"The First Lady: From the kitchen to the podium

How the gender equality revolution and the media forged a new political actor in democratic systems"

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Dedicat a en Marc,

el meu suport més lleial

ABSTRACT

The first ladyship is nowadays one of the most mediatized, yet scientifically neglected unofficial institutions to be found in contemporary states. It is a figure which raises a number of questions regarding the nature of modern relations between politics and the media, politics and the citizens or the evolution of the public imaginary about womanhood, family and marriage within contemporary societies.

The presented PhD thesis contains results of an investigation analyzing the role of the modern first lady and its evolution in Poland, France and Spain. It examines how major social and political processes, such as women's empowerment and the development of mass media, influenced the figure of the first lady. The study, presented as a thesis by compilation of articles, is composed of four papers, published previously in scientific journals, addressing different issues about the first ladyship.

The evidence suggests that the rise of the first lady in the studied countries would not have been possible without a greater visibility of women on the public stage, or without the media spotlight put on this legally unwritten office. Nevertheless, there lays a risk that a gendered outlook on the first ladyship may jeopardize future attempts to empower it.

Key words: First ladyship, political communication, public image, media-politics relations, media influence, political celebrity, women's empowerment, gendered frame, gender stereotypes.

RESUM

La institució de la primera dama es avui una de les més mediatitzades de l'estat contemporani i, no obstant, menys investigades per la comunitat científica. Planteja qüestions sobre la naturalesa de les relacions modernes entre política i mitjans de comunicació o entre política i ciutadans, així com l'evolució de l'imaginari col·lectiu sobre la feminitat, la família i el matrimoni a les societats contemporànies.

Aquesta tesi doctoral conté els resultats d'una investigació que analitza el paper de la primera dama moderna i la seva evolució a Polònia, França i Espanya. S'examina així la manera en què grans processos polítics i socials com l'empoderament de la dona i el desenvolupament dels mitjans de comunicació de masses han influenciat la figura de la primera dama. L'estudi, presentat en forma de tesi per compendi d'articles, el composen quatre articles, prèviament publicats a revistes científiques, que examinen una sèrie de matèries determinades sobre la institució de la primera dama.

Els resultats suggereixen que l'actual importància de la primera dama als països estudiats no hauria estat una realitat sense una major visibilitat de la dona a la vida pública i l'atenció mediàtica que ha rebut aquest càrrec jurídicament inarticulat. Amb tot, existeix el risc que una visió estereotipada de gènere sobre la primera dama comprometi el seu empoderament en el futur.

Paraules clau: primera dama, comunicació política, imatge pública, relacions entre política y mitjans, celebritat política, empoderament de la dona, marc de gènere, estereotips de gènere

RESUMEN

La institución de la primera dama es hoy una de las más mediatizadas del estado contemporáneo y, sin embargo, menos investigadas por la comunidad científica. Plantea cuestiones sobre la naturaleza de las relaciones modernas entre política y medios de comunicación o entre política y ciudadanos, así como la evolución del imaginario colectivo sobre la feminidad, la familia y el matrimonio en las sociedades contemporáneas.

La presente tesis doctoral contiene los resultados de una investigación que analiza el papel de la primera dama moderna y su evolución en Polonia, Francia y España. El trabajo examina el modo en que grandes procesos políticos y sociales como el empoderamiento de la mujer y el desarrollo de los medios de comunicación de masas han influenciado la figura de la primera dama. El estudio, presentado en forma de tesis doctoral por compendio de artículos, está compuesto por cuatro artículos, previamente publicados en revistas científicas y que examinan una serie de materias determinadas sobre la institución de la primera dama.

Los resultados sugieren que la actual importancia de la primera dama en los países estudiados no habría sido posible sin una mayor visibilidad de la mujer en la vida pública ni sin la atención mediática recibida por este cargo jurídicamente inarticulado. No obstante, existe el riesgo de que una visión estereotipada de género sobre la primera dama comprometa su empoderamiento en el futuro.

Palabras clave: primera dama, comunicación política, imagen pública, relaciones entre política y medios, celebridad política, empoderamiento de la mujer, marco generizado, estereotipos de género

RESUME

L'institution de la première dame est aujourd'hui l'une des plus médiatisées et en même temps, scientifiquement négligées dans les Etas modernes. Elle soulève des questions concernant la nature des relations actuelles entre la politique et les médias, la politique et les citoyens ou encore l'évolution de l'imaginaire collectif sur la perception de la féminité, la famille et le mariage au sein des sociétés contemporaines.

Ce travail doctoral contient les résultats d'une recherche analysant le rôle actuel de la première dame et son évolution en Pologne, France et Espagne. Il examine comment des changements sociaux et politiques majeures, tels que l'autonomisation de la femme et le développement des médias de masse, ont influencé le personnage de la première dame. L'étude, présentée en tant que thèse en forme de compilation d'articles, est composée de quatre articles scientifiques, publiés auparavant dans de revues scientifiques et répondant à de différentes questions sur l'institution de la première dame.

Les résultats suggèrent que la montée de la première dame dans les pays concernés n'aurait pas été possible sans une plus grande visibilité donnée aux femmes sur la scène publique ou sans les médias qui ont mis en lumière cette institution non-régulée au niveau juridique. Cependant, il existe toujours un risque que la perception genrée sur l'institution puisse compromettre les prochaines tentatives de son renforcement.

Mots clés: première dame, communication politique, image publique, relations entre les médias et la politique, influence des médias, célébrité politique, autonomisation des femmes, cadrage genré, stéréotypes du genre.

STRESZCZENIE

Instytucja pierwszej damy jest dzisiaj jedną z najbardziej medialnych i jednocześnie naukowo zaniedbanych instytucji nowoczesnych państw. Porusza ona wiele kwestii dotyczących natury relacji między polityką i mediami, polityką i obywatelami oraz ewolucji współczesnych społecznych wyobrażeń na temat kobiecości, rodziny i ślubu.

Niniejsza praca doktorancka zawiera wyniki badań na temat roli współczesnej pierwszej damy oraz jej ewolucji w Polsce, Francji i Hiszpanii. Bada ona jak ważne procesy społeczne i polityczne, takie jak wzmocnienie równouprawnienia kobiet i rózwój mediów masowych, wpłynęły na instytucję pierwszej damy. Praca, skonstruowana jako praca doktorska w formie artykułów naukowych, zawiera cztery artykuły, opublikowane w gazetach naukowych i zawierające elementy odpowiedzi na różne pytania dotyczące zagadnienia pierwszej damy.

Wyniki sugerują, że wzmocnienie roli pierwszej damy w wymienionych państwach nie byłoby możliwe bez wzmocnienia przez kobiety swojej obecnośni na scenie publicznej lub bez mediów, które rzuciły światło na tą prawnie nieuregulowaną funkcję. Istnieje niemniej ryzyko, że pełne stereotypów spojrzenie na rolę pierwszej damy może zaszkodzić dalszym próbom zwmocnienia instytucji.

Słowa kluczowe: pierwsza dama, komunikacja polityczna, wizerunek publiczny, stosunki między polityką i mediami, wpływy medialne, celebryta polityczny, równouprawnienie kobiet, stereotypowy przekaz medialny, stereotypy płciowe.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Summary

Tables and figures

Pictures

0)INTRODUCTION

„Just as every American boy may hope to become President,
so every American girl may hope to become a President's wife."

„The Lady of the White House",
New York Times Magazine, 10/03/1929

If as late as 1929, being a woman meant having a secondary –if any role in society, and the first ladyship was seen as the culmination of the female cursus honorum, in twenty-first century democracies, the situation is radically different. Or is it?

Democratic societies have greatly evolved in the last century, deeply shaking the foundations of the traditional gender balance of power. As the New York Times portrayed in 1929, the first ladyship has consistently had the enigmatically attractive power to simultaneously mirror its society and evolve with it. Yet in relatively recent times, this evolution has started to work both ways, for the changing role of women has shaped the institution of the first ladyship but the action of certain First Ladies has played an important part in triggering social changes.

My personal interest regarding the first ladyship was born at a class of political communication during my master program in communication at Sciences Po in Paris. We were analyzing images of Nicolas Sarkozy and his strategy of over-communicating. On several pictures we could see his wife, Cécilia Sarkozy, faithfully participating in her husband *mise en scène* of power. I asked myself then why public opinion and media are interested in presidential partners and how politicians used them to gain power and votes. Interested by the theme I started to look for some information and I realized that first ladies are not simple assistants to their spouses but genuine public stakeholders. Many other questions popped then

up in my mind, but they remained without an answer. The subject of the first ladyship also fascinated me because it demonstrated how fluid the borders between the private and the public are and how in politics, especially in the modern era of overwhelming information and merciless buzz-hunting, they practically disappear. While looking for information, I noticed an important lack of profound analysis about the subject of the first ladyship, except for the United States and especially a lack of any international comparison. My personal curiosity and the conviction that this subject merits an in-depth and systematic analysis motivated me to present my research project at the Department of Communication of Pompeu Fabra University. Entitled "The First Lady: From the kitchen to the podium. How the gender equality revolution and the media forged a new political actor in democratic systems", the project since its beginning has aimed to demonstrate that despite existing differences between the first ladyship among countries there exist similarities that would allow a comparison and codification of the function and ultimately would result in proposition of some universal guidelines.

It is also important to underline that this investigation focuses on the first ladyship and not on the role of the political companion. Subsequently first gentlemen were excluded from the sample. The decision was based on two arguments. Firstly, the number of first gentlemen is significantly limited. In 2016, only 15 women were heads of state, representing 8,4% of the total number of the heads of state in the world. Among them three are divorced, one is a widow and two are single, additionally decreasing the number of first gentlemen[1]. Moreover, male companions are still very reluctant to be publicly involved in public activities therefore the first gentle manhood is almost inexistent on the public stage. Although there is no study tackling the question, the little public involvement of first gentlemen may be

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[1] The list of women who were heads of state in February, 2016 was retrieved from the web page https://firstladies.international/2016/02/22/2016-women-and-political-leadership-female-heads-of-state-and-heads-of-government/

explained by the recent appearance of the function and by the persistence of gendered norms following which the man has the dominant position within the couple. Secondly, study of gender stereotypes represents an important part of this work. For the clarity of the investigation it was decided to concentrate solely on gender stereotypes applied to women and on women's situation within the society. Also, the research does not take into account the case of homosexual couples in the highest political office, as such a situation has (yet) not happened.

The presented research work is composed of seven chapters, including the present introduction and reference (part 7). The first part presents results of the background investigation regarding the concept of the first lady itself. Given the extension of the concept, the aim of this chapter was to collect information ad offer a global view of the first ladyship. This part proposes a universal definition of the first lady and an introduction to international history of the first ladyship.

The second part of this work concerns the theoretical background declined into four main lines: The, image, social condition and role of women; political empowerment of women; history of modern journalism and modern political communication. Those four fields are of crucial importance for the first ladyship studies and the presented background was written keeping in mind the main subject of this investigation. The third part entitled "Research scope" presents objectives of this investigation, details research questions and the method's construction. It is followed by the forth part, presenting results in the form of four articles published in scientific journals. The presentation of results is divided into two parts: case presentation, focused on the Spanish model of first ladyship and the comparative analysis that presents all the studied cases and is contextualized by the research on the American model. Although all the papers presented in that part are interdisciplinary, the part "Case studies" is composed of three subsections, each of

them analyzing a different issue of the first ladyship studies. The section "Results" is closed by the information about additional academic works, such as participation in scientific conferences and a visiting fellowship in the subsection entitled "Extracurriculum".

The fifth chapter aims to present additional research that was not published in any scientific journal. The chapter is composed of two parts, the first one analyzing the status of the first lady in the law, on the public stage and within the society and the second one examining positive and negative factors that have an impact on the first lady's empowerment.

The fifth chapter of this work represents general conclusions of the research. It is composed of four parts. The first part offers a global look on the development of the first ladyship. It is followed by the study of the first ladyship as an unofficial political institution. It argues next that the first ladyship did not only develop thanks to the greater gender equality but also mirrors the situation of women on the public stage. The last part

Finally, the chapter "Reference", containing the bibliography of the source quoted in the presented document, closes this work.

1) FIRST LADY – DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT

a) DEFINITION OF THE TERM

Despite an apparent simplicity of the concept of the first ladyship, one of the first and the most important challenges of this research was to present a coherent definition that could be universally applied to different political and cultural systems and to different countries. Indeed, although the term of the first lady has been largely used and has spread around the world, its definition is local and varies through geographical zones, political systems and cultures. Existing studies on the first ladyship have not yet addressed the question from the international specter; there is therefore no universal definition.

Facing thus this basic lack of a clear determination of the main concept and taking into consideration significant variations depending on political, social and historical contexts, the primary aim of this investigation was to propose a definition.

"The first lady is a term describing the wife, life partner or other close female relative (such as daughter, sister or niece) of the Head of State, who becomes a public figure as a result of her private status and closeness to the Head of State, of national traditions and/or foreign influence of public exposing of political spouses. She is involved on the public stage and acts in a less or more extended and institutionalized framework."

i) DESIGNATION OF THE FIRST LADY

(1) LINK TO NATIONAL POWER

The first issue that appears when defining an international concept of the first lady is to clearly point out *who* she is. Indeed, if it is easy to identify the first lady in countries with the presidential or semi-presidential systems, like in the United States or France, the situation is more ambiguous in countries with other political systems, such as constitutional monarchy or parliamentary republic.

a. FIRST LADIES IN REPUBLICS

Following the American model of the first ladyship, the first lady is the wife, female partner or other female relative[2] of the president of the United States, who thanks to large power given to him by the American Constitution is also the chief executive (Milkis, 1994). He connects thus the functions of the Head of State and Chief of the Government, separated in the majority of countries, detaining at the same time the symbolic power of representing and embodying the Country and the supreme political power in the State.

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[2] For sake of stylistic simplification, "presidential wife" or "political wife" is often used in this thesis as a synonym of the first lady, because the overwhelming majority of first ladies are married to heads of state. In any way, the use of those expressions should be seen as an exclusion of life partners or other female relatives or as a personal stand of the author.

This duality of the American president's function results blurring regarding the perception of the first ladyship abroad as it does not specify whether the first lady supports the president in his function of the head of state or that of the chief executive. The confusion may be even greater in countries where the head of state does not cumulate many prerogatives and has solely a representative role, being overshadowed by a strong head of executive (mainly a prime minister), like it is a case of parliamentary republics. Public opinion is then often divided whether the first lady is the spouse of the head of state, symbolically representing the country or of the head of executive, detaining real political power. Additionally, a politically weak chief of state builds his popular legitimacy not on his political prerogatives but on his abilities to maintain media interest, like it is a case of Italy (Palladino, 2015). In this particular situation, the ability of a head of state to attract popular attention and trust strongly influences on the first lady's visibility and shape of her tenure. In other words, the first lady's role is strongly precarious in those countries and can significantly vary from one tenure to another, based on individual factors.

In order to address this ambiguity of the first ladyship in political systems other than presidential and semi-presidential, it was decided to analyze closely the role of the first lady in the United States and its link to presidential duties. It was thus concluded that the *essence* of the first lady's actions is directly connected with the representative function detained by the head of state. In consequence, it was determined that the role of the first lady corresponds to the function of the spouse of the chief of state and not that of the spouse of the chief of executive.

b. First ladies in constitutional monarchies

The question of the first ladyship also concerns modern parliamentary monarchies, especially present in Europe. At the first sight the role of the first lady can seem different from the role of the queen consort, mainly because of the association with ancient monarchies, in contradistinction with the democratic system and because of the non-elective character of the monarchic rule, also inconsistent with the democratic rule of the will of the majority expressed through the ballot.

Several similarities however allow concluding that in modern monarchies queen fulfill the role of the first lady. A monarchy understood in its more direct lecture is a state that is governed by one ruler. A constitutional monarchy is however a state where the ruler has to act according to the constitution (Bogdanor, 1997). The royal power is legislated and is not of divine source, but symbolic and supposed to represent the will of the People (Balmer, Greyser & Urde, 2006). The sovereign, like a head of state in a republican country, must thus fulfill with representation duties relating to the State but also to its habitants. Moreover, the shift of power from the Crown toward citizens represented by the Parliament modified the relation between the governor and the governed. In modern monarchies popular approval is also necessary and its lack can lead to a severe institutional crisis (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015). In consequence, monarchs, similarly to other politicians, are in constant effort to gain and maintain a positive image in the public eye. Simultaneously, queens consorts in sake of the stability of their political institution have followed their husband in their quests for public legitimation of their power. They moved therefore away from the traditional role of queens in the Ancient Regime and adopted the attitude of republican first ladies. This mix of monarchic traditions and modern democratic values are strongly embodied by the Spanish Royal Household. During the Democratic Transition, King Juan Carlos II played a

role of the defender of democracy and skillfully legitimized and empowered the Royal institution in the new political order (Blain and O'Donnell, 2003; Preston, 2004; Powell, 1995).

