calhoun, 1992). The possibility of an *Instasphere* around German cinema, this is an international community of interaction on the Instagram, could be a powerful breakthrough inviting for further explorations.

Cultural Diplomacy and country-branding: curating the community

This chapter approaches first, the community developed from the interactions about German cinema on Instagram curated by the hashtags, in this case, Germanness as a construct projected inwards -among the citizens of Germany-, and outwards -for the rest of the world. Second, this chapter deals with the idea of communicative space: an interface within which social Instagram interactions take place. According to Neal (2014), sociological definition of the concept of community from Parsons to Tonnies, from Mannheim to Benedict Anderson, typically involves a group of people sharing interactions, territory, and meanings (see; From the state perspective, the most popular form of imagined community is the nation (Anderson, 2006).

The state efforts regarding the community are well packed under the concept of cultural diplomacy as the "exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding" (Cummings, 2003, p. 1). The notion is understood differently along the vector of state intervention, where the extreme propaganda model is one side of the spectrum and the silent state and private non-governmental actors' involvement is the other (Jessica et al., 2010). Schneider (2009) refers to cultural diplomacy as a process that "operates best as a two-way street" (p. 261): inwards, as a form of building citizenship by enabling shared meanings and nation-membership; and outwards, as a permanent effort to improve, and curate the international perception of the state.

The complexities of this inward process have been long researched: Foucault (2008), Billig (1995), Yuval-Davis (1998), Edensor (2002), Hobsbawm and Ranger (2012), Calhoun (2007) and many others have explored how institutions such as national museums, universities and educational schooling systems build and disseminate narratives of collective belonging to

enhance feelings of commonality among citizens. States also invest in national heritage (McGuigan and Mcguigan, 2012) and language protection; in broadcasting systems or in shared fiction: original mythologies and folklore, or soap operas, and movies. Culture, rituals, and tradition ease the violence of the law, and conflictual issues like social class awareness are diverted. The process of national building sometimes adopts the form of nation-branding (Montiel et al., 2007); and as much as this collective is taken for granted in the everyday life, sometimes it is abused and it can be particularly violent to newcomers (Edensor, 2002).

Beyond their borders, national states also curate how they are internationally perceived. Arts, media, cultural production and consumption become spaces of inclusion of NGOs, and private stakeholders -corporations or other actors- "favoring a diversification of cultural policy" (Zamorano, 2016, p. 166). Cultural festivals, exhibitions or other cultural exchanges are part of this public diplomacy (Schneider, 2009) with the ultimate goal to build and maintain relationships rather than simply communicate the country-image (Szondi, 2008). These relationships extend towards the geopolitical arena.

"Different to cultural diplomacy, cinematic diplomacy focuses on the use of cinema and film for establishing intercultural dialogue" (Herrschner, 2015, p. 127). But the dialogue of diplomacy shadows also power relations: Hollywood is an example of soft power applied through cultural export. And German cinema, similarly, to any European cinema industry is financially and structurally supported through mechanisms that "foster film and audiovisual sectors" (Talavera et al., 2016, p. 10). Indeed, national and regional governments support the German film industry with €350 to €450 million annual amounts. These sums fund the production of 120 to 140 feature films that are 'mostly' produced in Germany (Loist and Prommer, 2019). Such financial institutional efforts are explained from multiple angles: first, they compensate the U.S. industry domination that in 2013 signified almost 70% of the cinema consumed in Europe (Katsarova, 2014); second, because cinema is a 'prototype' industry with fluctuating demands and high regulation and production costs. This industry balances between cultural and industrial components making the consideration about funding very particular: whereas marketized views call for liberal and non-interventionist approaches, the creative sectors demand more attention. In short, "funding [serves] to support the industry on one hand, and to enhance national culture, on the other" (Loist and Prommer, 2019, p. 97). Promoting its own cinema for Germany helps enhancing and promoting its symbolic, cultural, and economic value. German cinema is thus paradigmatic as embodiment of what Herrschner, following Schulte, calls the "German model of cultural diplomacy" (Herrschner, 2015, p.126): a mixed system of public and private and independent organizations and institutions (e.g. Goethe Institute) that hold the responsibility of representing and cultivating the German culture and language abroad.

Setting goals and defining a program of cultural promotion with strategic purposes, particularly if there is financial support involved, carries the temptation of measuring its impact. The effect of commodifying the cultural activity starts a capitalistic constellation of meanings: industry, production, and consumption. Such constellation also raises the issue of financial risk, and its consequent need to measure success in relation to investment cost, impact, or predefined goals. Nevertheless, the cultural policy environment is in process of changing paradigms (Bonet

and Negrier, 2018) and the understanding of impact of any cultural intervention changes too (see Langen and Garcia, 2009).

Public response, engagement, and participation are the lines of discussion towards which the understanding of impact of cultural policies is heading: new public diplomacy refers to the engagement of foreign audiences (Melissen, 2005); and Bonet and Negrier (2018) call it 'participative turn'. In this context, social media platforms play a key role in altering the discussion about audiences and participation: there, social media activity becomes an indicator for the success of the promoted culture activity.

This chapter does not measure the Instagram response to a specific campaign from the German institutions, however, this research apparatus showcases the possibilities of the analysis and how this tool can be systematically -and statistically- applied. The perceptions of German cinema on Instagram; enables an analysis that discusses the views promoted by German cultural institutions as an opportunity to consider the Instagram activity around the hashtag #Germancinema as a form of checking the impact of institutional investment on German cinema.

Communicative spaces: an interface for social interactions

The second condition of the public sphere is that it happens in a communicative space of interactions. For Schlesinger (1999) democracy must be grounded in a notion of open and accessible communicative spaces that enable debate, negotiation, struggle, and (dis)agreement. Too often, the space has been assimilated to territory -assuming national public sphere as the state territory. But it is necessary to move beyond the physical territory or the contents of the conversation, to explore the assembled extension of the network on a geographic background. Similarly to that idealized picture drafted by Habermas of the London bourgeois society in 1700s, which included more than 3000 public coffeehouses, publications, citizens participating in debates, and the topics discussed all along (see Calhoun, 1992; Habermas, 1964). To understand the communicative space, the attention needs to move beyond the physical place, communicative space is a virtual environment, a complex interface of interactions. Such interface is an assemblage of physical territory, published contents, understandings, and the means that enable those interactions (the media) -this includes, online worlds or, social media spaces. The current ecosystem of online enabled social media platforms as background for many social interactions does not diverge from the idea of a communicative space, but rather enhances it. This is also how Twitter can be treated as a communicative space (Schmidt, 2014). This chapter explores whether the activity on Instagram involves interactions similar to those of a communicative space.