(2)   FAMILY CONNECTIONS

The legitimacy of the public acting for a first lady is based upon her private status and personal links to the head of state. It shows then that the role of the first lady is inextricably connected to public imaginary about the private sphere, as the first lady, through her closeness to the highest representative of national power, embodies its non-political character. When the head of state represents the State and its formal institutions, the first lady embodies the Nation and its cultural values (Mayo & Meringolo, 1995). Because the family and marriage are one of the strongest cultural values across the world, this role is traditionally occupied by wives of heads of state.

In some cases yet it is not the wife, but other close female relative, such as sister, daughter or niece, who holds the office. It is a common situation for unmarried heads of state who are bachelor or widowers. One of the most popular first ladies not married to the head of state was undoubtedly Harriet Lane, the niece of American President James Buchanan. Lane served as the First Lady to her bachelor uncle between 1857 and 1861 and not only did she realize great national project, as creation of the first pediatric hospital in the country of defense of indigene people, her influence on the public opinion was so great that songs were written about her, many newly-born from this period were named Harriet and women massively copied her fashion style (Stern, 2005).

The fact that an unmarried head of state seeks another woman to occupy the role illustrates the importance of the feminine figure in his communication. Some unmarried heads of states or presidential candidates could experience pressure on behalf of public opinion and media. For instance, in Poland in 2010 one of the candidates, Jarosław Kaczyński faced multiple accusations of being unprepared for the role of the president because of his bachelor status. His accusers argued that a man who never took charge of his family will not be able to govern a country. He even was a victim of a mocking campaign entitled: "We don't want a cat for the first lady" (Kaczyński lived then alone with his mother and a cat). In consequence, Kaczyński was obliged to engage to his campaign a female colleague and to indirectly present her as a potential first lady of Poland.

Nonetheless, even married heads of state can chose a first lady other than their spouses. These situations are yet rare and are results of complicated and controversial contexts. For instance, in Paraguay in 2013 a conflict opposed the daughter of President Horacio Cartes Jara and his wife. The president lived separated from his wife for several years, yet he did not obtain a legal divorce. In the beginning of his tenure he decided to officially design his daughter as first lady of Paraguay. His wife however refused to accept the situation and claimed that because of being officially married to the president she was the only legitimate first lady and insisted on being grated with the function. Finally, after months of public quarrels the President decided to cancel the office of the first lady of Paraguay.

Ultimately the emergence of life partners in the office of the first lady is a relatively new phenomenon that reflects recent cultural and social modifications that impacted family structures. In various countries the percentage of married couples living together is decreasing, while that of an unmarried cohabitation is increasing. Logically, this situation is mirrored by an increase (yet very slow) of the number of heads of state who decided not to legalize their relationships. In France for instance, Valérie Trierweiler served as the first lady between 2012 and 2014,

without being officially married to president Hollande. It is important however to notice that the unregulated status of the presidential couple led to media and political questioning of Trierweiler's legitimacy to fulfill the role of the first lady of France and caused some diplomatic clashes during states visits (Widlak, 2015). Before Hollande and Trierweiler rise to power as the presidential couple, the couple Sarkozy-Bruni also experienced public criticism regarding the unofficial status of their relationship. Subsequently, Sarkozy and Bruni got married legitimizing in this manner Bruni's status of the first lady of France (Achin & Dorlin, 2008).

Despite the anecdotal character of the issue of the first lady's designation, in reality two important conclusions appear. Firstly, unlike the democratic rule of political mandates legitimated by the popular vote, the first lady does not participate in balloting process, but is "nominated" by the chief of state. This method is clearly connected to ancient regimes and to the role of queen and appears to be in contradiction with basic democratic rules. In consequence, the function of the first lady has always been an easy target of political attacks and questioning of the funding of its existence in democratic societies (Widlak, 2015). Secondly, the fact that even unmarried heads of state would look for a first lady shows the importance of social representations in politics and the impact of social identities on political representatives. It can be concluded that a head of state is not only a political but also a cultural and social spokesman for his country and that the first lady helps him in staging this power.

b) INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL HISTORY OF THE FIRST LADYSHIP

A historical analysis of the first ladyship allows detecting different stages such as creation of the function in the United States in the 18th century and its development during the 19th and especially the beginning of the 20th century, its spreading in the world since the first half of the 20th century and its homogenization and globalization since the last decades of the last century.

The function appeared in the 18th century United States. When George Washington took the reign of the country, his wife, Martha, took the reign of the White House, becoming thus the first hostess to the Nation (Brady, 2006; Bryan, 2002). It appeared that despite their will to exist in a new, more egalitarian society, nostalgia of the Old Continent and its royalties persisted within the American society. They created thus their own queens, able to function in the new political realm and to represent the republican order (Le Bras-Chopard, 2009). Although Martha Washington limited her public role to the role of hostess, she quickly became an interesting subject for the media and a potential target of political attacks for her husband's opponents (Beasley, 2005). Indeed, thanks to her social status of the woman living with the most powerful man of the country, almost immediately she started to be framed through gendered norms that regulated the societal view on American womanhood (Burns, 2008).

Without having any official political responsibilities, Martha Washington did exert influence on her husband and on politics (Burns, 2008; Brady, 2006). Her role of the organizer of diners and other social meetings in the White House gave her a very powerful advantage of deciding who would be invited and would not be. She became thus the first gatekeeper in the American politics (Mayo, 2000). Although the word "lady" was used already to designate Martha Washington, virulent attacks

of promoting a term connected with the British aristocracy obliged the Administration to abandon it (Beasley, 2005). Only a half century later the term "first lady" appeared when in 1849, Zachary Taylor said at the funeral of a firstly commonly popular presidential spouse, Dolley Madison, that she would be never forgiven as she was the first lady for the country (Coroli, 1996).

Despite media interest that existed since Martha Washington first first ladies were relatively spared from the media exposure. Following dominating social norms, the only acceptable role for a woman was to remain in the private sphere and not to venture into the men's world of politics. Women, as modesty was *le mot d'ordre*, were not supposed as well to attract public attention (Beasley, 2005). This attitude changed drastically in 1840s with the appearance of the penny press that tended to attract readers with colorful stories of personal stories. Moreover in the industrialized mid-nineteenth century United States women appeared as a new class of readers. With aim to attract them, publishers started to feature stories on women and particularly on first ladies who appeared as a perfect embodiment of American family and spirit (Beasley, 2005). Furthermore, appearance of pictures in the press started a new era of visual representation of first ladies. The first one to use it to her advantage was Dolley Madison, who became an often guest of newspapers' pages (Allgor, 2007). This frequent coverage had two important consequences. Firstly, her fashion choices were largely commented and framed in political terms (Burns, 2008; Chadwick, 2014). Indeed, political opponents of President Madison strongly criticized her regales tastes while federalist titles lauded her decision to buy cloths made in the United States, rather than spend money on European brands. Secondly, Madison became a fashion trendsetter what established her as a recognized public figure (Burns, 2008).

Since the end of the 19th century president's wives became public figures and public expectations toward their duties increased significantly in the beginning of the 20th century. Vision on womanhood varied greatly in the beginning of the 20th century

and was the opening moment of the entrance of women into the public sphere (Duby & Perrot, 2002a; Duby & Perrot, 2002b). American first ladies understood then that they need to face and control (at least partially) their public image and increasing media and public attention. They started to organize first offices, with assistants helping them in dealing with the media. However, the first to knowingly manage her relation with the press was Eleanor Roosevelt through press conferences, interviews and pictures reached to generate positive for the White House coverage (Caroli, 1996; Burns, 2005; Cook, 2000).

During the first half of the 20th century, first ladyship started to shyly spread into the world and especially in Europe. The growing political and cultural influence of the United States put the spotlight, among others, on the American president and in consequence his spouse. In Europe the interest in American politics was important also because it found a fertile ground on a continent where after the Great War most of States went through drastic political changes and almost all European empires and monarchies got vanished in favor of the republican system (Gerwarth & Manela, 2014). During this period, women got their recognition as citizens and female suffrage was legalized in the majority of countries (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). Moreover, the WWII was a turning point in the visibility of (American) first ladies in the world. Firstly, the massive entrance of women on the labor market (Goldin, 1991; Duby & Perrot, 2002) normalized their presence in the public sphere and a greater focus was given to them in the media. Secondly, during the war, a spotlight was put on political spouses who were supposed to publicly stand for their husbands, countries and its political interests (Burns, 2008).

Despite the rise of conservatism after the War World II and a pressure made on women to leave the work place for men and to return to home and to the role of social and biological reproducers (Duchen, 2003; Meyerowitz, 1994; Garrido et al., 1997), the post-war era was also a period of strong questioning of existing norms and demands for changes in both private and public stages. In a period of profound

political and social reconstructions, feminist movements emerged massively and with ties to civil rights' claims they fought not only for greater equality between men and women but also for a change of outlook on gender norms. Women, yet very slowly, started to challenge the simple status of voter and demanded for a greater representation. Despite existing difficulties, female politicians entered into this men-exclusive world. Women's empowerment and appearance of the female leadership (Bullough et al., 2012; Vinkenburg et al., 2011) led to a relative normalization of the female presence on the public stage (Thames & Williams; 2015).

An outstanding of the nascent female leadership was the tenure of the Argentinan first lady, María Eva Duarte de Perón (popularly called Evita Perón) between 1946 and 1954. Evita was the pivot of Peronism, who overshadowed her own husband and became one of the most important politicians of this period in Latin America (Llorca, 1994; Barnes, 1996). Great defender of women´s voting rights, she personally wrote a part of the Constitution of Argentina guarantying equality within the marriage. A year before her death in 1951 she was awarded the title of the Spiritual Leader of the Nation.

This change of heart regarding female presence on the public stage was also a crucial factor in the further empowerment of first ladies as the popular perception on the gender is one of the variables strongly limiting first lady's scope of action (Eksterowicz & Roberts, 2004; Wekkin, 2000; Cinar, 2014). It could be observed that in the last quarter of the 1900s various first ladies left behind presidential gardens and entered into the spotlight of the political scene. Although political stances and public exhibitions of their public power often generated scandals and strong critics, they normalized first ladyship as a political acting in the public eye. For instance, Danielle Mitterrand in France and Jolanta Kwaśniewska in Poland normalized official foreign travels without the company of the spouse. Bernadette Chirac connected the role of the first lady with political engagement and became

one of the prominent politicians in the right party, UMP (Widlak, 2015). Hillary Clinton headed in 1993 the Task Force on National Health Care Reform, the flag program of the first tenure of Bill Clinton (Burrell, 2000; Troy, 2008).

Withal the political changes of the second half of the 20th century, the evolution of (above all) Western societies has also modified the first lady's office. The introduction of television in households in the 1950s that gave birth to a new form of massive communication made a lasting mark on modern consumer society (Gorman & McLean, 2009). It also marked new standards in politics: on the one hand politicians were given new perfected arms of massive influence on voters, on the other they had to adapt to the new more and more mediatized reality (McCombs, Shaw & Weaver, 1997; Mazzoleni & Schultz, 1999). In this new media reality where the interest shifted from the party and politicians and from ideas to feelings (Stromback, 2008), a fertile ground was created for appearance of a new form of political culture behavior based on norms of the celebrity culture (Street, 2004; Rojek, 2004).

The mass media gave to first ladies an opportunity to appear in the collective consciousness and to impose their presence on the public stage. The first one who perfected the method of using the mass media to impact voters was Jacqueline Kennedy. Generating an extensive press coverage and strictly controlling her image, Jacqueline Kennedy became the most famous first ladies not only in the United States (Gould, 1990), but also abroad and an international icon (Beasley, 2005). Her status of international celebrity also influenced politicians in other countries. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, French President from 1974 to 1981, propelled his wife on the public stage, seeking for the same positive effect that Jacqueline Kennedy had on the tenure of her husband.

The digitalization of media and a constant infotainment that got reinforced since the end of the 20th century fortified the celebrity culture in politics (Sanders & Canel,

2004, Salmon, 2007). Emotional discourse being reinforced, the political of first ladies as liaison officers between their husbands and public opinion have naturally got reinforced (Zamora Medina, Berná Sicilia & Marínez Martínez, 2014). Although the first lady is still limited by gendered media discourse and public expectations (Widlak & Guillamet Lloveras 2015; Winfield & Friedman, 2003), nowadays in many countries she is one of the most prominent public figures (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015; Gutin, 2000; Watson, 2003). Especially, since the increase of the level of education and political involvement, some first ladies have not hidden their political ambitions, forming with their husband political super couple, like Hillary Rodham Clinton and Bill Clinton in the United States or Cristina and Nestor Kirchner in Argentina.

2) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

a) THE IMAGE, SOCIAL CONDITION AND ROLE OF WOMEN

i) WOMEN IN POLISH SOCIETY

The current situation of Polish women reflects the persistence and strength of traditionalist values of Polish culture, soaked in Catholic ideology and its influence on political and economic situation of women in this country. The imaginary of Polish womanhood is illustrated by the concept of *Matka Polka* (Mother Poland), issued from the 19th century romantic mythology of resistant Poland (Oleksy, 2004; Tieszen, 2007). The loss of independence by Poland in the end of the 18th century and military uprisings following the next century led to a creation of a myth of a maternal figure, full of sacrifice and moral strength and defending Polish values, such as language and religion, within the household (Tieszen, 2007; Bartminski, 2008). This particular myth, connecting both religious and patriotic values and strengthening links between family and nation, persisted in the 20th century during the instauration of the communist system in Poland after the WWII mainly. Despite slogans calling for gender equality and the opening of job market to women, women did not reach genuine equality, because there was no effort to eliminate patriarchy (La Font, 2001) as women's inclusion to the public sphere was limited and solely caused by economic factors. The fall of state socialism did not weaken the strength of the social imaginary of "Mother Poland". In the 1990s Central and Eastern Europe, fragile of economic and political levels, suffered of the process of "remasculinization". In Poland, where women were particularly touched by the shift toward market-driven economy, the "breadwinner theory" reinforced the separation between the private and public spheres (Gerber, 2011). Additionally, the growing influence of the Catholic Church and the cult of the Holy Virgin, called "Queen of Poland", reinforced the gendered discourse in the public sphere (Graff, 2003;

Gerber, 2011). Although before its accession to the European Union in 2004, Poland had to fulfill several conditions regarding increase of gender equality, the implementation of new rules did not automatically translate into greater gender equality as the gender agenda was imposed and was not accompanied by a genuine change of heart (Gerber, 2011). The rise of Right-wing parties, especially of the conservative party PiS, resulted in an aggressive public discourse against gender equality as a threat to social norms and "Polishness" (Oleksy & Oleksy, 2016).

The rebirth of democracy in Poland was also a period of reawakening of feminist movements, sluggish during communism (Marzec, 2011; Graff, 2003; LaFont, 2001). In the new political realm, women's organizations experienced difficulties, due following Bystydzienski (2001) to four factors: the significant role of the Catholic Church; the legacy of the communist distrustful attitude toward women; suppression of women's interest within the democratic opposition during communism; and limited opportunities created to women during the transition toward democracy. Despite being under-equipped and precarious, those organizations reached however to be considered as an important actors in women's rights promotion (Coyle, 2003). Since the mid-1990s their agenda has focused on domestic violence, economic gap and work condition and above all reproductive rights, an issue of extremely high sensitivity in Poland (Graff, 2003).

On the political level, although Polish women were granted with voting rights relatively early, in 1918, the year of the independence, their political activity was almost inexistent. Strong opposition of political parties resulted in an extremely low (2.2%) number of women running into parliamentary elections. By the same token, women did not vote in elections (Śliwa, 2000). Quantitatively, political representation of women significantly increased during communism. The 1952 Constitution guaranteed in the article 66 the equal status of women and men, obtained through equal pay for equal work and its actualization of 1976 took a further step by obliging the State to act in strengthening women's position,

especially of mothers and working women. Women occupied around one third of parliamentary seats, yet this representation was in reality a part of the State's propaganda (La Font, 2001) and in the structure that genuinely detained political power, PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza – Polish Unified Workers' Party) women's presence in the leadership's structures was deceptive (Pacześniak, 2006). The claims of gender equality were superficial as women were considered as unable to fully devote themselves to the party because of their reproductive duties (Fodor, 2002). Likewise, democratic opposition ignored gender issues as well as the women's presence in their structures, reinforcing the common (false) opinion about women's inactivity in the political struggle for freedom (Kenney, 1999; Penn, 2005). The change of regimes in 1989 did not result as favoring women's political leadership (Graff, 2001; Sekuła, 2011; Fuszara, 2006). In the 2011 Polish parliament approved the parity law obliging political parties to present on their lists a minimum of 35% women. Although the system of gender quotas increased the level of women's participation, results of its impact on women's political leadership are mitigated as it did not translate into a genuine change of heart of public opinion and the political class (Gwiazda, 2015; Gorecki & Kuklowicz, 2014).