The conceptual effort of assembling the online and geographic communications on a single interface comes with empirical and methodological difficulties. This chapter innovates in this direction by aligning with works that consider the spatial turn of the media (Adams and Jansson, 2012) and the mobility turn (Urry, 2008); along these lines, the research on spatial media

(Kitchin et al., 2017), locative technologies or locative media (Thielmann, 2010) or geomedia (McQuire, 2017), among many others have helped. The integration of the territory and the digital platforms reactivates concepts such as the third space (Bhabha, 2012), or digiplace (Zook and Graham, 2007). These conceptual and methodological advancements help explore the spatial (in)equalities visible in the geographies of events and within communicative spaces as part of the research on public sphere (Rodríguez-Amat and Brantner, 2016); as in this case with the geographic and connective spread of interactions among instagrammers about German cinema.

Instagram

The Instagram application launch in 2010 marked a new era of mobile photography as opposed to previous desktop photo (and video)-sharing platforms (Manovich, 2017). Photo-sharing became then part of the daily media consumption as communication includes the photographs and their context (Budge and Burness, 2018), changing the former mnemonic communicative function of photography for a more present and phatic one, personal and professional (Barbour, Lee and Moore, 2017). Facebook-Inc Instagram has grown since its launch to recently celebrate 1 billion active users. 71% of them are under 35 years old (Mohsin, 2019). In 2015 more than 85% of German youths used Instagram (Pilgrim and Bohnet-Joschko, 2019).

Instagram is an "image machines" for brands, locations, and the whole industries (Carah and Shaul, 2016, p.70), the principal virtue of which is "its capacity for interaction between brand and users through photography" (Caerols-Mateo et al., 2013, p. 70). Brands and celebrities entered Instagram and since 2014 can pay for targeted advertisements to sell products and build *followship*.

Instagram research, expands across a wide range of topics: brands operation and representation on social media (Habibi et al., 2014), identity practices of Instagram users (Duguay, 2017), community-building and community facilitation (O'Callaghan et al., 2012) or narratives, contexts and meanings produced by Instagram hashtags (Commane and Pottonb, 2019). Some previous research focused on the role of Instagram regarding touristic destinations (Nixon, Popova and Önder, 2017) or located Instagram images (Hochman and Manovich, 2013).

This paper aligns with these research antecedents; while expanding on Highfield and Leaver's calls (2015) and (2016) to develop mixed methods that integrate textual and graphic critical analyses in social media research. This chapter also follows Stefanidis et al. (2013) and makes use of geospatial information generated by social media applications to learn about activities of people involving interests, contacts, and participation in global virtual communities.

Methodology

Aligned with digital methods (Rogers, 2019), Internet studies, and Instagram research this research is inspired by research on Twitter and combines image tools and text-based data from social media following Laestadius (2017).

Commercialized Instagram API turns the platform into an advertising friendly platform but complicates academic research: this forced the use of a Python script to collect images and metadata directly from the website with a clean browser. This means all the images were accessible without an Instagram account and without browser cookies that could affect the search output. With this approach we excluded the issue of public/private comments, or of public and public-ness availability of data. Thus, the data collection was determined by Instagram's algorithm decision of what posts appear first.

Hashtags focus the exploration of meanings. They are markers for topics and facilitate indexing activity on social media and sharing keywords "folksonomically" (Halavais, 2013, p. 36). Hashtags build contingent communities of meaning, or ad hoc publics around cases (Bruns and Burgess, 2011a). The Instagram hashtag #Germancinema points at the social representations of meanings involving Germanness and filmic culture. Data collection, thus was based on 13 hashtags obtained from a first exploration: #Germanfilm, #Germancinema, #Deutscheskino, #Cinealeman, #Cinemaalemao, #Cinemaallemand, #Cinematedesco, #Deutschefilme, #Filmallemand, #Filmdeutschland, #Filmtedesco, #Germanmovies, #Kinodeutschland.

A python script automatically collected 200 Instagram posts per hashtag (when available) between 19th and 20th of January 2020. The script scraped metadata of the posts: likes, date and time, location, all hashtags, and the available information of users - number of posts, followers, and followed, personal description, and URL links. The sample showcased consists of the first 381 posts without duplicates. This sample is not expected to be statistically representative: the first posts chosen by the algorithm create constructs that disable any statistical generalization of the results.

Quantitative, geographic, and visual analyses were helped by python processing of images and metadata. Some posts were geolocated (121 from the 381 sample). A qualitative analysis was done manually, following the Image Type Analysis approach (see Brantner, et al, 2019). It consisted of an inductive extraction of images sorted by contents revised through several waves of analysis until reaching a final organization of 6 image types (see Figure 6). For quantitative analysis, only the first two types were considered to quantitatively identify historical periods and specific movies. The data were mapped and the interactions between users and hashtags visually analyzed using Gephi software for network analysis as a natively digital method for "exploring social and semantic structures of publics" (Caliandro, 2014. p.17). Gephi identifies modular clusters showing communities of interaction in the network structure.

Discussion

Three subsections organise this part: in the first, data graphically represented along four variables: most liked posts, most used hashtags, most active users, and chronology of posts; the second subsection explores image contents against specific movies and historical periods of the German cinema. The third subsection deepens in the heuristic possibilities of geographic analysis and of the analysis of the network of users and hashtags.

Pictures, hashtags, users and chronology

From the showcase sample, 347 pictures included the number of likes, the 38 rest were videos. Only the first 15 posts have more than 1000 likes. And most of them do belong to institutional profiles; for instance, @deutschland_de is the Instagram profile of an online portal owned by Frankfurter Allgemeine publisher (FAZIT) and German Federal Foreign Office. The other posts included in the list are published by profiles with more than 15k followers - Instagram reference to incorporating advertising. Also @oldmagicmovie counts with 254k followers, and @fadeincinema 15,5k; these profiles post topics rather than persons; but @carolmoreira (275k) and @aboudi.86 (101k) are influencers with profiles on other social media. @nicolebielow (101k) is a visual artist, @dasding a new publication; and @denkpausefilms (9900 followers), or @cinematic_bts (34k) are film production companies. The highly attractive posts, and their number of followers' correlate. Those posts are owned by institutions, private or public, or by individual influencers. After these first profiles, the number of likes falls closer to the trendline of likes, well below 1000 likes per post (see figure 1).
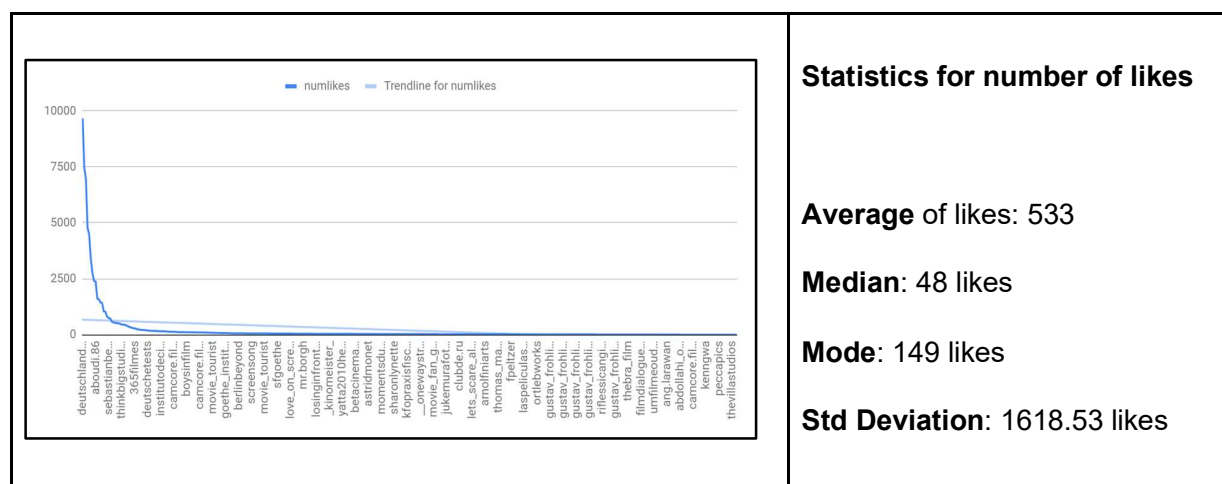

Statistics for number of likes

Average of likes: 533

Median: 48 likes

Mode: 149 likes

Std Deviation: 1618.53 likes

Figure 1. Line-chart of the number of likes in descending order (left). Statistics (right).

Regarding the hashtags, 381 posts carried 900 unique hashtags of a total of 4807. Of those, 265 hashtags only appeared once, 279 appeared twice. Only 110 hashtags include more than

10 iterations. 51 of these 110 relate to #Germany (4) #Germancinema (19), #Germanauthors (14) or #Germanmovies (12) (see figure 2):. Of these 110, one is @GoetheInstitut (see figure 3), "which is the representation of German culture, with the aim of creating a contemporary image of Germany (GoetheInstitut, 2012)" (Herrschner, 2015, p. 126).
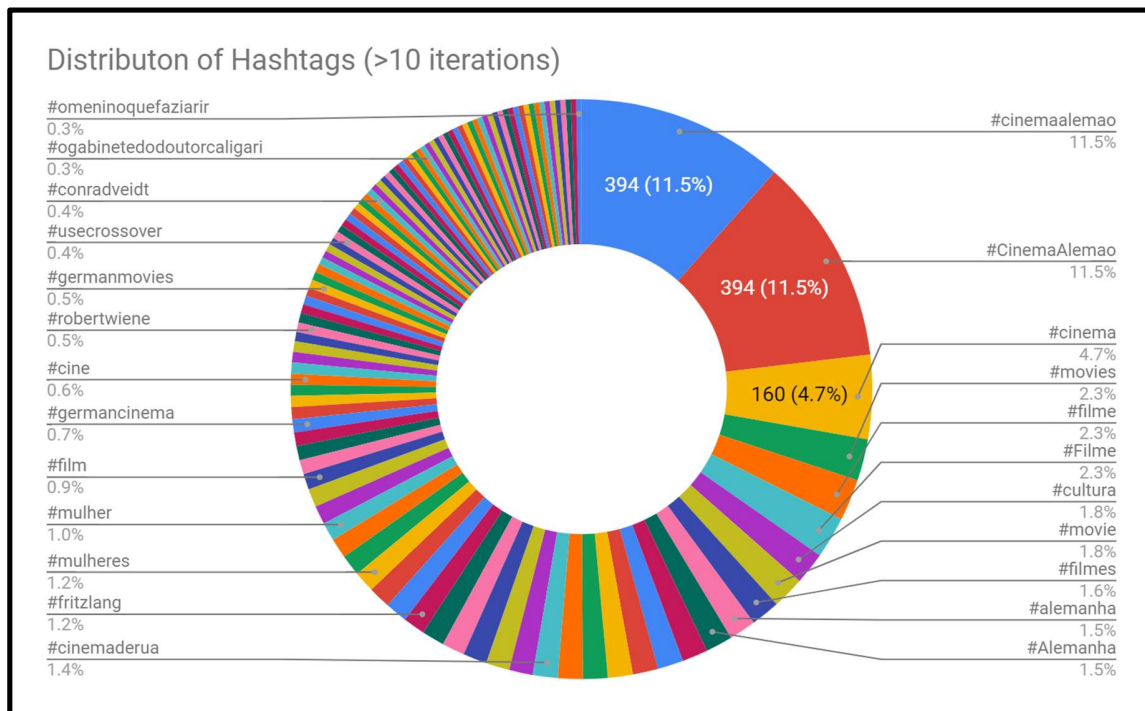

Figure 2. Pie-chart of the hashtags with more than 10 iterations..