The current participation of women in economics is also a fruit of historical and cultural influences. In the 19th century the economic emancipation of women was one of the most important issues as after Polish insurrections for recovering independence failed, men lost their lives or were imprisoned and their properties were confiscated. In this situation women were obliged to retake the role of the family's breadwinner (Zarnowska & Szawrc, 2000; Markowski, 2008). Their work was however unappreciated, due to popular opinion about women's belonging to the private sphere and to women's necessity to accept even worst and lower payed jobs, which ultimately led to a gender separation on the job market. After the WWI women's situation on the job market improved, yet women still were excluded from leadership positions (Zarnowska & Szwarc, 2000; Markowski, 2008). In 1945, the

change of regime had a crucial importance on women's participation on the labor market. Communism promoted the idea of gender equality also on the economic level. Polish women became thus strongly active: their participation in labor force exceeded 80% and their interrupted only briefly their work for maternity leave (Fodor, 2002). However, women also occupied less prestigious posts, earned less and were less likely to be promoted (Fodor, 2002; Kenney, 1999). Likewise, although women were actively invited to study, their educational investment return was lower than men's one (Fodor, 2002; Matysiak, 2009). The change of regime in 1989 was quickly followed by a very brutal economic transition and its main victims were women (La Font, 2001). Polish women reached however to beneficiate from the development of entrepreneurship and economic growth that took place thereafter (Wasilczuk & Zieba, 2008; Leven, 2008).

ii) WOMEN IN FRENCH SOCIETY

The place of French women within society has been for long time a polemic subject on the public agora. During the era of Enlightenment, French philosophers in their great majority rejected the idea of women as equal to men, solely attributing them the role of social reproducers and educators of men (Hoffmann, 1995; Souza Fernandes, 1992). The French Revolution in 1789 did not change the situation of women in France as the gendered vision of the political body was maintained (Landes, 1988). In consequence, political rights were granted only to men and feminist voices, like that of Olympe de Gouge, were silenced (Devance, 1977; Blanc, 2014). Women remained thus still excluded on the political and economic levels, as testified by the 19804 Napoleonian Code in which women were treated as

minor without any political rights or even the right to freely decide about their properties (Daune-Richard, 2004). The ultimate man's power was legalized not only on the public stage, but also in the private domain through the concept of "marital authority" and "chef of the family" and lasted in the French law respectively until 1838 and 1970 (Daune-Richard, 2004).

The 19th century model of separate spheres and influence of Rousseau's ideal of womanhood intrinsically connected with motherhood conditioned the process of girls' and women's socialization as devoted to others. It was considered that young girls had little needs regarding intellectual development, so the education program was limited to general culture and household management (Foley, 2004).

In France, the notion of physical attractiveness has been strongly integrated into the gendered look on women. 19th century ideal of French womanhood was based not only on sacrifice and modesty, but also on physical attractiveness (Foley, 2004). In its control of external gender markers, the 1804 Civil Code forbade women from wearing pants under the danger of considering them as travesty (Bard, 2010). The last decades of the 19th century introduced the ideal of feminine beauty into public cultural and scientific discourse, spreading the idea of physical attractiveness as primarily destined to please men, but also as a sign of good health (Steward, 2001). By the same token, French women since the 1800s and especially the 1920s used fashion as a manifesto for greater gender equality (Bard, 2010). In consequence, women's sensuality has not only a very important place in the French culture, but is also mitigated symbol of the patriarchal tradition of the 19th century and feminist ambitions of the 20th century.

1944 was a turning point for women in France who ultimately obtained voting rights. Nevertheless, the end of the war was marked by a return to the traditionalist order (Duby & Perrot, 2002b) and although women were legally equal to men, they still remained suffered from a lack of social, political or economic autonomy (Scott,

1997). The process of building of women's political representation was lagging. For more than two decades after gaining the right to vote, women were still reluctant to vote (Mossuz-Lavau, 1993) and female politicians were exception (Bard, 2007a; Bard, 2007b; Sineau, 2011).Until 1974, 23 out of 27 governments in France were composed without women and four counted with only one woman each time. In 1974 president Giscard d'Estaing ignited a revolution introducing women to the executive branch. During his tenure (1974-1981) 9 women hold positions in Giscard d'Estaing's governments (Bard, 2007b). The further step in the achievement of the representative equality was made in 1981 when the arrival of the Socialist Party was accompanied by the first entrance of women to the Parliament (Mossuz-Lavau, 2007). It was however only in the 1990s that the issue of political equality became a political and politicized subject (Freedmann, 2000; Sineau, 2011; Murray, 2010). In 1991 Edith Cresson became the first woman to hold the office of the Prime Minister. Four years later greater political inclusion of women formed part of the political program in the presidential elections of Jacques Chirac (Mossuz-Lavau, 2007). In 1999 the Constitution was modified to include the notion of equal participation of men and women in exerting political responsibilities (art. 3) and a year later, with the aim to address the issue of under-representation of women in the Parliament the parity reform was legislated (Freedmann, 2000). In 1999, Sineau (2011) conducted surveys of French deputes about the theme of women participation on the political stage. Her work displayed a genuine change of heart regarding the issue and appeared as a possible end to the "Republic of Males". In the 2000s some effects of the said change could be observed: in 2002 Michele Alliot-Marie became the first female minister of Defense, in 2007 Segolene Royal appeared as the first plausible female candidate in the presidential run and in 2015 26,9% of seats in the French parliament were held by women.

The economic dependence of women in France, legalized in the 19th century by the Civil Code started to disappear with the process of industrialization and

urbanization. In the beginning of the 20th century women's work was a subject of public debates (Foley, 2004). After the end of the WWII State's natality propaganda idealized the household as a place for normality after years of the war and through its program "Les mamans de France" (Mamas of France) tended to push women back to the private sphere (Duchen, 1991). In the 1950s women who work were young and unmarried or coming from families with difficulties (Daune-Richard, 2004). The genuine entrance of women into the labor market occurred in the 1960s (Daune-Richard, 2004). It was accompanied by State's efforts in protecting and assuring infrastructure for working mothers (Daune-Richard, 2004). Nevertheless, a legal trend in the 1980s and 1990s based on the gendered vision of society had a negative impact on women's participation in the labor market. Legal tries to reverse this tendency focused on father's implication in the family, like parental leave and slightly improved situation (Daune-Richard, 2004). Currently, although the employment rate among French women is higher than the average within the EU and the gap between men and women regarding domestic unpaid work lowered (Richroch, 2012), French women suffer from profession's segregation and higher than men rate of unemployment and part-time jobs (Maruani, 2005).

Although feminist movements existed in France since the 19th century (Boxer, 1982; Bard, 1995; Offen, 1984), women's organizations appeared massively on the public stage in the 1970s. In 1968 the outbreak of students' violence caused by disillusionment and rejection of the State's authority caused the awakening of feminist organizations (Duchen, 2014). New organizations, leaded by the Mouvement de Liberation des Femmes (Movement of Women's Liberation) concentrated their efforts on the issues related to the body: sexual freedom and the right to abortion (Duchen, 2014; Picq, 2008). The impact of feminist movements in the 1970s was critical not only on the issue of free and legal abortion for Frenchwomen, legalized in 1975 by the Simone Veil's law (Robinson, 2000). In 1974 the dialogue between the political authorities and feminist movements got

institutionalized through the creation of a government body, called the Condition of Women and Women's Rights (Picq, 2008) whose main mission was to respond to women issues addressed by feminist movements. Although the relation between the authorities and women's organization has varied over time, it allowed the legalization of various initiatives supporting gender equality in France (Picq, 2008).

iii) WOMEN IN SPANISH SOCIETY

Various analyses of dynamic of gender stereotyping in Spain dismiss that although Spain obtained positive results regarding gender equality, role-related stereotypes are still strongly embedded within the society (Moreno Minguez, 2009; Lopez-Zafra & Garcia-Retamero, 2012; Royo-Vela, Aldás-Mazano, Küster-Boluda & Vila-López, 2007; ...). The social perception of a strong division of the private and the public for centuries compelled women to exist only through the roles of mothers and wives (Garrido et al., 1997). Despite a wind of women's emancipation brought by the 2nd Republic (1931 – 1934), the regime of Franco reinstalled the traditionalist model. The loss of civic rights embodied the will of the authorities to exclude women from the public stage and caged women in the roles of social and biological reproducers (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Morcillo, 2008). Moreover, nationalist propaganda that placed women as the symbol of the Spanish nation (Enders & Radcliff, 1998; Morcillo, 2008) was entrusted by the Catholic Church and Seccion Feminina, a female branch of the Falange. A partial opening to the "West" in the 1960s (Jones, 1998), the death of General Franco in 1975 and the process of the Democratic Transition that followed aftermath allowed a mores' evolution within the Spanish culture. Nevertheless, the traditionalist system did not disappear, but started to

coexist with the new one, displaying an increasing cultural gap within the society, especially visible between younger and older generations and between habitants of cities and of small villages (Lopez-Zafra & Garcia-Retomero, 2012; Royo-Vela, Aldás-Mazano, Küster-Boluda & Vila-López, 2007).

In Spain women granted passive voting rights in 1931 and voted for the first time in the 1933. Since the Civil War in 1936 and the rise of the francoist dictatorship until 1977, women got excluded from the public life. Not only did they lose their voting rights, they became legally unequal and dependent on men (Radcliff, 2002). The Democratic Transformation that took place after the death of Franco was an excellent opportunity for inclusion of women on the political stage, especially given the fact that feminist movements formed part of the democratic opposition to the francoist regime (Garrido et al., 1997; Romeu Alfaro, 1994). Unfortunately the change of heart was not complete. Although the 1978 Constitution guaranteed equality of all citizens (art. 14), women were still perceived through the stereotype of conservative housekeepers (Radcliff, 2002). Women's participation in the public life was then seen as an issue rather than an opportunity (Radcliff, 2002). Beside the element of socialization, gaps in resources such as education and work influenced as well the lower level of political engagement (Calvo & Martin, 2009; Morales, 2006; Campbell & Olbrecht, 2006). Nonetheless the percentage of women's participation in the decision-making process has significantly increased since the 1980s, both regarding the voting participation and political representation (Morales, 1999; Ruiz Jimenez, 2009). Its level increased even more between 2004 and 2008 when gender equality and gender violence were in the heart of the political program of the socialist government of Zapatero (Calvo & Martin, 2009). The said government was also the first one in history of Spain, and very unique in Europe as well, composed in equal parts of women and men. Among its many initiatives, the government of Zapatero passed the parity law with significantly restrictive conditions for political parties not respecting the law.

As for the women's participation in economics, Spanish women integrated the labor market relatively late and despite significant improvement in the last 30 years, their level of employment is still lower than the average of European countries. After the fall of the francoist regime, women did not find favorable conditions to join labor force. Indeed, the existing social program was aimed to help male workers (Carrasco & Rodriguez, 2000). Additionally, the "breadwinner" model that still dominated within the society prevent women from high and middle classes to work and women who were obliged to work because of their economic situation occupied low-skilled and low-waged jobs (Prior, 1997). The period of the democratic Transition was accompanied by economic recession, high inflation and high rate of unemployment, overburdening women's inclusion in the labor market (Carrasco & Rodriguez, 2000). Nevertheless the rate of women's economic participation progressively increased, especially among young generations where a cultural change of mentalities operated and women stopped leaving their jobs after getting married (Carrasco & Rodriguez, 2000; Cebrián, Moreno & Toharia, 1997). Additionally, the rise of women's access to education had also a positive impact on women's participation on the labor market. By the same token, women are still disproportionately touched by unemployment and part-time jobs (Carrasco & Rodriguez, 2000; Tobio, 2001).

b) POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

i) HISTORY OF EMPOWERMENT

History of political empowerment of women started with attribution of voting rights to women. Although this process was strongly unequal in different regions of the world, it can be observed that in Western countries the process started in the 1800s, after centuries of women exclusion from the political life (Przeworski, 2009). Thanks to a rise in literacy rates in industrialized countries and first fights for educational opportunities for women (Hannam et al., 2000), as well as a substantial growth of women in composition of middle and classes (Hall, 2013) increased conscience about existing gender inequalities on the public stage. In various countries women started to organize themselves into movements reaching to obtain voting rights for women (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). Those national organizations, that in countries such as the Unites States and Great Britain took the size of mass movements, modified the popular perception on women as forbidden from the public sphere and were decisive in the implementation of women's rights (Paxton & Hughes, 2016; Pankhurst, 2015). Besides national movements women also organized themselves on the international level and lobbied organizations such as The League of Nation to grant women with political rights (Rupp & Taylor, 1999). Moreover, dismantlement of empires and colonies after the Word Wars with few exceptions resulted in establishment of female suffrage (Ramirez, Soysal & Shanahan, 1997). In consequence, in the first half of the 20th century women's voting rights spread quickly through the world and by 1948 it was taken for granted that women should have voting rights (Paxton & Hughes, 2016).

The second step in women empowering consisted in gaining descriptive representation. Over the 20th century women started to hold leadership positions in politics. This process was marked however by strong inequalities between

countries, as in some of them women appeared in politics in substantial numbers in the 1970s, in others in the 1990s and in some women are still waiting to be symbolically represented (Wängnerud, 2009; Paxton & Hughes, 2016). In democracy, the importance of descriptive representation in parliaments lays in the fact that in this system legislative elections are the most direct form of popular representation (Thames & Williams, 2013). Although in some countries attribution of active voting rights went hand in hand with attribution of passive voting rights, initially effective gaining seats in the Parliament by women was a different struggle as public opinion was (and often still is) to change (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). For the first time a woman was elected in legislative elections in Finland in 1907. In 2015, 22% of parliamentarians in the world were women[3] yet this global increase varies significantly among countries. Three key aspects seem influence positively women's presence in the legislative branch. On the cultural level, in countries that value gender equality, women are usually more voted in elections (Inglehard & Norris, 2003). On the economic level, an important presence of women in the labor force translates in a greater women's mobilization and thus a greater demand for equal representation (Norris, 1985). On the political level, the quota system, imposed by some countries or voluntarily adapted by various political parties, have had a positive impact (Thames & Williams, 2013).

Regarding women's presence in cabinet positions, in 2015, 18.6% parliamentarians were women, mainly in Western Europe were they represented 31% against 9% in the Middle East and North Africa (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). The results are still low, what can be explained by the connection between the number of female ministers and female parliamentarians. Indeed, in most of the cases ministers are chosen from the parliamentary ranks. Logically, the fewer women there are in the parliament, the fewer chances are to choose women for cabinet positions (Whitford,

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[3] Following data of UN Women published on http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures

Wilkins & Ball, 2007). All the same, historical analysis shows that the numbers are still growing and that a critical change of heart occurred as it is popularly understood now that cabinets should contain women and neglecting them during nominations can cause public criticism to politicians (Krook & O'Brien, 2012). Additionally, women are better represented in presidential systems rather than in parliamentary one because female presidents can appoint more easily female ministers (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). A closer look on the composition of governments contrasts however the overtone as women are usually given less prestigious and attached to the private sphere positions (Lawless, 2004; Schneider & Bos, 2014) such as health, family and education and are underrepresented in policy domains such as finance or defense traditionally symbolizing men's power (Dolan, 2010).

Regarding the history of women in high-leadership positions, two paths of women empowerment in this field has existed. The first one is the path of women becoming political leaders as political surrogates or their husbands of father. This way of political ascension is especially present in regions where women leadership is less expected, like it was the case of Sirimavo Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka, who became the first Prime Minister in the world in 1960 after the death of her husband (Paxton & Hughes, 2016; Jalalzai, 2013; Burn, 2005). The second path of women's political ascension is rising through the party ranks. Here again, the low percentage of high-level leaders can be explained by a low level of female party's leaders. Indeed, becoming a top leader usually requires leading the party that wins elections (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). In 2015 14% of party leaders are women (O'Brien, 2015). An analysis of their accession allowed to O'Brien (2015) to confirm the existence of the "glass cliff", a situation where women are asked to lead a party, when it is about to fail (Ryan & Haslan, 2005) or when social or political contexts are instable (Thomas & Adams, 2010), like it was the case of Margaret Thatcher, Angela Merkel or Michelle Bachelet for instance.

ii) BARRIERS LIMITING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Despite general advancement of women presence on the political stage women still have to face strong reticence regarding their public activity. Historically, there have been always existed philosophical arguments about women unsuitability for politics (Elshtain, 1993). Those arguments were also supported by teachings of different religions. Indeed, the major religions in the world such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism contradict women participation in politics (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). Moreover, gender ideology and cultural perception of women's place in the society affect as well gender stratification of politics (Paxton & Kunovich, 2003) and the traditional sex-role socialization, defining attitudes for both sexes toward political activity (Hooghe & Dietlind, 2004), results in a lower participation of women in political races (Carroll & Sanbonmatsu, 2013).