Portuguese hashtags seem to have taken over; but this is part of the algorithm-bias that prioritizes recent posts. And the users are also unbalanced (Figure 3) of the 381 posts, 66 are from the same user @gustav_frohlich. The rest are more evenly distributed. There are 216 different users in the 381 posts sampled. This distribution of hashtags will be combined later with the users in the network analysis.
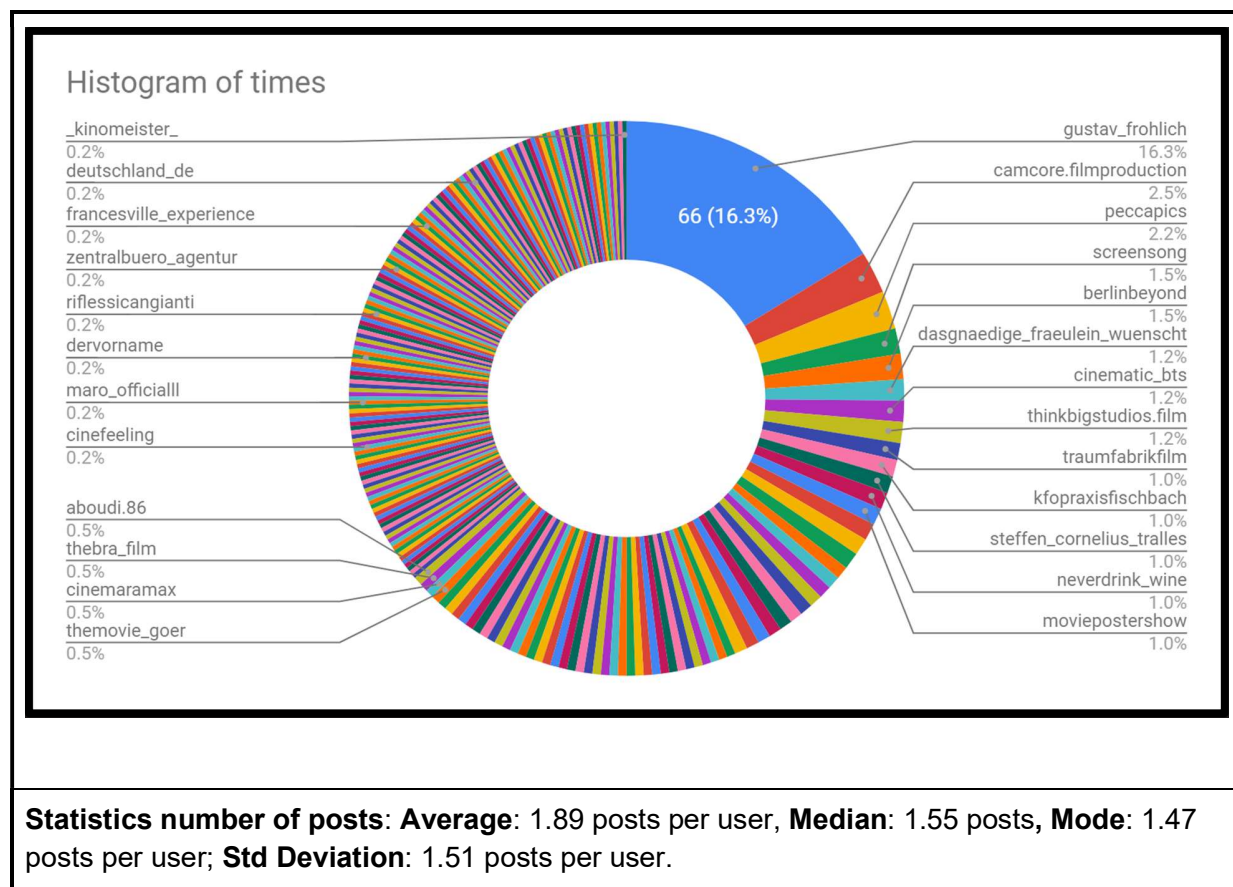
Histogram of times

kinomeister
0.2%
deutschland_de
0.2%
francesville_experience
0.2%
zentralbuero_agentur
0.2%
riflessicangianti
0.2%
dervorname
0.2%
maro_officialll
0.2%
cinefeeling
0.2%

aboudi.86
0.5%
thebra_film
0.5%
cinemaramax
0.5%
themovie_goer
0.5%

66 (16.3%)

gustav_frohlich
16.3%
camcore.filmproduction
2.5%
peccapics
2.2%
screensong
1.5%
berlinbeyond
1.5%
dasgnaedige_fraeulein_wuenscht
1.2%
cinematic_bts
1.2%
thinkbigstudios.film
1.2%
traumfabrikfilm
1.0%
kfopraxisfischbach
1.0%
steffen_cornelius_tralles
1.0%
neverdrink_wine
1.0%
moviepostershow
1.0%

Statistics number of posts: **Average**: 1.89 posts per user, **Median**: 1.55 posts, **Mode**: 1.47 posts per user; **Std Deviation**: 1.51 posts per user.

Figure 3. Pie-chart of Instagram users by number of posts

This algorithmic unbalance is also visible in the chronology of posts. The line shows that Instagram prefers posts of less than 10 days (see Figure 4). However, some posts with a high number of likes were published 6 months earlier. The older posts in the sample are from October 2017 (Figure 5); not particularly relevant for the number of likes (306 likes) or for the number of followers (@cinema.retro, 8375 followers); this is an algorithmic mystery.
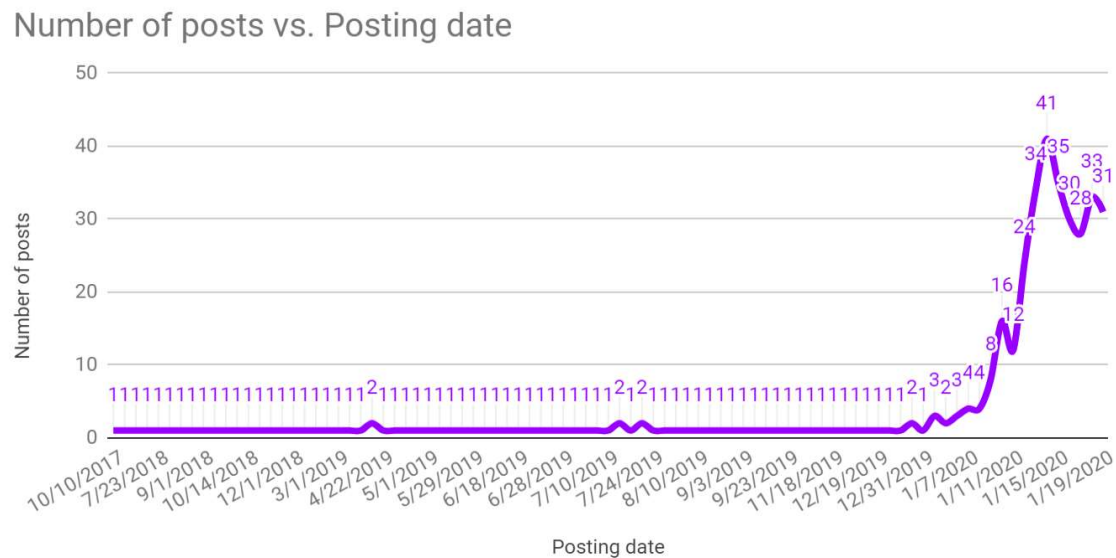
Number of posts vs. Posting date

Figure 4. Chronology of posts from the showcase sample.

These first views (posts, users, hashtags, and their chronology) show that Instagram commercialized approach gives prominence to higher amount of likes and to recent posts; and the first check also shows that these posts with more likes are mostly institutional or professionalized profiles.