In consequence, gendered stereotypes still exist in modern societies (Grossmann & Lugovsky, 2011) and they negatively influence women's presence on the public stage (Dittmar, 2015; Dolan, 2010; Brooks, 2013). Gender stereotypes influence voter at the hour of voting (Dittmar, 2015) as positions of power are associated with male traits (Bligh & Kohles, 2008). Traditionally women are in a subordinate position to men, so there exists a popular belief that men are more competent (Ridgeway, 2001). Additionally, women in power are supposed to fit to two kinds of role: that of a leader and that of the mother. The dichotomy of the popular perception enables women to adapt a typical attitude of a leader marked by aggressiveness and dominance (Eagly, Makhijani & Klonsky, 1992; Ridgeway, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002) while they should match the contrasting imaginary on women as supportive, modest and emotionally involved (van Zoonen, 2005; Sreberny & van Zoonen, 2000). Subsequently, politician women face an inextricable dilemma: when they behave autocratically, they are judged more severely in the

public eye as transgressing social expectations regarding women's behavior (Dittmar, 2015; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Bligh & Kohles, 2008) and when they rely on their gender markers, they are judged as unsuitable for politics (van Zoonen, 2005; Norris, 1997).

Moreover, despite their claims about impartiality, media reinforce gender existing stereotypes through the biased look on women and men in politics (Ross & Comrie, 2012; Campus, 2013). Media space is continuously occupied by men and women, both those from elites and from popular classes (Ross, 2013), are still an exception (Lachover, 2012; Lundell & Ekstrom, 2008, Norris, 1997). As a consequence, women by receiving less media attention are negatively affected as potential voters know less about them as candidates and about their political stances (Kahn, 1994). Furthermore, not only do media are less interested in women politicians, they also cover more their private life than their political opinions (Braden, 1996; Ross, 2010). Traditional frames on women place them in gendered roles of mothers, sex symbols or victims (Lachover, 2012; Byerly & Ross, 2006; Gallayner). A special focus on bodily markers trivializes women's public image and delegitimizes them as political leaders (Trimble et al., 2013; Ross, 2013). Women's political legitimacy is also undermined by frequent questionings of their capacities to hold the office (Ross, 2013). In consequence, media representation of women in politics maintains gender gap on the political stage.

c) HISTORY OF MODERN JOURNALISM

If the concept of "media" appeared only in 1920s, a concern for communication means existed way before (Briggs & Burke, 2009). Since the 19th, and especially in the 20th century, profound evolutions in communicating led to the creation and amplification of mass media, defined by Wimmer and Dominick (2013) as "any communication channel used to simultaneously reach a large number of people, including radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, billboards, films, recoding, books, the Internet and the smart media." (p. 2). Among all those channels, the press has an important position as historically it was the first medium of massive distribution.

The evolutionary character of the press is strongly connected not only to technological innovations that took place since the Industrial Revolution, but also to shifts in social and cultural development (Nerone, 1987). Although first regular newspapers appeared in France, modern journalism is an Anglo-American invention (Neveu, 2001; Chalaby, 1996). First newspapers, an evolution of "gazettes d'annonce" (Brin, Charron & Bonville, 2004), appeared in Europe in the 17th century and had to function in a strongly challenging environment characterized by a strong dependence and control on behalf of political forces and limited printings due to limited technical possibilities (Pettegree, 2014). Two centuries later, journalism of opinion left place to journalism of information (Brin, Charron & Bonville, 2004) and the press started to reach larger audience, losing its elitist character. The evolution of the press in the 19th century was a result of various factors. Technological innovations of that period and especially the invention of the steam printing press in 1814 increased editors' abilities to increase newspapers' distribution (Briggs & Burke, 2009; Chapman, 2005). Progressive abolishment of censorship in Western countries constituted the first step of separation of the worlds of press and politics and by 1900 it was not important whether a country had a press law because the press had become a force in the society (Briggs &

Burke, 2009). The growth of the middle class and a progressive alphabetization created new possibilities for newspapers to increase their readership (Chapman, 2005). Additionally, an important change in newspapers' strategy took place, with the shift of attention from politicians to readers (Nerone, 1987).

The flag example of the dramatic changes that occurred within the press world was the creation of the penny press, considered today as the beginning of the commercial press in Northern American countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Schudson, 1978; Conboy & Steel, 2008). The penny press, unlike traditional press still accessible mainly to the elites, targeted middle classes. For that reason, its accessibility based on low prices (one penny vs. usual six pennies of other newspapers) and news methods of distribution (sells on the street vs. traditional subscription) quickly increased its readership. However, the truly revolutionary character of the penny press relied on content changes: the penny press privileged greater political neutrality, simplification of the writing style, marked by a sensationalist tone and a creation of new sections corresponding to readers' preferences, such as business, police and sport (Briggs & Burke, 2009).

During the 19th century the press continued to evolve, constantly refining in order to adapt to its reader (Conboy & Steel, 2008; Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Around the 1870s the commercial success of newspapers assured to the press an impact on the public stage as the "Fourth Estate" (Hunt, 2013) and an increasing independence for politics (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). By the end of the 19th century ideals of an informed public lost with the market-driven reality (Burns & Burke, 2009) and a constant commercialization of newspapers (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Two models of newspapers that existed then in the United States, that of "journalism as entertainment" and that of "journalism as information", influenced modern standards of journalism in the world, which following Schudson (1978) boil down to three function: to inform, to interpret, to entertain.

The 20th century was however the century of the greatest transformations for the press. Firstly, since the beginning of the century European journalism underwent the process of Americanization that got intensified after the WWII when the United States became an economic and political power. It was especially strong fascist countries such as Germany, Austria and Italy that after losing the war were obliged to adapt to American philosophy of the press (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Moreover, strong commercialization of the sector and advancing globalization facilitated the process of homogenization of the press in the world that resulted in disappearance of national characteristics in different media systems and replacement by a global set of media practice (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Secondly, the appearance of the radio and then television as mass media created first great challenge to the press as the press was forced to redefine its place in media environment (Briggs & Burke, 2009; Conboy & Steel, 2008). With a shift from industrial society toward a knowledge-based economy (Bell, 1999), the abundance of information led since the 1970s to creation of the "information society" in which all message and information is treated as data (Briggs & Burke, 2009; Webster, 2002).

As consequence, newspapers adapted to the new logic of the media landscape. They significantly increased content dedicated to lifestyle and consumerism and compact their format (Conboy & Steel, 2008). Following Carey (2008), the press also shifted toward the position of identity creators rather than knowledge contributors, with news being a cultural form and a "ritual" model of communication. The popularization of the Internet in the beginning of the new millennium increased further information quantity and obliged the press to mutate once again (Esser, 1999; Conboy & Steel, 2009). The market-driven attitude of newspapers and evaluation of news through the angle of its "saleability" caused a decrease in journalistic standards and of hard news as well as an increase of soft news marked by scandal and entertainment, provoking the process of "tabloidization of news" (Esser, 1999; Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr & Legnante,

2011). Another process, that of infotainment, caused absorption of political news by the logic of spectacle (Neveu, 2001; Jebril, Albaek & de Vreese, 2013) and a strong use of techniques such as personalization and privatization emotions and proximity (Hallin & Mancini, 2008). In consequence, all this created a fertile ground of the celebrity culture (van Zoonen, 2005; Rojek, 2004; Sanders & Canel, 2004). Furthermore, especially since the irruption of the Internet, a phenomenon that completely reconfigured the related between informers and informed (Deibert, 1997) as well as the news market (van der Wurff, 2005), newspapers have to face a fragmented readership and tailor their content for specific groups of readers (Weber, 2002; Conboy & Steel, 2008).

i) FOCUS ON HISTORY OF JOURNALISM IN THE STUDIED COUNTRIES

(1)   HISTORY OF JOURNALISM IN POLAND

The history of modern journalism started relatively late in Poland in comparison to Western countries, mainly because of two reasons: a lack of statehood before 1918 and a common illetracy of the Polish society and an access to the press reserved to elites (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012). Like in Southern-European countries Polish journalism was strongly connected to literature world as the profession of journalist was born within literary, political and activist circles.

The creation of the Polish state in 1918 was a genuine breakthrough for the press. Multipartisanism and a lack of a clear dominance of one party created a fertile ground for creation of new press titles. Nevertheless, although newspapers enjoyed an important freedom of political opinion, the majority of newspapers were officially

or unofficially connected to a political formation. Firstly, because of the difficult economic situation of the country, the readership was struggling to take off (Habielski, 1999) and newspapers would have not survived without subsidies of parties. Secondly, the press continued to address itself to a limited group of political and cultural elites and aristocracy (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012).

The beginning of the WWII represented the death of the press model started in 1918. During the war official newspapers were published in German and Russian and newspapers written in Polish were published abroad or by the resistance (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012). At the end of the war and entering into the Soviet zone of influence, Polish press underwent profound changes. As the control of the message was of crucial importance for the Communist Party, so were the media (Curry, 1990). However, Polish media landscape was atypical in the Soviet bloc as 10% of media ownership was private allowing a greater liberalization of the press and the spread of "Western" ideology (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012, Hadamik, 2005; Curry, 1990).

In the 1990s Polish media landscape transformed from the state controlled to private and free media market. The period of political and economic transformations gave advantages to big groups, often from foreign countries, to dominate the press market in Poland (Goban-Klas, 1996). As a result, nowadays the ownership is concentrated in the hands of two main players: Polish media group Agora and German group Bauer. Current media landscape in Poland is characterized by processes observed on the international level, such as tabloidization, infotainment or a strong use of gender markers (Lisowska-Magdziarz, 2009). In 2008 the press market was shared by national quality dailies: Gazeta Wyborcza, Rzeczpospolita and Dziennik (33 percent of the market); paid tabloids: Fakt and Super Express (30 percent) and free tabloids (13 percent) (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012).

(2)   H<small>ISTORY OF JOURNALISM IN</small> F<small>RANCE</small>

The French Declaration of the Right of Man and the Citizen in 1789 was not only a fundamental step in the reorganization of the French political system but also the bill establishing freedom of press and as such, laiding foundation to modern French journalism. The new freedom provoked an explosion of newspaper circulation, reaching 300 000 copies a day, limits of technological possibilities in those days (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). However, in few decades popular interest relapsed and the press returned to literary salons, re-becoming a matter of elites.

The 19th century press was strongly connected to literature and politics and because of its low professionalization was called by Neveu (2001) a period of "journalism without journalists". It was also time of strong pressure of the political world on journalists and state censorship (Never, 2001). The situation changed drastically in 1881 thanks to the adoption of the law limiting possible abuses. This stimulated the rise of the commercial press, both in term of the level of newspapers' circulation and professionalization of the sector (Halim & Mancini, 2004; Neveu, 2001). However, despite the significant improvements, the industry still suffered economic hardships and it was not as profitable as the American or British ones, where the advertisement market was much larger (Chupin, Hube & Kaciaf, 2009; Neveu, 2001).

Since 1944 various laws framed the media landscape in France creating a hydrybid model of newspapers as private companies with a strong statal interventionism and a developed system of national financial aids with a limited access of foreign investments and prosctription of media concentration (Charon, 1991). This mix of a pure financial management and institutional interventionism had negative consequences for the press market in France as between 1914 and 1990 the

number of newspapers dropped of 75% and, despite national helps, newspapers could not create a viable financial model (Charon, 1991).

The liberalization of the media market that started in the 1970s brought a contestation of the interventionism of the State in the name of values of press freedom and ethics (Chupin, Hube & Kaciaf, 2009). The press market got once again profoundly modified and fragilised in the 1990s and especially in the 2000s, with the irruption of the Internet and the apparition of free newspapers (Chupin, Hube & Kaciaf, 2009; Delporte, Blandine & Robinet, 2016). In 2008, "Etats Generaux de la presse ecrite" (General States of Press) organized with the patronage of the Elysees displayed a profound conflict within the press world toward the future of the sector and especially a strong dependency of the press, especially specialized in politics, on financial aids of the State. However, although the situation of French press seems critical, many French press titles fight for survival by readopting their economic models to the new consumption patterns and by offering both printed and digitial versions of their newspapers[4].

(3) HISTORY OF JOURNALISM IN SPAIN

The development of the modern Spanish press is situated in the 19th century, a period of technological outburst and political disruptions. The press quickly became a strong political tool yet limited to elites given the high level of illetracy and

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[4] Following data of L'Alliance pour les Chiffres de la Presse et des Media (Alliance for Number of Press and Media) in July 2016 web pages of *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* were respectively the second and the fourth most visited web pages in France with 93 million and 71 million monthly visits on all electronic platforms.

substancial linguistic variety (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Its development was disrupted by the Civil War and the dictatorship of General Franco since 1939. In 1938, in the midst of the Civil War, the Law on the Press instaured a strong censorship and established the "right" of the State to use the Press as a tool of communication. Not only did Franco's regime control information, but made a step further and used the media as a tool to spread its ideology (Sinova, 2006). Following the Directive on Rewardings for Journalists from 1/10/1938 the role of the press was to "correctly interpret wishes, the doctrine, purposes, the emotion of the redeemed Motherland and the future Spanish greatness."

The censorship got partially released in 1966 with a new Law on the Press and the death of General Franco in 1975 extended press freedom (Barrera, 1995). In 1978 full freedom of press was officially guaranteed by the new democratic Constitution. The democratic transition deeply modified Spanish media both on economic and political levels (Guillamet, 2008; Fuentes & Fernandez Sebastian, 1997). Since the 1980s and the privatization of media and its technological reconversion, the Spanish media landscape took on the character of market-oriented (Mancini & Hallin, 2004). It was also a period of the reconfiguration of the economic model from little enterprises to big groups and internationalization of the ownership. In the 1990s free newspapers appeared and obliged traditional press titles to reconsider their economic stategy. Aditionnally, the global process of media digitalization deeply modified the sector as well as the profession of the journalist.

On the political level the democratic transition offered the possibility to be published to newspapers forbidden of publication during Franco's regime. Their voice became so important during this period, that they became "paper parliament", a powerful stakeholder in the political debate (Zugasti, 2008). Since then, Spanish press maintained its strongly politicized character and newspapers have openly demonstated their political affinities (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Fuentes & Fernandez Sebastian, 1997). It led to various ideological wars between different

36

press titles, as well against particular political groups. After the terrorist attack in Madrid in 2004, Spanish media called for popular mobilization and ultimately played a crucial role in the destitution of Aznar's government (Olmeda, 2005). During the government of Zapatero, strongly contrasted coverage of Spanish newspapers on political authorities and its management of the economical crisis displayed a further political radicalization of media. Most currently, the question of a possible independence of the Catalan region proves that Spanish media continue to try to exert their influence on the political stage and public opinion.

d) MODERN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

i) POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC OPINION

From the sociological point of view, political communication is an activity aiming at enhancing, promoting and legitimating political work and power that should be analyzed from the perspective of the political representativeness, i.e. relation between the representative and the represented (Riutort, 2007). Although different rituals of representation of power and its legitimization existed in various societies for centuries (Balandier, 1980), appearance of modern liberal democracies changed balance of power between the governors and the governed and obliged public authorities to take into consideration citizens' opinions (Riutort, 2007).

"Public opinion" designs a communication from citizens toward authorities that can only exist in democratic countries, where citizens can express themselves freely and have access to information (Speier, 2001). Following Habermas (2007) its growth was strictly connected with the birth of bourgeoisie as a social group in modern liberal democracies. The increase of public opinion started in 17th century Europe and was encourage by the process of democratization of States and rising literacy (Reynié, 1998; Speier, 2001; Donsbaugh & Traugott, 2007). Both those processes strongly accelerated in the 19th century and the development of mass journalism in the 19th century United States (Chalaby, 1998; Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

In the first half of the 20th century the model of citizenship changed drastically from the power totally delegated to authorities and affirmation of their legitimacy to the mobilization of the masses and putting the citizen in the heart of the political process (Schudson, 1999). This obliged thus politicians to actively look for public approval. Since the end of the 19th century "public opinion" became a matter of

sociologists and of numerical approaches (Blondiaux, 1998). Largely diffused in the 1920s in the United States public opinion polls appeared as a consensual and scientific way of expression for public opinion (Blondiaux, 1998; Riutort, 2007; Moon, 1999). In consequence, in 1930s new group of specialists of political communication appeared: political persuaders, charged of dealing with public opinion's reactions (Nimmo, 2011). In 1936 the prediction of the victory of Roosevelt by Gallup began the expansion of pre-electoral opinion polls in the United States and little time after in Western democracies (Donsbaugh & Traugott, 2007).

By the same token, the success of opinion polls quickly sparked controversies (Riutort, 2007). Firstly, public opinion can be influenced and volatile. As defended by the theory of the two-step flow of communication (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 2005), public opinion is not a sum of individual opinions but are socially influenced by groups to which a person belongs. Additionally, following the agenda-setting theory of MacCombs and Shaw (1972) there are too much news for the media to relate and for public opinion to assimilate. In consequence, the media making a selection of news they present, they influence citizens about what they think. Secondly, questions about the participation in the decision-making process were also raised. Althaus (2006) states that mass audiences are not involved in the process until they are asked in the final phase about their opinions.

In late modern democracies, changes provoked by the growth of sociocultural heterogeneity, media outlets and channels and information cacophony as well as increasing distrust of citizens toward politicians and journalists (Blumler & and Gurevitch, 2000) led to a situation where public opinion is less "sacerdotal" and politicians have to do more effort in order to attract media coverage and the communication is no more top-down but adapted to public (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999). Additionally, the rise of Internet facilitated a massive communicative interactions between citizens and thus further dispersion of public spheres what on the one side contributes to destabilize political communication systems and on the

other, engage citizens to participate in the construction of new democratic politics (Dahlgren, 2005).

ii) POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

From the media study perspective, political communication is a power game that confronts political and media logics (Esser & Stromback, 2014). Political logic refers to rules and principles, both formal and informal, that define ways of acting and thinking within the political sphere (Esser & Stromback, 2014). Media logic describes institutional, aesthetic and technological ways as well as formal and informal rules that impact the distribution of material and symbolic resources by the media (Hjarvard, 2013).

The question of this power struggle attracted attention of many scholars (Ross, 2010; Stromback, 2008; McCombs at el, 2011; …). Although opinions diverge on who and in which extend dominates in this relation (Voronova, 2014; Ross, 2010; …), since the 20th media undoubtedly increased their impact on the political game, transforming the culture of political communication (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999). With democratization of States and the development of mass communication (Wolton, 1989), appeared the phenomenon of mediated politics in which the role of the media as a privileged channel of communication between politicians and citizens increased in the last century leading (Stromback, 2008; McCombs, 2004). This led to the mediatisation of politics, a process in which politics become media-centered and adapt to the media logic (Stromback, 2008; Asp & Esaiasson, 1996; Mazzoleni & Schultz, 1999; Hallin & Mancini, 2004) and become more and more dependent on it (Hjavard, 2013; Cohen, Tsfari & Sheafer, 2008). As consequence,

political communication underwent profound changes, among them the most important being professionalization and personalization.

The first aspect, professionalization of politics, is a direct answer of politics facing the growing presence of media and its impact of on voters' decisions (Norris, 2014, Blumler & Karavagh, 1999). The appearance of political specialists, often coming from the media world, is a professional response of politicians to manage media pressure (Blumler & Karavagh, 1999) and to counterbalance the weight of party members and activists (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In the strongly modified environment, political communication's specialists work in a very complex environment where they have to face the continuous news streaming and communication abundance, deliver immediate results (Denton & Woodwad, 1989) while working in a permanent campaigning (Meyer, 2002). Additionally, they have to reach the largest number of citizens facing fragmented audiences in terms of social organizations, interests and identities (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999).

The second aspect, personalization of politics, describes a process of "politization of the private persona" (Trimble et al., 2013) and the fact of observing larger political and social issues through the specter of individual actors (Bennet, 2001). As a consequence of a consumerist approach of citizens toward politics (Bernays, 2007; Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999), the process of individualization of politics where a politician becomes more important than the party and its program takes place (van Zoonen, 2005). The personalization has been reinforced in the last decades with the evolution of the media coverage, marked by the "infotainment" and a tabloidization of news (Jebril, Albaek & de Vreese, 2013; Esser, 1999; Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999). This led to the rise of the celebrity-style politics where politicians capitalize on the entertainment industry and adopt the strategy of conventional celebrities to attract public attention (Stanyer & Wring, 2004).

3) RESEARCH SCOPE

a) OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTIGATION

The essence of the PhD work rests on four scientific papers published between 2015 and 2016. Three of them analyze different aspects of the first analyzing in depth the Spanish model of the first ladyship. The fourth article represents a comprehensive analysis of the whole research on France, Poland and Spain and is a response to the main investigation question. Although the four articles were composed as separate and independent units, with different research aims, they all create a coherent ensemble. The field of the first ladyship is at the crossroads of several academic fields with a clear dominance of three of them: political sciences, gender studies and media studies. Each of the articles focuses on a particular aspect and on a different academic field, keeping however connectors with the rest of the published articles.

The first article entitled "The media portrayal of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish newspapers. Analysis of the press coverage on the Queen Sofia in *El País* and *El Mundo*, May 2011 to August 2012" and published in the journal *Comunicació* focuses on two issues: firstly, on the attitude of two main Spanish newspapers toward the royal spouse and secondly, on the public image of Queen Sofía and the place she occupies on the public stage as reflected in press items.

The second article entitled ""Annus Horribilis" and its impact on the royal image: How scandals influenced Queen Sofía of Spain's press coverage in newspapers *El País* and *El Mundo* from 2012 to 2014" and published in *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico* analyzes the impact of political crisis on the role of the first lady and on the media frame on her. The continuation of the first article, ""Annus Horriblis"…"

analyzes how the media changed their frame on the Queen during the institutional crisis of the Crown and underlines the political empowerment of the Spanish queen.

The third article, "Queen Sofia of Spain as the embodiment of traditionalist womanhood. Analysis of the gossip press coverage on the Queen from 2011 to 2014", was published in *Journal of Gender Studies*. The main focus of the article lied in the analysis of propagation of gender stereotypes by the gossip magazine *¡Hola!* and a particular use of the figure of Queen Sofía as the embodiment of traditionalist values regarding the Spanish woman and her place within Spanish society. This paper centers its attention on the cultural role of the first lady as the highest representative of the national womanhood.

The fourth article, "Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain" and to be published in December 2016 in the journal *Analisi*, is a compilation of all the results from France, Poland and Spain and a presentation of general results. The aim of this article was to propose some general lines of international comparison of the first ladyship in democratic countries and explanation of the tendency regarding empowerment of heads of state's spouses recently.

Because of time limits and despite candidate's efforts, papers analyzing in details the French and Polish cases could not be included to this thesis as they are still under revision in scientific journals. However, those results were presented on scientific conferences in France and in the United Kingdom. Moreover, the fourth article contains as well general findings concerning those two countries.

b) SUMMARY PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY-CASES

- **<u>Poland</u>**

Poland is an example of a post-communist country from Central Europe, classified today as a full democracy (Sparks, 2008). It is a parliamentary republic with a politically weak head of state and a prime minister as in the fact executive chief of the State (Antoszewski, 2012). This model is common to the majority of the democratic states in the world. However, Polish case represents one particularity which is the fact of electing the President in direct elections (Kowalski, 2008). That gives to the president a very strong visibility and attracts interest of the media and the public eye.

Following Freedom House Index from 2015 Poland is a free country, with guaranteed civil and political rights. The same year, Press Freedom Index classified Poland on the 18th position regarding journalists' liberty to exert their profession. Additionally, Gender Development Index in 2014 placed Poland on the 36th position among countries with very high human development.

The first ladyship appeared in Poland in 1990, with the collapse of the communist regime and the installation of the democratic system. Before that date such a function could not be implemented in the political environment as it was impeded by ideological, political, gender and media factors. With the dismantling of communism, new political but also social and economic realities were built upon influences from Western democracies (Sztompka, 1996). In this new realm, the institution of the first ladyship appeared naturally during the tenure of the first democratically elected president of Poland, Lech Wałęsa. Since his presidential appointment in December 1990, Poland has had five first ladies.

TABLE 1 CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST LADYSHIP IN POLAND

Name of the first lady	President	First lady's tenure	Picture
Danuta Wałęsa	Lech Wałęsa	1990-1995	(Official portrayal of the Presidential Family retrieved from autobiography of Danuta Wałęsa, *Marzenia i nadzieje*)
Jolanta Kwaśniewska	Aleksander Kwaśniewski	1995-2005	(Picture by Slawomir Kaminski, Gazeta Wyborcza)
Maria Kaczyńska	Lech Kaczyński	2005-2010	(Picture by PolskaPresse)
Anna Komorowska	Bronisław Komorowski	2010-2015	(Official portrayal of the presidential couple retrieved from the webpage of the President of Poland)

Agata Kornhauser-Duda	Andrzej Duda	2015 - ongoing	
			(Official portrayal of the presidential couple offered to the Norwegian Kings in 2015)

- **France**

France is a semi-presidential republic that institution and functioning is defined by the 1958 Constitution of the V Republic (Hamon & Troper, 2011). In this hybrid political system the prime minister and the government are responsible before Parliament, yet the main leader of the executive branch is the president who is at the same time "the first national arbiter and responsible" (Massot, 2014). This dominance of the president was reinforced with the modification of the Constitution in 1962 and the introduction of the presidential election in the universal suffrage.

As for the county's democratic standards, in 2015 Freedom House Index classified France as a free country, guaranteeing civil and political liberties and Press Freedom Index placed it on the 28th position in its press liberty's classification. Regarding gender inequalities, France occupied in 2014 the 22nd position in the Gender Development Index and was classified as a country with very high human development.

It is difficult to clearly define the beginning of the first ladyship in France because of the public inactivity of the spouse of the first president of the V Republic, Yvonne de Gaulle (Widlak, 2015a). The function took a genuine takeoff in the 1970s when

Valery Giscard d'Estaing, under the influence of the media success of Jacky Kennedy, propelled his wife, Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing, on the public stage (Bard, 2007). Since then, the first ladyship got politicized since the tenure of Danielle Mitterrand (1981-1995) and strongly mediatized in the middle of 2000s (Widlak, 2015a).

TABLE 2 CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST LADYSHIP IN FRANCE

Name of the first lady	President	First lady's tenure	Picture
Yvonne de Gaulle	Charles de Gaulle	1959-1969	(The de Gaulle during a visit in Grenoble, France in 1968, copyright DALMAS/SIPA)
Claude Pompidou	Georges Pompidou	1969-1974	(The Pompidou at a press conference in 1970, source: AFP)
Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing	Valéry Giscard d'Estaing	1974-1981	(New Year's Wishes from Elysee, 1975, source: AFP)

Danielle Mitterrand	François Mitterrand	1981-1995	 (The Mitterrand during a State visit in Belgium, source: AFP)
Bernadette Chirac	Jacques Chirac	1995-2007	 (The Chirac in 1995; source: Reuters)
Cécilia Sarkozy	Nicolas Sarkozy	2007	 (The Sarkozy at the G8 Summit in 2007, source: Abaca)
Carla Bruni-Sarkozy	Nicolas Sarkozy	2008-2012	 (The presidential couple in 2011; picture: AFP / Lionel Bonaventure)
Valérie Trierweiler	François Hollande	2012-2014	 (The presidential couple in 2013; source: AFP / Charles Platiau)

- **Spain**

Spain is a parliamentary monarchy with the monarch as the head of state. Following the Spanish Constitution, the King embodies the unity of the country. However, despite the representative role, his political prerogatives are very weak. This model is common to European monarchies, except Vatican, an absolute theocratic monarchy. Democracy was born in Spain in 1975 after the fall of the authoritarian regime of General Franco. In 1978 the Constitution established the parliamentary monarchy as the governing form in Spain.

According to Freedom House Index 2015, Spain is a free country respecting civil and political freedom. The country is situated on the 33rd position in the ranking of press liberties by Press Freedom Index and on the 26th position in the Gender Development Index from 2014 classifying itself to the group of countries with a very high human development.

In a constitutional monarchy the role of the first lady belongs to the Queen. In Spain Queen Sofía fulfilled her duties for more than three decades, since 1978 to 2014, becoming an important part of the institutional communication of the Royal Household of Spain (Widlak & Pont, 2015). In 2014 she stepped out of her duties after the abdication of her spouse, King Juan Carlos II. She was replaced by Queen Letizia, her daughter-in-law and the wife of King Felipe VI.

TABLE 3 CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST LADYSHIP IN SPAIN

Name of the Queen	King	Tenure	Picture
Queen Sofía	King Juan Carlos II	1978-2014	 (Official portrayal of the Kings retrieved from the webpage of the Royal Household)
Queen Letizia	King Felipe VI	2014-ongoing	 (Official portrayal of the Kings, retrieved from the webpage of the Royal Household)

c) RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research aimed to respond to one general and three detailed objectives:

General objective: Offering a comparative and interdisciplinary analysis on first ladyship in democratic countries through the analysis of first ladyship's models existing in France, Poland and Spain:

- detecting similarities and differences among the first ladyship in the studied countries and seeing if a comparison with the American case is possible
- disclosing main trends and categories within the different models of first ladyship
- verifying the initial hypothesis of the research about a global influence of the development of women's rights and mass media impact on the empowerment of the institution of the first lady in democratic countries

Objective 1: Understanding the role of the modern first lady, especially regarding her actions on the public stage, and public expectations toward her activity and as well as her place within the office of the head of state

Objective 2: Explaining how women's empowerment, especially that on the political level allowed first ladies to legitimize and institutionalize their role and how gender stereotypes jeopardize this advancement

Objective 3: Understanding the media influence on the first ladyship, both positive and negative and contextualizing it within the mark of recent tendencies dominating modern press, such as privatization, personalization, tabloidization etc.

d) Methodology presentation

i) Challenges while elaborating the investigation plan

The first ladyship is an original and multifaceted theme in which still many things are still to discover. Those particularities makes the first ladyship a strongly interesting and at the same time challenging subject of investigation, as the researcher has to face up to two main difficulties: a relative poverty of sources and the methodological complexity of the subject.

Although a growing popularity of first ladies on the popular, but also the scientific level, is a recent phenomenon. Concerning the academic field, sources are still limited and concern in their great majority historical works or case studies of particular first ladies. The only exception in the matter are the United States where the first ladyship studies are recognized both as an independent category of research and as an extension of presidential and gender studies (Stooksbury & Edgemon, 2003). However, despite the advancement in the field comparing to other countries, many American scholars consider the development of the discipline as restrained due to a historical lack of academic interest. The principal reason of this disregard is considered to be the gendered attitude of researchers toward the subject (Sufaro, 2007; Watson, 1997; Eksterowicz & Watson, 2000; Scobie, 1995; …). Following Watson (1997), "it could be argued that she (the first lady) is the second most powerful person in the world, even though some scholars dismiss the effort to formalize a field of study of her as "trivial" or unworthy of serious academic attention" (p. 805).

American scholarship on first ladyship was born in 1970s and genuinely developed in 1990s during the tenure of Hillary Rodham Clinton (Stookbury & Edgemon, 2003). Rooted in historical and biographical studies, that provided "an appreciation

for the formal power of the first lady" (Borrelli, 2002, p. 27), first ladyship attracted attention of political scientists who intended to analyze patterns and create typologies of the first ladyship (Stookbury & Edgemon, 2003). Subsequently, the subject also attracted attention of feminist scholars (Gutin, 2008; Templin, 1999; Parry-Giles & Blair, 2002; Simonton, 1996; …) and media researchers (Burns, 2005; Beasley, 2005; Scharrer & Bissel, 2000; Winfield & Friedman, 2003; …).

The interdisciplinary character of the first ladyship represents as well an important challenge at the hour of the methodology's construction. A combination of various methods and theories from different disciplines can create debates about analytical and methodological constructs and the validity of results of the research among scholars. The first ladyship studies had also made a subject of such an academic dispute and no common agreement about the approach to study the field was found (Watson, 2003). Additionally, the international component of this particular research obliges the scholar to take into account additional variables such as cultural, linguistic and national differences between the studied countries. Although a scientist should not however expect to be completely free from influences of the said variables, (s)he should take them into consideration to minimize the possible bias in results. Comparative studies, particularly popular since the salience of globalization, represent thus an epistemological difficulty as the researcher constantly balances between the risk of a theoretical universality and a too strong contextualization, inhibiting any comparison (Livingstone, 2003).

Taking into account the challenges of this research, the PhD candidate had to face two important issues: carefully choose cases to study that at the same time would allow a comparison and show potential variety of first ladyship models and propose a method of investigation that would answer thoroughly the research questions with the available sources. Being aware of the difficulty of the task, especially on

the methodological level, the aim was thus to create a *workable* methodology that would produce relevant findings.

ii) SELECTION OF STUDY CASES

Nowadays, the institution of the first lady, in a less or more developed form, exists in almost all the countries in the world. Facing the plethora of cases to analyze, the choice was based on the presumption of existence of national, region or cultural models of first ladyship, rather than on the analysis of first lady's tenure of particular women fulfilling the office. In consequence, several conditions were set:

- political system must be stable; in order to evaluate the political and public power of the first ladyship institution in one country, it is necessary to eliminate the variability produced by drastic changes in the political landscape.

- media in the country must be free; in order to analyze the influence of the media on the first ladyship in the country and first ladies use of media during their tenures, it is important to eliminate the factor of State's censorship.

- women must be granted with rights; in order to study the impact of women empowerment and the evolution of the first lady's office, it is necessary that in the studied country women's rights were ensured.

All those preconditions naturally turned the choice of study cases toward democratic countries that meet the said requirements.