Movies and Periods of the German cinema history

The images were analyzed following the Image Type Analysis approach described earlier. The process of grouping and sorting the images through multiple analytical waves, called loops, that helped identify a typology of six posts (available in the showcase sample):

- Movie photograms,
- Poster or promotion of the movie (trailer),
- Image of the cinema (building) or of the projection,
- Personal posts before/ after the movie (or actors).
- Making off, backstage, gatherings of movie staff,
- Visitors to festivals/ museums

(

The first two types of images referred specifically to movies and it was possible to identify them. Therefore, the 214 images of the first two types were further qualitatively analyzed, while the remaining 167 were dismissed. The images were classified by periods of historical German cinema. The categories corresponded to the periods described by Silberman and Silberman (1995), Fehrenbach (1995), Flinn (2004), Allan, Allan and Sandford (1999) the periods were: Weimar Republic (1919-1933), War period (1935-1947), Post War (1950s), East-West (1960s), New German cinema (1970s), Pre/re/unification (late 80s-90s), Post 2000s and Recent cinema (after 2015). The outcome of this qualitative analysis is represented in Figure 7:
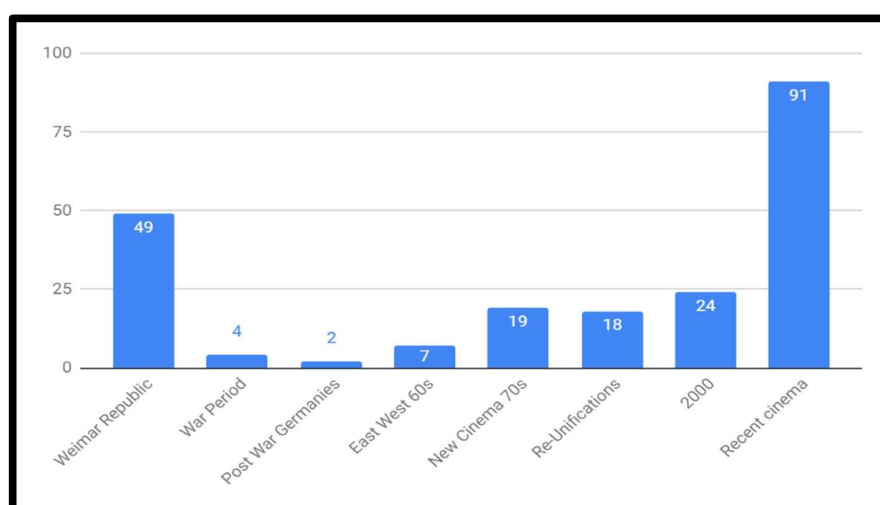

Figure 7. Accumulated images of movies for each period of the German cinema history.

The sample shows preference for recent movies against any other period of the German history. This fits the efforts of the cinematic cultural diplomacy exercised by institutional anchors such as #GoetheInstitut or German Federal Foreign Office (@deutschland_de). Non institutional actors also participate in the promotion: for instance, the 10 posts (out of 381) by @camcore.filmproduction - a Germany based film producer for advertising; and 9 by @peccapics owned by Peccadillo - "one of the UK's most recognized distributors of LGBT & World Cinema titles" (Peccadillo Pictures Ltd, 2020). 66 of those posts were by @gustav_frohlich - the name of the male protagonist of 1927 Fritz Lang Metropolis - which with 130 followers appears to be a non-institutional fan account.

The Weimar Republic is the next relevant period on Instagram. With very specific films: Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) gets 12 mentions (from the 49 of the period) topping the rank of the Weimar Period cinema, *Sonnenstrahl* (1933) interpreted by Gustav Frohlich gets six. After these two movies, *Der Golem* (1915) and *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (1920) are mentioned five times. There is a rich dispersion of movies referred to in this period. These four aside, 15 other movies represent the Weimar Republic period that appears as the Golden Age (Elsaesser, 1996) of German cinema: a great contribution into development of the European and world film industry in terms of technology and artistic interpretation. Fritz Lang was described by Hake

(2008) as the figure representing "Germanness" with his dark and epic urban thrillers and philosophical vision that brought him recognition on the international arena and in the US, where he moved in 1933.

The rest of periods show lower numbers, and the titles are more scattered, appearing only once or twice. For example, only *Stosstrup 1917* (1934), *Der Kampf mit dem Drachen* (1935) or *Tanz auf dem Vulkan* (1938) represent the War period. and *Die Sunderin* (1951) the postwar. The divided Germany appears with six different movies and the seventies includes *Angst essen Seele auf* (1974) (four mentions) or *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (1978) (three mentions) and 10 other movies mentioned less.

Similar trends are observed with the re-unification period. Only Wim Wenders' *Der Himmel über Berlin* (1987) reaches three references, After that, two works by Herzog and Klaus Kinski *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) and *Cobra Verde* (1987) receive two mentions, as many as Fassbinder's miniseries *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1980). Other 7 titles were mentioned once. Closer to the millennium, *Der gefallene Engel* (1997) and *Lola rennt* (1998) are mentioned once.

The sharp decline of the German film industry since 1933 coincided with the exile of talented directors and other industry workers; the regime used cinema as a propaganda instrument pushing the decline further to an after-war period of Rubble films not much successful in terms of box-office or international recognition (Zimmermann, 2008) neither of movies or directors. Instagrammers inside and outside Germany seem to follow these thoughts when representing the cinema, too. The political and social history of Germany is closely tied with the perception of German cinema as a clog in the ideological machine, favouring "authoritarian, nationalistic or racist values" (Elsaesser, 1996, p. 11). And yet, those growing up in the 50s and 60s and through the whole period of East-West Germany, people systematically dissociated themselves from the idea of the German nation (Gemünden, 1999): "1989 has come to signal yet another "Stunde Null" (zero hour), a kind of magical date that allows or calls for a taking stock of German history at the threshold of a new beginning." (p. 120). The nation-branding in case of Germany is aimed to move from egocentrism and to overcome the legacy of the past (Jordan, 2014).

Already in the 21st Century, *Good Bye, Lenin!* (2003), and *Das Leben der Anderen* (2006) are the top-ranked mentioned movies. The American and German production *Unknown Identity* (2011) is mentioned 4 times; and after that *Sophie Scholl - Die letzten Tage* (2005), receives 3 mentions, followed by 6 movies that are mentioned only once or twice.

These millenium movies rejected the past artistic film history and marked a new era of German cinema that turned towards mass culture production (Kapczynski, 2007). For Kapczynski, *Good Bye, Lenin!*, and *Sophie Scholl* are "heritage films", capturing the divided Germany and looking at the past through the lens of nostalgia, or ostalgia, when talking about GDR.

The spread of recent movies is bigger: The *Cakemaker* (2017), *Traumfabrik* (2019), *Kartoffelsalat 3 - Das Musical* (2020) receive 4 mentions; *Der goldene Handschuh* (2019)

received 3 mentions; whereas two mentions for *Vier zauberhafte Schwestern* (2020), *Victoria* (2015), *Toni Erdmann* (2016), *The Bra* (2018), the short *Sven und Sabrina* (2020) *Prélude* (2019), *Jonathan* (2018), *Gipsy Queen* (2019), *Der Hauptmann* (2017), *Das schweigende Klassenzimm* (2018), *Das Perfekte Geheimnis* (2019), or *Aus dem Nichts* (2017). And other 32 movies were mentioned once.
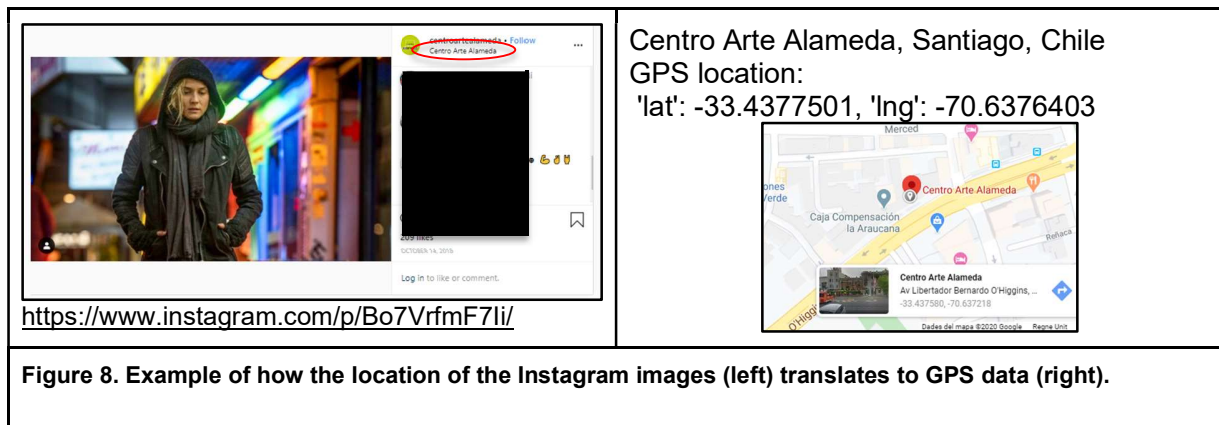
The spread of recent movies points in two directions: one, the good health of German audiovisual production; and the Instagram value as a promotional platform. The former shows the richness of recent titles available, productions and co-productions aiming at global audiences. The latter shows Instagram as a promotional platform: many posts linked as trailers, posters, or events; or posted by producers or cinemas. The combination of these two factors - Instagram promotion, and healthy industry- forms a space of recognition and reproduction of recent titles, beyond the German public, outreaching and promoting productions across the world. User's activity on Instagram spreads knowledge, awareness, and links the public with a variety of German productions.

The iteration and prevalence of historical commonplaces such as the Golden Age of the Weimar Republic points right in the direction of the interest of German cultural campaigns; however, it is uncertain to state if this is the happy coincidence of the 100 anniversary with the 1920s historical period; or if it is a sampling bias related to the over-representation of @gustav_frohlich in the sample. Still, with care, the scarce references to historic German movies between the post war period and the 2000s shows a selective shared memory of German cinema that made it across the globe. The tandem Herzog - Kinski receives little attention as do works by Wim Menders or by R.W. Fassbinder; or more recently Fatih Akin is barely visible in this list.
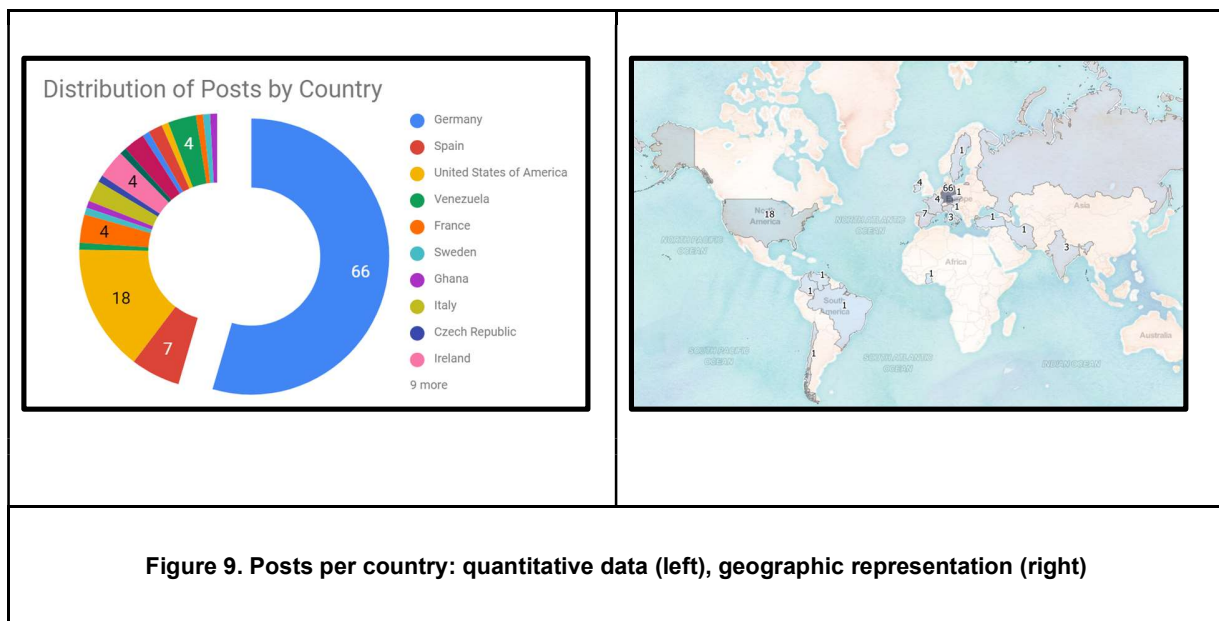
Indeed, in spite or beyond the algorithmic bias, the analysis of the spread of titles points at the absence of historically important titles bringing the discussion towards the features of collective forgetting (Billig, 1995, Anderson, 2006): "A consistent pattern of omission or avoidance of a particular history or particular histories - of the existence of whole groups of people and their pasts - by journalists, politicians, and the general public,[suggests] that there is some meaning and motivation behind this collective 'forgetting.'" (Smith, 1994, p. 394) The absence of films from the Nazi regime or the war period plays in favor of an understanding of Germany as a country, as a continuous historical entity. This point invites further research on the topic: collective forgetting is not simply an act of a governmental or individual decision, but rather "negotiated in the interplay between social and individual organization of memory" (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 32). Research should explore the extent of the discrepancy or continuity between institutional efforts to shape shared memories or particular images of the country, and the spontaneous expression of users on the social media platforms.

Geography and networks: a communicative space

The Instagram posts were not published all from the same place. The location of the Instagram images was translated into GPS coordinates with a python script (see Figure 8). It was then possible to identify with some precision the country of origin of a good number of images: 121 of the 381 showcased. Some of the addresses were very specific; and some were more general such as "Germany" or "Chile"; but the possibility of translating them to geolocative data, enabled a new layer of analysis.