In the next step, the aim was to detect differences in different models of the first ladyship based on variability among political cultures in order to analyze how the first lady's office develops in countries where heads of state enjoys different levels of power and to discover whether and how the public visibility of the head of State influences that of the first lady. Ultimately, the selection concerns countries that provide their heads of State with different prerogatives. Simultaneously, it was decided to exclude the case of the United States considering that there existed a risk of a partial redundancy with some existing works. Instead, despite of the fact of not being properly included in the theme of the research, the American first ladyship was treated as a key example, outstanding thanks to its longevity and influence that it finally had on the development of the first ladyship in the world. In the end three countries were selected for the investigation: Poland, a parliamentary republic since 1989, France, a semi-presidential republic since 1958 and Spain, a constitutional monarchy.

Regarding the time period of the analysis, the first design of the research encompassed the span of time going from the 1990s, when the first ladyship would develop the most intensively worldwide, until modern days. However, after some month of investigation, it became clear that it was impossible to study the modern form of the first ladyship in each country without understanding its historical evolution, marked by political, cultural, social and economic changes in the country. Subsequently, instead of choosing a firm timescale, the period of analysis was adapted individually to each case with aim to ensure a deep understanding of each case.

The Polish case was analyzed since 1990, when the first freely elected president entered into office, until the end of 2014. During those 25 years, four presidential spouses fulfilled the function of the first lady (please refer to Table 1 Chronology of the first ladyship in Poland on the page 45). Regarding the French first ladyship the period of 1958-2014 (the year when Valérie Trierweiler separated from Francois

Holland) was adopted, including eight first ladies (please refer to Table 2 Chronology of the first ladyship in France on the page 47). As for the Spanish example the time-lapse was shorter as until 2014 only one woman detained the title of the Queen of Spain (please refer to Table 3 Chronology of the first ladyship in Spain on the page 50) and the first analysis of her tenure showed that the model did not evolve much except after 2011 when a profound institutional crisis touched the Spanish Crown. In consequence, a time period was reduced to the last five years of the Queen Sofía's tenure, being judged as sufficient to display all the characteristics of the model and changes that took place after 2011.

iii) MIXED METHODOLOGY

(1)   PRESS CONTENT ANALYSIS

At the hour of choosing the most appropriate media to analyze, the PhD candidate was confronted to a hard choice of limitation to one support. It was decided that the press was the most suitable medium:

- The press content analysis is, next to the documentary research, one of the most popular methods of investigation in the first ladyship studies. The use of this method seems particularly suitable in this case as at the same time it allows obtaining historical data, often unavailable from other sources, and helps in understanding the image of first ladies and the first ladyship as the institution that is shaped by the media and its evolution over time.

- The decision to favor the analysis of the written message almost automatically eliminated the content analysis of the TV news. By the same

token, long time lapses of analysis also excluded the use of digital media that developed to important size only in the 2000s.

(a) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Content analysis is an observational research method intended to study message of all forms of recorded communication (Lombard, Snyder-Duch & Campanella Bracken, 2002; Kolbe & Byrnett, 1991). It is a systematic and objective procedure, tending to accurate represent the body of the text by measuring variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 2013) and to describe and quantify phenomena (Cole, 1988). The method is particularly suitable for multifaceted and sensitive objects of study (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). The content analysis is very flexible, not only concerning the large variety of studied supports, but also concerning approaches that differ in coding schemes, origins of codes and threats to trustworthiness, classified by Hsieh & Shannon (2005) in three categories: the conventional approach in which coding categories are derived directly from the studied text; the directed approach in which the analysis starts with a theory or on the basis of relevant finding as a guidance for initial codes; and summative approach based on counting and comparing units of the analyzed document and subsequently interpreting the context. In consequence, the absence of clear guidelines makes the use of content analysis method challenging for a researcher (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). It represents as well one of the most important limitations of the method, as findings are limited to the framework of categories used in the study (Wimmer & Dominick, 2013).

The content analysis can be used for various purposes: to describe a communication content; to test hypotheses of message characteristics; to proceed

to a reality check of the media content; to assess the image of particular groups; or to establish a starting point for studies of media effect (Wimmer & Dominick, 2013). Weber (1990) established seven classic steps in the content analysis research: the formulation of the research question; the selection of the sample to analyze; the definition of categories; the planning of the coding process, including the training of the coder; the implementation of the coding process; the definition of trustworthiness; and the analysis of the results obtained through the coding process.

(b)   PRESENTATION OF THE METHOD

The design of this research was based on the logical-semantic and logical-aesthetic methods of Mucchielli (2006). The logical-semantic method defines global frames of the discourse through an analysis of frequency, themes and attitude. Those aspects were coded in the research by dates (frequency), specific description of the theme as well as their attribution to general categories (themes) and analysis of the tone and emphasis given to each first lady contextualized by the analysis of the general tone of the article (attitude). The logical-aesthetic analysis consists in analyzing the literary style in order to deepen the understanding of the media representation of a person or an event. A particular attention was thus given to the vocabulary used to describe each first lady and especially to some points: use of adjectives and connotations, presence of rhetoric and use of verbs belonging to the same category (for instance, words referring to leadership or to the family).

All coded articles had to namely quote each first lady during the time of her tenure (exception being the Queen Sofía for who shorter time-lapses were adapted),

articles referring solely to the role ("first lady", "presidential spouse", "queen" etc.) being automatically rejected.

(c) CHOICE OF SUPPORT

As for the supports to analyze it was decided to work on two different types of printed press: general information newspapers and women and gossip magazines.

General information newspapers offer the possibility of gathering information about first lady such as her public agenda and statements as well as her place in her husband's administration and on the public stage. In some cases, it also displays attitude toward the first lady of the public opinion and of other public stakeholders. Additionally, the analysis of general information newspapers is relevant of political and social context. Indeed, as press coverage reflects interests of public opinion (Schudson, 1999; Schudson, 2002), its analysis allows discovering the general attitude toward first ladyship and potential expectations toward the role. General information newspapers are also the medium enjoying the highest trust capital (Kiousis, 2001), and as such they have a great influence on public opinion and thus on the public perception of first ladies.

By the same token, women and gossip magazines represent an interesting support of research, not so much as a source of political or historical information, but rather as a vector of transmission of ideas about family, women and their place in the society (Railo, 2014; Ytre-Arne, 2011; McDonnell, 2014). They allow thus contextualizing the first ladyship's evolutions and features in cultural and sociological brackets. Additionally, because of their natural interest in women and

the emotional discourse corresponding to modern standard of political communication in which popular culture has a particular place (van Zoonen, 2005), women and gossip magazines are often used by female politicians, first ladies included, as an alternative channel of communication with voters (Demarest & Garner, 1992; Saarenmaa & Ruoho, 2014).

(d)   PRESENTATION OF THE SAMPLE

(i) GENERAL INFORMATION NEWSPAPERS

The corpus of analysis was composed of leading titles from the studied countries. It was decided to analyze one leading general information newspaper in Poland and France and two in Spain. This particular decision is justified by differences of political partisanism in journalistic culture of each of studied countries. While all of those three national models are marked by a certain politicization of the news content, various researchers argue that among the studied countries its level is the highest in Spain (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Dobek-Ostrowska, 2012; van Dalen, de Vreese & Albaek, 2012; Hanitz et al., 2011). In consequence, in order to reduce the bias the Spanish sample was increased to two contrasting press titles. Nevertheless, although Polish and French samples contained each only one press title, political sensitiveness and its implication in the framing of first ladies was taken into account during the analysis of the respective results:

- *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland): founded in 1989 as a newspaper of the democratic opposition during the semi-free elections of the same year, *Gazeta Wyborcza* reinforced its position on the Polish press market and became the second most read daily, overpassed only by the tabloid *Fakt*. Its

average daily circulation in May 2016 reached 141 652 copies[5]. *Gazeta* is the most opinion-forming newspaper following 2012 Report of the Polish Institute of Media Monitoring (Instytut Monitorowania Mediów) and was classified as "main quality daily" by Dobek-Ostrowska (2011). Ideologically, *Gazeta Wyborcza* is left-liberal and since the beginning demonstrated interest in the subject of women's issues. This can probably explain why first ladies enjoyed such an important coverage. Indeed, between 1990 and 2014 Gazeta Wyborcza published 1140 articles about Polish first ladies.

TABLE 4 COVERAGE ON POLISH FIRST LADIES IN "GAZETA WYBORCZA" 1990-2014

	Danuta Wałęsa (1990-1995)	Jolanta Kwaśniewska (1995-2005)	Maria Kaczyńska (2005-2010)	Anna Komorowska (2010-2014)	Total number of articles
Gazeta Wyborcza	111	626	170	233	1140

(Retrieved from the article *Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain*)

- *Le Monde* (France): one of the most prestigious French dailies and an international reference (Merrill, 2000), *Le Monde* was founded in 1944. It is currently the second most read general information daily with the average daily distribution of 267 897 in 2015, being exceeded by the leader of the French market, *Le Figaro*[6]. Although the daily is generally situated on the

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[5] Data following Zwiazek Kontroli Dystrybucji Prasy (Association of Control of Press Distribution) for wirtualnemedia.pl concerning Polish press market in May 2016; for further information refer to http://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artykul/fakt-gazeta-wyborcza-super-express-i-rzeczpospolita-z-najnizsza-sprzedaza-w-historii-dane-za-maj#

[6] Data following l'Alliance pour les Chiffres de la Presse et des Medias (Alliance for Number for the Press and the Media).

center-left (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), its editors claim its non-partisanship[7] and effectively, over its existence *Le Monde* has not officially supported any party (Eveno, 2004). The newspaper's editorial model consists in focusing on analysis and opinion, rather than on simple news reporting (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Between 1959 and 2014 *Le Monde* published 1477 articles about French first ladies.

TABLE 5 COVERAGE ON FRENCH FIRST LADIES IN "LE MONDE" 1959-2014

	Yvonne de Gaule (1959-1969)	Claude Pompidou (1969-1974)	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing (1974-1981)	Danielle Mitterrand (1981-1995)	Bernadette Chirac (1995-2007)	Cécilia Sarkozy (2007)	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy (2008-2012)	Valérie Trierweiler (2012-2014)	Total number of articles
Le Monde	0	4	29	360	578	78	314	114	1477

(Retrieved from the article *Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain*)

- *El País* (Spain): the newspaper was founded in 1976 in the aftermaths of the death of Dictator Francisco Franco. During the democratic transition, the newspaper was an important voice from the democratic camp (Imbert & Vidal, 1986), based on liberal and European values (Seoane & Sueiro, 2004). Despite various efforts of introducing American style of journalism based on neutrality, a tendency for advocating is still present (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In 2015 *El País* was the leader of Spanish newspaper market

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[7] Please refer to http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2010/10/30/ligne-politique-par-veronique-maurus_1433279_3232.html

with the average daily circulation of 279.404 copies[8]. Between 2009 and 2014 *El País* published 209 articles about Queen Sofía.

- *El Mundo* (Spain): a daily created in 1989, currently it forms part of the Italian media group RCS Rizzoli (García Avilés et al., 2009). Ideologically, *El Mundo* is situated on the center-right. It distinguishes itself from other leaders of the right-oriented journalism, *ABC* y *La Razón*, by its liberal and more heterogenic attitude toward various themes. Its feature is a strong emphasis on investigation journalism (Ramirez & Robles, 1991). Currently, *El Mundo* is the second most read newspaper on the Spanish market with an average daily circulation of 183.828 copies in 2015[9]. Between 2009 and 2014 *El Mundo* published 457 articles about Queen Sofía.

TABLE 6 COVERAGE ON QUEEN SOFIA IN "EL PAIS" AND "EL MUNDO" 2009-2014

	Queen Sofía (2009-2014)
El País	209
El Mundo	457
Total number of articles	666

(Retrieved from the article *Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain*)

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[8] Data following La Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (The Office of Broadcast Accounting)

[9] Data following La Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (The Office of Broadcast Accounting)

The selected magazines are the top selling magazines in their respective countries. While, the Spanish and French samples are composed of articles from one magazine, Polish sample contains two of them. The decision was mainly due to a quantitative limitation of the sample caused by cultural and political situation in Poland in the 1990s. Primarily, leading luxury women's and gossip magazines in Poland are respectively a bi-weekly and a monthly (in France and Spain both are edited on a weekly basis). Secondly, in comparison with French and Spanish market of women's and gossip press, Polish market is significantly younger. Although women's magazines existed already during communism, gender biased media genuinely developed in Poland only in the 1990s and underwent since then important changes, among them cultural change of outlook on women (Lisowska-Magdziarz, 2009). This had an important influence on the (absence) of the coverage on presidential spouses as following communist tradition of (self)censorship regarding private life of politicians (Sparks, 1995) during the first half of the 1990s:

- *Viva!* (Poland): a reference in the "high life" sector, founded in 1997. Since the beginning *Viva!* has been among leader women and gossip biweeklies, currently it is the third most read biweekly in the country[10]. The magazine offers interviews or feature stories with stars and celebrities from Poland and abroad. Between 1997 and 2014 *Viva!* published 10 articles about Polish first ladies.

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[10] Following data of the Polish Association of the Control of the Press Distribution (Związek Kontroli Dystrybucji Prasy) for April 2016.

- *Twój Styl* (Poland): the leading magazine in the "luxury" sector and the most read monthly (and fields included) in Poland[11]. This monthly magazine founded in 1990 aims to write about any topic that could interest a modern Polish woman, including fashion, cuisine, and also society and politics. Every year *Twój Styl* awards the title of "The Woman of the Year". Jolanta Kwaśniewska received the award in 1998 and in 2015 Danuta Wałęsa received the title of the woman of the quarter-century. Between 1990 and 2014, *Twój Styl* published 31 articles about Polish first ladies.

TABLE 7 COVERAGE ON POLISH FIRST LADIES IN "TWOJ STYL" AND "VIVA!" 1990-2014

	Danuta Wałęsa (1990-1995)	Jolanta Kwaśniewska (1995-2005)	Maria Kaczyńska (2005-2010)	Anna Komorowska (2010-2014)	Total number of articles
Twój Styl & Viva!	2	31	5	3	41

(Retrieved from the article *Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain*)

- *Elle* (France): a weekly women magazine founded in 1945, few months after the end of the WWII with the aim of giving hope for a better future to women (Colombani, Fitoussi & Toranian, 2005). The weekly was inspired by the American luxury women's magazine, *Harper's Bazaar.* Constantly committed its first editorial line was: "Seriousness in frivolity, irony in gravity" (Soulier, 2008), *Elle* treats thus strongly diversified themes such as politics, work, sexuality, fashion and beauty. Elle maintains it's a position among the leaders of luxury women's magazines, with an average

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[11] Following data of Polish Studies of Readership (Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa) for the period November 2015 – April 2016.

circulation of 330 715 copies per issue[12]. Between 2007 and 2014 *Elle* published 169 articles about French first ladies in function.

TABLE 8 COVERAGE ON FRENCH FIRST LADIES IN "ELLE" 2007-2014

	Cécilia Sarkozy (2007)	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy (2008-2012)	Valérie Trierweiler (2012-2014)	Total number of articles
Elle	5	128	36	169

(Retrieved from the article *Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain*)

- *¡Hola!* (Spain): a reference on the Spanish market of woman and gossip press, founded in 1944. Its average weekly circulation in 2015 reached 379.084 copies, placing it on the second position on the women's weeklies market[13]. The favorite theme of *¡Hola!* are the elites and especially European royal families. Subsequently, since 1960s the magazine abundantly covers on all the members of the Spanish Royal Household. Between 2011 and 2014 *¡Hola!* published 173 articles quoting Queen Sofía.

TABLE 9 COVERAGE ON QUEEN SOFIA IN ¡HOLA! 2011-2014

	Queen Sofía
¡Hola!	173

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[12] Data following l'Alliance pour les Chiffres de la Presse et des Medias (Alliance for Number for the Press and the Media).

[13] Data following La Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión (The Office of Broadcast Accounting).

(2) DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH AND META-ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

(a) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Documentary research is one of the most common methods in social science, yet it receives little attention in comparison with other methods (Ahmed, 2010). The method is particularly suitable for qualitative study cases (Bowen, 2009) as well as for historical and cross-cultural research (Merriam, 1988). In the case of qualitative research, the documentary research method is often used as combined with another scientific method as a means of triangulation, a use of at least two methodologies to converge and confirm results (Bowen, 2009).

Documentary research is not a simple recording of facts, but a reflexive process of placing obtained information in a theoretical frame allowing a further understanding of the context of studied documents (Ahmed, 2010). It consists in organizing, structuring and interpreting the mass of obtained data (Marshall & Rossmann, 1995; Payne & Payne, 2004; Bowen, 2009). While using the documentary research method, one should keep in mind that documents are not neutral or transparent reflects, but they actively participate in construction of organizations or events they describe (Atkinson & Coffey, 2010) and as such they should be treated as "socially situated products" (Scott, 1990). During the document's analysis it is important thus to focus on three aspects: cultural context, chronology and influence of external events (Erben, 1998). Additionally, although documents are a rich source of data they also should be used carefully (Bowen, 2009). Following Scott (1990), documentary research should answer to four requirements: authenticity, assessing the truthiness and genuineness of a document; credibility composed of objective and subjective factors creating the believability of a source and a sincerity of its

author at the hour of choosing a standpoint; representativeness of a document for a totality of all relevant documents; and the meaning of a document in the analyzed context that should lead to two levels of understanding: literal and interpretative.

By the same token, the meta-analysis method allows capturing all relevant features through a rigorous secondary qualitative analysis of primary qualitative findings in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to the investigation (Timulak, 2009). Although the method is adaptable and can be declined in different forms it is composed of two essential steps: categorization of data and comparison of units through the "in vivo coding". Through this process, meaning units corresponding to the core of selected units, appear. The meta-analysis method, issued from quantitative studies, offers an interesting alternative to traditional qualitative methods creating standardized procedures and summering multiple independent studies (Arnqvist & Wooster, 1995).

(b)   PRESENTATION OF THE METHOD

The documentary research was the second important method used in this research that served to enlarge the specter of the analysis. Although the process of texts' lecture and their further analysis and the classification of information, during the whole process of investigation new titles, judged as relevant for this research, were constantly added to the corpus of analysis. It should be taken into consideration that the bibliography presented in the section "References" on the page 251 does

not contain information about all sources analyzed but only about those quoted in the presented work. The collect of documents was divided into two major blocs: documents containing direct information about first ladies and first ladyship(s) and documents contextualizing the research.

Regarding sources offering information about first ladies and first ladyship(s) a major part concerned historical information about first ladies. This kind of information was obtained through first ladies' biographies and autobiographies. Additionally, complementary information was searched in biographies of political husbands, especially in the case of Polish first ladies who did not generate many publications. By the same token, official web pages of the heads of state of the studied countries contained sections dedicated to the spouse which contained in general first lady's agenda (or its extracts), speeches or extracts of interviews. Despite the richness of information this particular source having a relatively short history provided information only about the most recent first ladies. The research of historical data was also completed by the research of impacting press articles about first ladies in the press titles other than the studied ones.

Moreover, the collect of information was also turned into the existing scholarship in the field of first ladyship. Although the specter of this particular research was very wide, a special emphasis was put on analysis of the public role of the first lady, the influence of gendered perception of the role, the institutional aspect of the role and first ladies relations with media. Finally, in order to obtain an image of the relation between particular first ladies and public opinion, the research was complemented by public opinion polls conducted by the most prestigious institutes of public opinion in each of the countries of interest: Polish CBOS, French IFOP, Spanish CIS and BRIE and American Pew Research Center.

Regarding research of documents contextualizing the research, it was decided to work on disciplines the most present in the first ladyship field. Both theoretical and

practical aspects were included. In consequence, one of the studied field was political communication with a special emphasis put on the analysis of modern trends in political communication and their evolution over time, relation of politicians and the media and gendered communication and media coverage. The documentary research also included celebrity studies, especially celebrity politicians and celebrity and emotions and media studies through the analysis of media systems and cultures in the world as well as media history. Moreover, political sciences were included through the analysis of political systems of the studied countries as well as their political history. Finally, gender studies represented another important field and concern predominantly women's history, women's place in the society, women's leadership, gendered attitude of public opinion and media and the political world.

(3)   IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

(a)   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Interviews are one of the most popular methods of data collection in qualitative studies (Seidman, 2012; Ritchie et al., 2014). Although different categorizations of interviews exist, the most common is classification by interview's structure. There are four main types of interviews: structured, unstructured, non-directive and focused interviews (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011).

In-depth, or unstructured, interview is a "face-to-face verbal exchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to acquire information from and gain an understanding of another person, the interviewee. The interviewee may be invited

to talk about their own attitudes, beliefs, behaviors or experiences, as a citizen, user, consumer or employee" (Rowley, 2012, p. 260). The method consists thus in generating information and interpreting people's perceptions through direct interactions between participants of the study and the researcher (Ritchie et al., 2014). This type of interview is particularly useful when little is known about the studied phenomenon (Burnard et al., 2008; Doody & Noonan, 2013) or when the subject is sensitive or personal (Stoke & Bergin, 2006). However, they can be unsuitable for novice researchers as they are prone to researcher's bias, when inappropriate questions are asked or when participants respond in an irrelevant way (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

This type of interviewing is characterized by several features. Firstly, in-depth interviews combine the structure with flexibility as even in the most unstructured interview there are always general topics to treat. Thereafter, they are marked by a high level of interactivity and of questioning techniques that obtain depth of explanation and exploration (Ritchie et al., 2014). Finally, interviews are generative as they create knowledge from the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). Interview method is composed of three general stages: preparation of the interview (sampling and construction of the scheme of the interview), interview leading and post-interview data treatment (Seidman, 2012; Rowley, 2012; Ritchie et al., 2014).

In-depth interviews were primarily supposed to constitute a major part of this investigation and be used to the triangulation of data. Following the designed scheme interviews were expected to be done with three types of public: first ladies, journalists and citizens. Unfortunately, the implementation of this method failed, especially with the two first publics, as in all three countries there was a strong reticence to speak about the first ladyship institution. Regarding first ladies in Poland, France and Spain, only the first Polish first lady, Danuta Wałęsa agreed to give an interview that ultimately took place in Cracow in February, 2 2013. As for journalists, the same barriers were encountered. For instance, on 42 Spanish journalists contacted between May and October 2012, only two agreed to talk. One of those journalists explained journalists' reluctance to openly speak by the fact that the access to information about the Queen and the Spanish Royal Household is very difficult and based on the good relation with the Royal Household. Consequently, journalists prefer not to divulge information in order not to jeopardize their relation with the Royal Family and thus the access to the information. Similarly, in Poland journalists were very reluctant to speak about the issue.

As for interviews with citizens, logistic and financial reasons impede a large study in the three countries and ultimately, only Polish part of the field could take place. Between 2013 and 2015, 44 interviews were led personally or over skype. Following the method of the random purposeful sampling (Sandelowski, 2000), the list of potential interviewees was created on the basis of several equally distributed criteria, such as gender (women/men), age (groups of 18-30, 31-65, 65 and more years old), hometown (city/countryside), political preferences (Left/Right/no

preferences) and level of education (only mandatory education/high-school/university). The perfectly equal distribution, presented in the Table 10, corresponded to 36 interviewees. Ultimately however, eight categories were doubled interviewed giving the final result of 44 interviews.

TABLE 10 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS IN POLAND. SAMPLING.

Number	Sex	Age	Education	Political preferences
1	F	18-30	High-school	Right
2	F	18-30	High-school	Left
3	F	18-30	High-school	No preferences
4	F	18-30	University	Right
5	F	18-30	University	Left
6	F	18-30	University	No preferences
7	F	31–65	High-school	Right
8	F	31–65	High-school	Left
9	F	31–65	High-school	No preferences
10	F	31-65	University	Right
11	F	31-65	University	Left
12	F	31-65	University	No preferences
13	F	+65	High-school	Right
14	F	+65	High-school	Left
15	F	+65	High-school	No preferences
16	F	+65	University	Right
17	F	+65	University	Left
18	F	+65	University	No preferences
19	M	18-30	High-school	Right
20	M	18-30	High-school	Left
21	M	18-30	High-school	No preferences
22	M	18-30	University	Right
23	M	18-30	University	Left

24	M	18-30	University	No preferences
25	M	31–65	High-school	Right
26	M	31–65	High-school	Left
27	M	31–65	High-school	No preferences
28	M	31-65	University	Right
29	M	31-65	University	Left
30	M	31-65	University	No preferences
31	M	+65	High-school	Right
32	M	+65	High-school	Left
33	M	+65	High-school	No preferences
34	M	+65	University	Right
35	M	+65	University	Left
36	M	+65	University	No preferences

4) RESULTS PUBLISHED IN ACADEMIC PAPERS

a) CASE STUDIES

This part concentrates on the presentation of results obtained in the first stage of the investigation, i.e. analysis of particular case studies and focused on diverse aspects of the first ladyship. It is composed of three distinctive, yet logically connected articles analyzing the case of Queen Sofía. Articles about French and Polish cases are not included in this part as they are still under revision in different journals. Nevertheless, the results were presented on various conferences (please refer to the section "Extracurriculum" on the page 188.

The first part entitled "77Media-shaped image of the first ladyship" analyses different components of the first lady's public image. It is composed of the article "The media portrayal of Queen Sofía of Greece in Spanish newspapers. Analysis of the press coverage of Queen Sofía in *El País* and *El Mundo*, May 2011 to August 2012" published in 2016 in the journal *Comunicació. Revista de recerca i d'anàlisi*. The paper shows that despite ideological and journalistic focus-orientated differences between the two dailies, the image of the Queen is slightly similar and embraces the duality of the private and the public.

The second part "Gendered vision" focuses on the strength of gendered markers making part the public image of the spouse of the head of state. With aim to fully demonstrate their plethora, it was decided to analyze women and gossip magazines, characterized by their focus on women. The article "Queen Sofia of Spain as the embodiment of traditionalist womanhood. Analysis of the gossip press coverage on the Queen from 2011 to 2014" published in *Journal of Gender Studies* examines the gendered outlook through the analysis of the coverage of the magazine *¡Hola!* on Queen Sofía. The paper displays that despite a superficial

modernity *¡Hola!* frames the queen as the embodiment of Spanish traditionalist womanhood.

The third part "Empowerment of the first lady" focuses on the case of the public and political ascension of the first lady. There exist various ways of the first lady's public acknowledgement. It can pass through a change of the general context (i.e. the rise of consciousness about women's rights), persistence of a particular first lady to extend her field of action (i.e. Danielle Mitterrand, who was the first presidential spouse in France to clearly engage in political and international matters) or particular events. The paper presented in this part, entitled ""Annus Horribilis" and its impact on the royal image: How scandals influenced Queen Sofía of Spain's press coverage in newspapers El País and El Mundo from 2012 to 2014" and was published in *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, studies the last case, that of an empowerment through an event. It shows how the major institutional crisis that touched the Spanish Royal Household in 2011 opened a way to the Queen's empowerment. Indeed, not only did the Queen increase her public actions, she also beneficiated from an empowered image in the media.

i) MEDIA-SHAPED IMAGE OF THE FIRST LADYSHIP

The media portrayal of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish newspapers.
Analysis of the press coverage of Queen Sofia in *El País* and *El Mundo*, May 2011 to August 2012

La narració sobre la reina Sofia de Grècia als diaris espanyols.
Anàlisi de la cobertura de premsa de la reina Sofia a El País i El Mundo entre maig de 2011 i agost de 2012

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75

The media portrayal of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish newspapers. Analysis of the press coverage of Queen Sofia in El País and El Mundo, May 2011 to August 2012

ABSTRACT:

This paper focuses on the narrative presented of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish dailies during the last years of the reign of King Juan Carlos I. The king's wife occupies a prominent yet legally undefined place in Spanish public life. Consequently, this position depends strongly on how the media represent her. The main objective of this study is to highlight the characteristic elements of the Queen's image and to analyze the role that the media assigned to her, taking into consideration the evolution which may have taken place in this image and role due to the series of scandals which broke out in 2012, marking the beginning of the so-called *Annus Horribilis*. The research is based on the analysis of a selection of articles from two dailies, *El País* and *El Mundo*, published between May 2011 and August 2012. The authors applied the methods of content analysis and semiotic analysis.

La narració sobre la reina Sofia de Grècia als diaris espanyols. Anàlisi de la cobertura de premsa de la reina Sofia a El País i El Mundo entre maig de 2011 i agost de 2012

The media portrayal of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish newspapers. Analysis of the press coverage of Queen Sofia in el país and el mundo, May 2011 to August 2012

RESUM:

l'article se centra en la narració realitzada als diaris espanyols sobre la reina Sofia durant els darrers anys del regnat de Joan Carles I. l'esposa del rei ocupa una posició prominent però a la vegada indefinida dins la vida pública espanyola. per tant, aquesta posició depèn de la representació que els mitjans fan de la reina. l'objectiu principal d'aquest estudi és posar en relleu els elements que caracteritzen la imatge de la reina i analizar el paper que els mitjans de comunicació li han assignat, tenint en compte la possible evolució d'ambdós en vista del començament del període d'escàndols anomenat Annus Horribilis. la recerca es basa en l'anàlisi d'una selecció d'articles publicats a *El País* i *El Mundo* entre maig de 2011 i agost de 2012. els autors hi apliquen els mètodes de l'anàlisi de contingut i de l'anàlisi de la semiòtica.

PARAULES CLAU:

Corona d'Espanya, reina Sofia de Grècia, diaris espanyols, premsa, comunicació política, celebritat política.

1. Introduction

In modern Europe, where republicanism is the dominant political system, monarchies are rather an exception than a rule. The First and Second World Wars brought about far-reaching changes in the borders of Europe and a large number of empires and kingdoms vanished from the map. The few remaining monarchies had to adapt to the new reality and face some major challenges.

The greatest change involved the paradigm of power. As European kingdoms progressively adopted the political form of constitutional and democratic monarchies, generally culminating in the aftermath of the Second World War, the center of power shifted from crowns to the people represented by Parliaments. It created a new situation in which monarchs were obliged to seek the approval of the public eye. This loss of political supremacy limited the role of the crowns and in-creased their representative function as symbols of states and nations (Balmer et al., 2006; Blain and O'Donnell, 2003). The main function of royal families thus became the staging of national symbolic.

The second important evolution took place in the process of mediatization of the European royal families. Due to the development of the media culture and consumption cultures in the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, European crowns became a part of the mass media landscape. In order to face and to control, at least partially, this "consumption of royalty" (Blain and O'Donnell, 2003), European monarchies started to create their own "mythologies" (Blain and O'Donnell, 2003) or "brands" (Balmer et al., 2006), which mainly consisted of the creation of a coherent narrative, legitimizing the existence of the Royal Household in the State.

When Spain adopted the constitutional monarchy system in 1978, Juan Carlos I as the head of the renovated Spanish monarchy had to deal with these new parameters. In the complicated political context of the years immediately following

the death of the dictator Francisco Franco, the young king concentrated his efforts on the legitimization in the public eye of the return of the monarchy to the political scene. Thanks to his attitude in favor of democracy during the Spanish Democratic Transition, he finally succeeded in building the public image of a protector of democratic values and rights, thereby ensuring public approval of the monarchic institution (Blain and O'Donnell, 2003; Herrero de Miñón, 2006; Preston, 2004a, 2004b; Powell, 1995). As the years went by and the memory of the King's role in the implantation of democracy in Spain started to fade, Juan Carlos I took up the role of a "professional" king: a political actor whose presence on the political stage guaranteed national stability and a worthy international representation.

As in the majority of modern states, King Juan Carlos I, in his capacity as Head of State, was supported by his wife, Queen Sofia of Greece. During his entire reign (1975-2014), Sofia assisted the King in official ceremonies and acted in the fields of social aid and culture. This public involvement as well as the social status of the King's spouse attracted media attention and gave her position a great public visibility. Public interest was reflected in extensive media coverage, especially in the press. Although the Queen undeniably reigned over the women's and gossip press, she was also present in the general information newspapers, considered in Spain as the most trustworthy medium (Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002). Such publicity could be positive as it helped to spread the official message of the Queen and, indirectly, that of the Crown of Spain. However, the complex relations between politics and the fourth estate do not allow public persons to control their public image completely and it becomes clear that the media have a large impact on the perception of politicians in the public eye (Stromback, 2008; Walgrave, 2008). The intensity of the spotlight cast on the Queen thus raises the question of how Spanish newspapers shape her image and of how they contribute to delivering narrative messages regarding the Royal Household.

2. Scope of investigation and methodology

This study was undertaken to analyze the Queen's public image in the Spanish newspapers in a time of progressive turmoil for the Royal Family. The investigative line was defined by two main objectives. The first was to identify the characteristic elements of the Queen's public image and the second was to analyze the role assigned by the media to Sofia of Greece on the basis of the narrative discourses of the newspapers under study.

The main method of investigation consisted of analyzing press clippings of articles from two Spanish dailies, *El País* and *El Mundo*. The selected articles were published between May 2011 and August 2012 and contained the key expression "Queen Sofia" (or its variations such as "Doña Sofia", "the Monarchs", etc.).

As regards the choice of the media to be analyzed, the general information newspapers fit optimally into the investigative scope due to their large influence on the social and political perception of the public eye (Kiousis, 2001; Schudson, 2002). According to Schudson (2002), "the media are an increasingly important and autonomous force in politics, independent of political parties". Even Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002) confirm the high confidence level which they enjoy, despite the fact that they are more skeptical about the autonomy of the Spanish newspapers, which they place within the journalistic tradition of the Southern European and Latin American press.