Centro Arte Alameda, Santiago, Chile
GPS location:
 'lat': -33.4377501, 'lng': -70.6376403

https://www.instagram.com/p/Bo7VrfmF7Ii/

Figure 8. Example of how the location of the Instagram images (left) translates to GPS data (right).

The distribution of pictures by country pointed that half of the posts came from Germany; and while the majority of the rest of the pictures were located in Europe (4 France, 7 Spain, 4 Ireland, 3 Italy, 1 Sweden, 1 Czech Republic, 1 Austria) 18 pictures were located in the United States (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Posts per country: quantitative data (left), geographic representation (right)

This geographic distribution expands the possibilities of analysis. Figure 10 (left) shows the number of Instagram posts based in Germany referring to movie periods. Figure 10 (right) shows the geography of posts referring to recent movies (size and labels by number of likes). Such visualization allows also to see the higher concentration of posts from the European continent, particularly Germany. The secondary focus of attention to contemporary German cinema could be identified: obviously Hollywood, New York, and several countries in Latin America, particularly Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia with the last three posts from cultural institutions such as the Colombian-German house (see Figure 10).
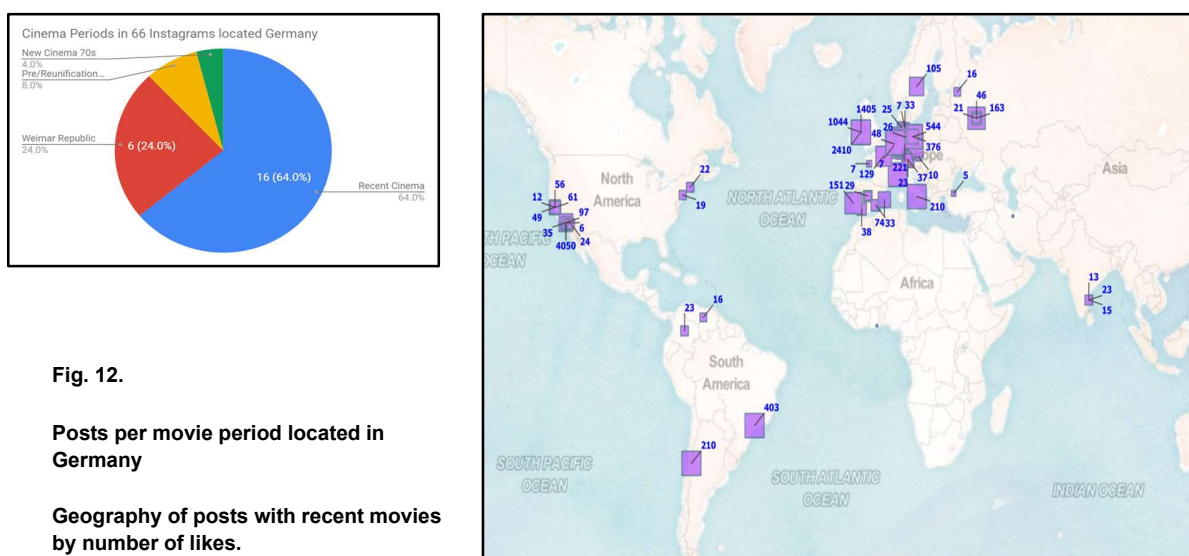

Fig. 12.

Posts per movie period located in Germany

Geography of posts with recent movies by number of likes.

Python geolocating a percentage of Instagram posts (31% as opposed to Twitter geolocation rate of 0.1%), allows to build maps and opens analytical opportunities such as proximity, centrality and periphery, and all sorts of quantitative and qualitative operations. Such as the counts of posts within Germany, or the distribution of posts about German cinema, by country (see Figure 9).

Locating posts geographically expands the analysis of representations of German cinema and nuances the dispersion of their meaning by geography of social interactions. To demonstrate such an interactive space constructed through the Instagram activity, it suffices to trace the links between users and hashtags from the body of posts.

The graphic visualization is the network diagram - system of elements -nodes- connected to each other in particular ways -edges. The analysis of the connections between nodes shows the network structure and its capacity. The Instagram activity around German cinema shows recurrence of hashtags among users, graphically represented identifying the principal clusters of probability of interaction. The model available in Gephi, showed the modularity analysis of the

network (according to Newman and Girvan, 2004) identifying the community structure as described by Du et al. (2007). The clusters of the network show the structure of interactions providing the idea of a public (Highfield and Leaver, 2015), or of a repertoire of meaning.

The interactions and recurrences between 900 unique hashtags making 4807 hashtags across the sample of 381 posts, and 216 unique users identified earlier, leads to the formation of 1116 nodes (900 unique hashtags + 216 unique users), contacted 4807 times (see Figure 11).
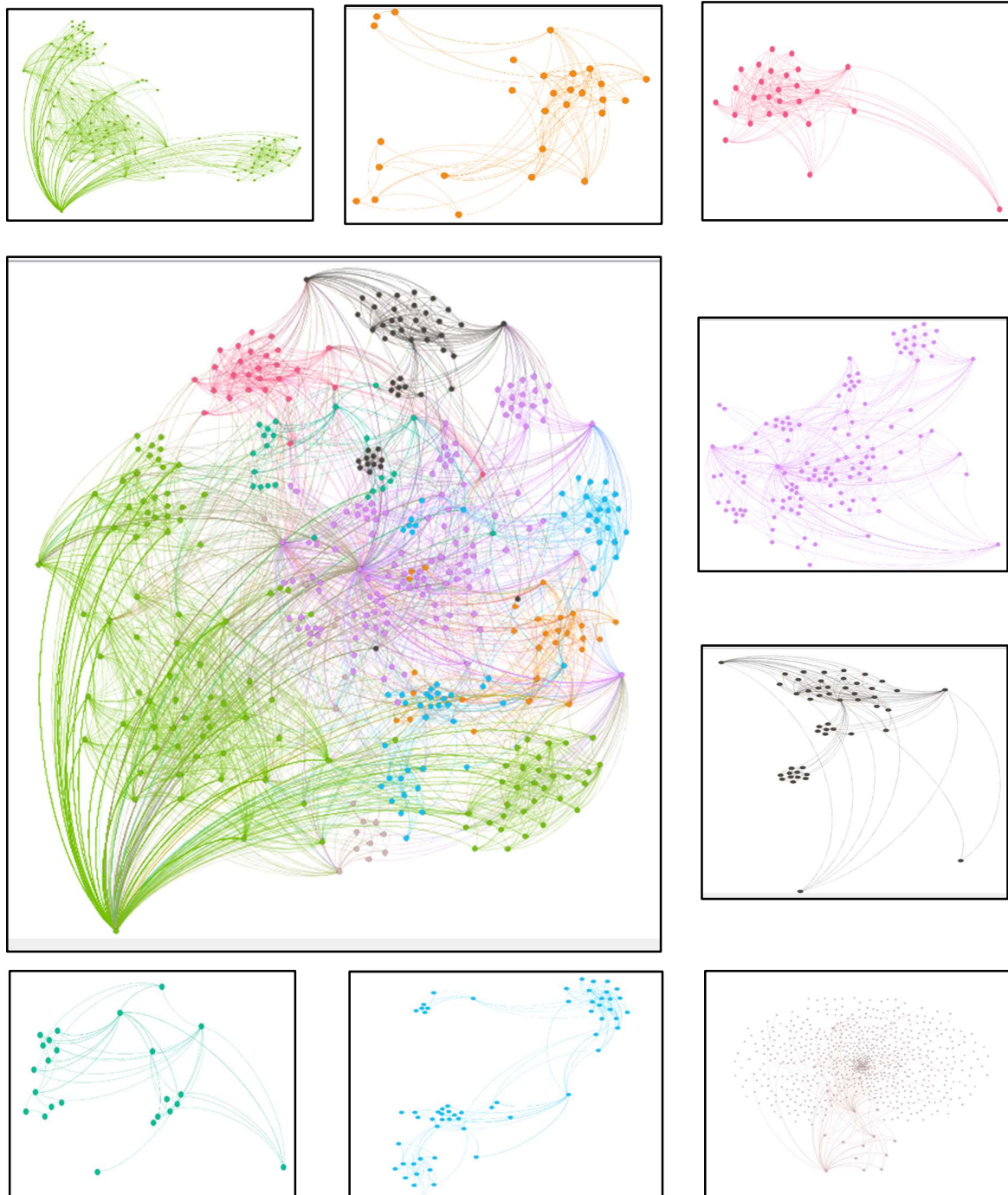
Figure 11 (a-i). Modularity in the network of hashtags and users. 8 Communities and one full network. (first line starting at left, a, b, c modules; central row are full network, e (top) and f (bottom); and third row, modules g, h, i from left to right).

Figure 11 is the network of all the interactions. For visualization purposes, the network represents all links above degree 5 - all the connections happening more than 5 times. The modularity of the network was then calculated to identify 8 modules -or communities-, represented separately (a to i) in the group of images above.

Each community is mostly an articulation of usernames and a cloud of hashtags used by them. Proper detail, for instance, shows the tendency of formation of hubs around relevant users - those more active- in the sample. For instance, the top right node of the module c (see Figure 11.c) corresponds to @cinematic_bts connected to a cloud of hashtags including: #cinemaemergente, #johanneskrell, #deutsch_alsfremdsprache, or #curtasalemaes among others; in that same community, @peccapics links to #danielbruhl, #dasboot, or #thriller. And the very active green node at the bottom left of the first cluster (module a) is @gustav_frohlich, connected to #cinemaalemao, #filmalema, #cineclube, #dasboot, #obarco.

The analysis of the network expands the territory of possibilities and of visual representation; and helps understanding that a few hashtags bring a world-wide dispersion of users together; and expand an online conversation around the topic -German cinema-. The analysis also shows that few users are responsible for a good amount of the hashtags collected (opposite to Twitter, hashtag cramming on Instagram increases visibility). The calculus of communities -through modularity within the network- offers various possibilities that can be graphically represented in multiple ways, increasing the heuristic power of both, network analysis and data-visualization.

Identifying an articulated network of the interactions among the users and their references (hashtags), and the territory within which these postings occur, brings this first analysis of the Instagram posts well inside the field of research on governance of the communicative spaces (Rodriguez-Amat and Brantner, 2016).

Conclusions

This chapter addressed the Instagram discussion on German cinema to explore the community and the communicative space developed in that conversation. The contribution here can be perceived along three fields: first, the current research on Instagram as a combination and mix of digital methods; second, to research on cultural diplomacy cultural policies; and finally aligns these contributions to progress in the double discussion about the public sphere: the community of interaction, and the communicative space.

The method showcased here has explored 381 posts under 13 hashtags and the network of users, images and posting times. The images have then been analysed to identify to which historical period they refer, to further identify the movies. The third layer of analysis consisted of the network of relations between users and hashtags to identify the communities of meaning, and the geography of the posts to explore the communicative space formed by this conversation.

The findings show a triple contribution. First, the relevance and opportunity of a tool to research Instagram incorporating Image Type Analysis and metadata, and combining quantitative, qualitative, network and geographic analysis to contribute to research on social media and communicative spaces and the public sphere. The findings have shown that the amount of geolocative data is high; and that there is a dense network of activity. Geographic and network analysis showed that interactions are modularly structured forming communities. Tracing interactions shows sets of shared meanings and geographies of activity that can be visualized in maps. The mix of methods is an innovative contribution; and beyond its limitations, this case is a good starting point for further developments and for a systematized model of research.

Second, the findings show that Instagram activity not only assumes and reproduces the institutionally promoted views of the German cinema -the prominence of the institutional profiles shows so; but also that the Instasphere could complement that institutionally promoted German culture by responding to the brain-drain of creative agency in the currently institutionally promoted German cinema. Beyond these initial findings, this chapter has shown the possibilities of research on social media activity around German cinema as a form of enhancing participation and engagement of the public as a response to culturally planned actions. In this case, German cinema as part of a broader strategy of cultural cinematic diplomacy and the result of the German effort to curate German culture around the world. The analysis showed that Instagram is actively used as a promotional platform by various institutions, such as German Federal Foreign Office and independent actors representing the creative industry - production companies, film festivals, actors, and viewers. Instagram, therefore, can be used as an assessment tool for the impact of cultural policies promoting cities, regions, or countries. The activity produced by these stakeholders shows the diversity of representations, as respect country branding and cultural memory. The absence of certain historical periods and overwhelming number of posts associated with the Weimar Republic and contemporary movies indicates the narrative of collective amnesia might be exercised as a part of cultural diplomacy.

And third, combining the previous two, social media interactivity around a topic is not linear, rather forms a networked system of activity that spreads across geographies. Instagram does not only connect the people who are acquainted with each other but also expands the networks to those sharing similar interests and mediate the community-building around certain brands, celebrities, books, or movies in the online realm. Interactions on Instagram are not structured necessarily around conversational turn-taking processes; but they build a space of contact and disagreement, a space of interactive dispersion: this is an interface with fundamental features of a communicative space. The case of German cinema can be thus approached as a communicative space: the Instasphere as a contingent public sphere.

NOTE: The data and scripts will be made available online and accessible. The authors hope that this data will generate further opportunities for more detailed analysis and tests.

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