The decision to analyze articles from *El País* and *El Mundo* was mainly based on the prominent positions held by these papers in the Spanish newspaper market. Both are leaders of the Spanish general-information press market[14] as the flagship titles

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[14] According to the Circulation Audit Office (Oficina de la Justificación de la Difusión) and information on readership in Spain in 2013 presented in the Marco general de los medios en España 2014 and published by the Media Research Association (Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación), in 2013 *El País* had an average daily circulation of 172,400 copies and reached 4.6 million readers

of, respectively, the political left (Imbert and Vidal, 1986; Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002; Seoane & Sueiro, 2004) and right (Ramírez and Robez, 1991; Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002). In consequence, the mix of a large audience and divergent political ideologies allows a genuine impact on the Spanish public opinion to be attributed to their particular focuses. They may also be considered to offer a broader scope for analysis of the Queen's portrayal in newspapers. As to the timeline considered, the period of fifteen months between 1 May 2011 and 31 July 2012 provided an extensive range of press clippings, offering rich and solid material for the investigation. Moreover, this particular time span comprises two stages of the picturing of the Spanish Royal Household. The first stage corresponds to the period from May 2011 to March 2012, when the Spanish Royal Family enjoyed an overall positive press coverage and could influence the press focus (Zugasto, 2007). The second stage, from April 2012 to the end of July 2012, was characterized by a significant change in the focus and agenda of Spain's Royal Household due to the outburst of scandals and image-damaging situations. Those four months were the beginning of what the media commonly called the *Annus Horribilis*, namely the first image crisis of the Spanish Crown in democratic Spain[15].

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during the year. During the same period, *El Mundo* had an average daily circulation of 133,140 copies and its readership in 2013 totaled 2.8 million people.

[15] As regards "a crisis", the definition of Seeger, Sellnow and Ulmer (1998) was set out: "A specific, unexpected, and nonroutine event or series of events that create a high level of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten an organization's high-priority goals" (p. 233). In the case of the Spanish Crown, the public image got damaged, as the media coverage became more controversial and the public opinion started to express its mistrust in polls. (The significance of the rise in public dissatisfaction can be seen from an analysis of the results of annual surveys on the trust of Spaniards toward their public institutions conducted by the Center for Sociological Research or Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas. The Spanish Crown, for decades perceived as the most trustworthy political institution in Spain, suffered its first significant drop at the end of 2011 and continued to follow this negative trend in the subsequent years).

Two scientific methods, content analysis (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984; Wimmer and Dominick, 2010) and semiotic analysis (Barthés, 1964; Eco, 1978), were applied to the examination of the press clippings. The complementarity of the qualitative and quantitative approaches offered by these two methods led to the creation of a database focused on the frequency of the articles' appearance (publication dates), the position of the articles in the newspapers (section) and their appearance in geographical editions (national or local), agenda-setting (determination of the primary and secondary subject of each article), emphasis placed on the Queen (measured on a scale of 1 to 4, 1 being an article featuring the Queen and 4 being a mere mention of the Queen's name in the text) or on other members of the Royal Family mentioned in the articles (adopting the same system as applied to the Queen), political and social context, visual complementarity (analysis of pictures accompanying texts), role attributed to the Queen (use of names, description of her functions and actions), and the attitude of the newspapers toward Queen Sofia (tone of the article, use of connotations, names, adjectives, verbs and rhetoric).

The main investigation methods were complemented by documentary research. The greatest interest was given to books and scientific articles presenting and analyzing different aspects of the reign of King Juan Carlos I (Herrero de Miñón, 2006; Powell 1995; Preston, 2004a, 2004b; Vilallonga, 1993; etc.). On reading these texts, special attention was given as well to the Queen and to her public actions and interactions that had interfered with her private and public affairs.

The documentary investigation also included popular literature, especially biographies of the Queen (Carol, 2012; Eyre, 2012; Peñafiel, 1994, 2008; Urbano, 2009; etc.). Despite a lack of scientific rigor, these books were valuable testimonies on the Crown and the Queen, as they were often written by journalists who had direct access to La Zarzuela. They therefore offered an interesting, albeit sometimes controversial, outlook on royal affairs.

The last part of the documentary research tended to expand the understanding of the modern European monarchies, their relations with the media and the public opinion (Balmer et al., 2006; Blain and O'Donnell, 2003; Van Dalen, 2012; Macia and Herrera, 2009) and democracy (Bogdanor, 1998; Ünaldi, 2012), and the way of understanding the modern role of the wives of heads of State, commonly called first ladies (Beasley, 2005; Burns, 2008; Le Bras-Chopard, 2009).

3. Results

3.1. Thematic structure of the press coverage of Queen Sofia

The press clippings analyzed for this paper comprised 245 articles, including 68 articles published in *El País* and 177 articles in *El Mundo* (for the number of articles per month, see table 1). This large number of articles covering Queen Sofia shows that the Spanish press, like the press in other monarchic countries in Europe, considered Sofia of Greece, in her capacity as a member of the Royal Household and as the wife of the Head of State, to be a "marketable" subject (Blain and O'Donnell, 2003).

The analysis of the articles allowed a categorization of subjects. Three groups were considered on the basis of the subjects' features: structural, traditional and transitory. The first group, corresponding to structural subjects, refers to events that the newspapers cover regularly, on an annual basis. Their extent is limited to the holidays of the Bourbon family in Palma de Mallorca and to their official or unofficial participation in national holidays. Structural subjects can concern both private and public affairs.
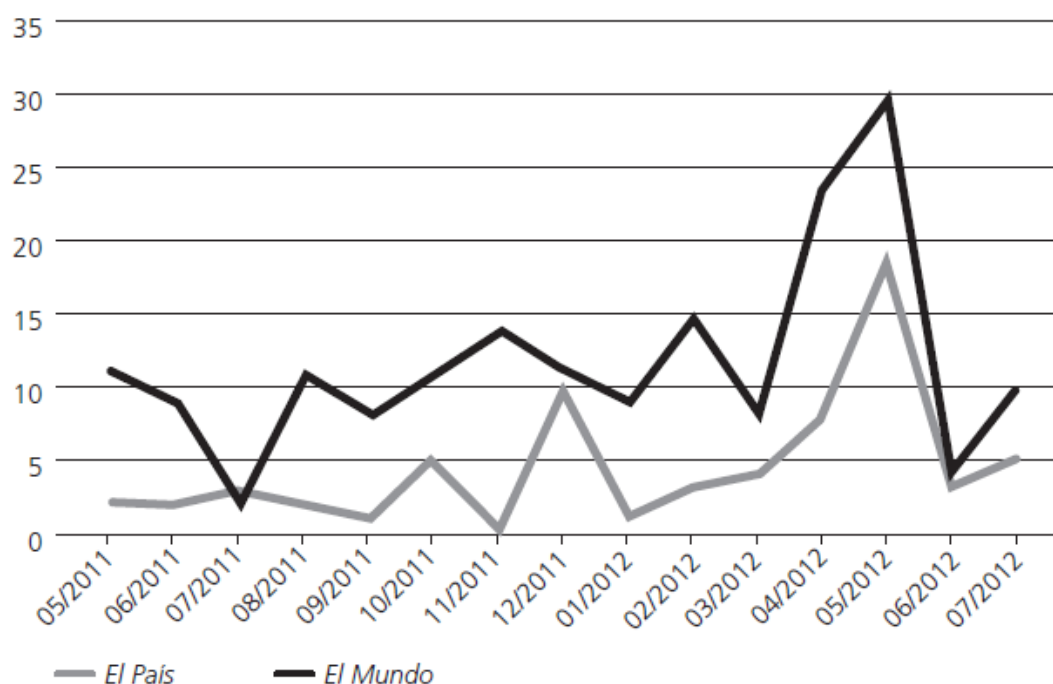
Table 1. Number of articles in *El País* and *El Mundo* on Queen Sofia (on a monthly basis)
Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of data collected from the press clippings analyzed.

Traditional subjects are those usually covered by the press when reporting on Queen Sofia. These themes appeared in the newspapers for many years and formed the core of the press coverage on the Queen. Generally, they are related to the Queen's public duties, such as her participation in cultural and social projects or the diplomatic representation of the Crown of Spain abroad. This is the most frequent category, yet articles that are classified here are usually shorter and more descriptive. Transitory subjects include those that were covered during a limited period of time. They represent a disruption in the agenda dominated by traditional subjects. In most cases, transitory subjects concern private affairs, such as the first communion ceremony of one of the royal grandsons or the Queen's legal battle against a webpage that had used her image abusively. Nevertheless, at times they concern public events that do not relate to the Queen's traditional duties, for example the lowering of the Royal Household's budget at the beginning of 2012.

Unsurprisingly, both newspapers favored traditional subjects, especially in the case of *El Mundo*, which extensively covered the Queen's participation in local events in its regional editions. Nevertheless, as from the end of 2011 the press coverage started to be dominated by transitory subjects, mainly related to various scandals damaging the Crown's public image and leading finally to the *Annus Horribilis*. The first scandal, which was a prelude to the image crisis that affected the Royal Household of Spain in 2012, came to light when the Spanish media started to inform about the possible involvement of the royal son-in-law, Iñaki Urdangarin, in a corruption affair (called by the press the "Institute Nóos case"). The media information about various details concerning the financial scandal and the legal decision to investigate the involvement of the Duke of Palma de Mallorca finally started to impact negatively the public image of the Royal Family. In December 2011 the media informed about the Royal Household's difficulties in facing the situation. Although the King said publicly that everyone was equal before the law, the Queen refused to break off contact with her daughter's family. Moreover, the corruption accusation made against Urdangarin, combined with a difficult economic situation in a Spain still struggling with a financial crisis, drew public attention to the budget of the Royal Household. Under social pressure, for the first time in history the King made public the royal accounts and limited the expenditure of La Zarzuela for the following year.

After four months of relative calm, April 2012 was marked by an almost simultaneous outburst of two scandals involving other members of the Royal Family. On 9 April, the press informed that Felipe Froilán de Marichalar y Borbón, one of the Monarchs' grandsons, had been hospitalized for a wound in his foot. It was discovered afterwards that Froilán had shot himself while playing with a firearm belonging to his father. The accident stirred controversy as the use of firearms is forbidden in Spain to people under the age of 14 (Froilán was 12 years old at that time). However, a true media storm arose less than a week later when

the information about the King's operation after his accident on a private trip to Botswana electrified the media in Spain. On the following days, new details of this affair produced controversy: the King's costly expedition was paid for by a Saudi businessman; during that trip Juan Carlos I had hunted legally protected animals, which countered his official image as an animal protector and as the president of honor of an organization for the protection of wildlife; lastly, he had been accompanied on this trip by Corinna zu Sein-Wittgenstein, at that time his adviser. This latter information fueled rumors about the King's purported love affair with Corinna. Consequently, the media started to publish articles giving intimate details about the King's personal life. Alongside the significance of this change, in strictly quantitative terms May 2012 marked an absolute peak of information, as shown in table 1.

Date	Event	Subject	Number of articles in *El País*	Number of articles in *El Mundo*
2011 and 2012	Royal holidays in Palma de Mallorca	Structural	4	9
2011 and 2012	Appearance during national holidays	Structural	7	7
June 2011	Opening of Balenciaga Museum in Getaria	Traditional	0	4
October 2011	Ibero-American Summit in Asunción, Paraguay	Traditional	3	0
November 2011	World Microcredit Summit in Valladolid	Traditional	0	10
Since the end of 2011	Corruption scandal involving Iñaki Urdangarin and its consequences for the private affairs of the Royal Family	Transitory	6	10
December 2011, January 2012	Budget of the Royal Household of Spain	Transitory	5	6
January 2012	Celebration of the European Green Capital Award for Vitoria	Traditional	2	8
April 2012	Firearm accident of Felipe Froilán de Marichalar	Transitory	1	7
April and May 2012	King's accident in Botswana and marital problems of the Monarchs	Transitory	15	13
April and May 2012	Dispute over Gibraltar and deterioration of Spanish-British diplomatic relations	Traditional	8	12

Table 2. Among the 245 articles under analysis from 1 May 2011 to 31 July 2012, most of the events covered related to Queen Sofia

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of data collected from the press clippings analyzed.

During this period, *El País* devoted 28% of all its coverage (19 articles) to this subject as opposed to 17% for *El Mundo*, despite the fact that *El Mundo* published one-third more articles than *El País* (30 articles).

3.2. Portrayal of the Queen by *El País* and *El Mundo*: struggling between public duties and personal affairs

The portrayal of Queen Sofia in the newspapers was characterized by a clear dichotomy based on differences between the spheres of monarchy (connected to the political institution) and of royalty (relative to the dynasty). The Queen was presented in a twofold role: that of "a great professional"[16], a stakeholder on the Spanish political scene, and that of a royal wife and mother. Both roles are strongly influenced by the emotions.

The role corresponding to the monarchic paradigm portrayed Queen Sofia in her official responsibilities as the Spanish Queen and a member of the Royal House-hold of Spain. Although no law defines the public duties of the Spanish Queen, as in the case of American first ladies (Burns, 2008), the media coverage of her activities defines de facto her field of action in the public eye. *El País* and *El Mundo* thus participated in this definition of the Queen of Spain's role. Numerous articles illustrating her everyday official activities created a public image of this function. Through their media coverage, they centered the Queen's role on representative functions, such as participation in various social and cultural events, especially in the fields of music, youth and sport promotion, and the representation of the Bourbon dynasty on the international scene, for instance by participating in meetings organized by other royal families in Europe.

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[16] The expression "great professional" was popularized by the book based on an interview with the King, El Rey: conversaciones con D. Juan Carlos I de España by Vilallonga (1993). Juan Carlos I used those words in the interview with the author to describe his wife.

In terms of political power, it may be observed that *El País* presented the Queen as a public person lacking any genuine political power. Her presence was perceived as being limited to mere presence, as may be deduced from the general use in the articles of the verb "to attend" or the expression "to be present". The articles relating to the representative actions of the Queen were generally short and descriptive and there was no particular interest in analyzing her role on the public scene. They were generally published in the "Society" section, indicating the relatively small importance attributed to the Queen's public activity.

Nevertheless, the image crisis affecting the Spanish Crown stimulated *El País'* journalists to revamp Queen Sofia's role in Spanish politics. Articles became longer and more analytical. Several feature stories were published between May and July 2012. They analyzed the role of the Queen in past events such as the coup of 1981, and her influence on the relation between Juan Carlos I and General Franco or on the preparation of Prince Felipe for his role as the future King of Spain. Lastly, it was affirmed that Queen Sofia had a positive influence on the stability of the monarchic institution. Moreover, the daily also recognized her "soft power" based, on the one hand, on her ability to assuage situations and to foster dialogue and, on the other, her sensitivity, illustrated by her engagement in social and cultural projects.

By contrast, *El Mundo* adopted a more ambiguous attitude towards the matter of the Queen's power on the public scene, an attitude that varied according to the national or regional editions involved. The Queen was covered more frequently in regional editions (97 articles relating to representative duties of the Queen were published in regional editions as opposed to only 38 articles on the same subject in the national edition), although she was given little emphasis. Her name appeared often in titles or in the opening sentences of articles, without any further mention being made of her in the rest of the article. She was thus treated as a sort of "lure" since she could draw the attention of readers and her presence at any event

enhanced its prestige. On the contrary, the national edition gave her greater importance on the public scene and covered significant events, such as official trips abroad. Although the daily did not directly analyze the importance of the Queen's diplomatic actions, events such as her trip to the Philippines in 2012 within the framework of a cooperation program between the two countries or her absence from the ceremony of the 60th anniversary of the accession of the British Queen, Elisabeth II, during that same year, obtained thorough coverage in *El Mundo*. This may indicate that the right-wing daily attributes Sofia of Greece considerable international importance. Moreover, the analysis of linguistic aspects of *El Mundo*'s articles supports this conclusion. The common use of connotative verbs such as "to preside", "to inaugurate" and "to decide" stressed the Queen's leadership and helped to create an image of an independent and powerful stakeholder. More often than in *El País*, articles in *El Mundo* relating to the Queen's public actions were published in the "Spain" or "International" sections.

The role corresponding to the royal paradigm, which defined the Queen by her position within the Spanish reigning family, is the second facet of her public image. Despite being the essential part of the Queen's image, the role of royal wife and mother was secondary in the general information newspapers. However, since the outburst of scandals involving various members of the Royal Household of Spain and the change in the media coverage of the Queen, this secondary aspect of the Queen's public image has been emphasized.

The recent significance of this role, belonging traditionally to the women's and gossip press, indicates major changes in the discourse of *El País* and *El Mundo*. First of all, a process of tabloidization, in which hard news is replaced by soft news such as entertainment and scandal (Esser, 1991; Peters, 2011), marked the Queen's portrayal in both newspapers. The predominance of scandals over the traditional subjects also modified the tone of articles. The dominating neutrality of articles faded because of the introduction of emotional elements. *El País* and *El Mundo*

centered on the Queen's frustration, loneliness and love for her family. Moreover, the focus on the Queen during the scandals as a victim rather than as a person responsible for the negative public image of the Crown (table 3) creates an impression of compassion addressed to the Queen. Such a trend is far from anecdotal but rather it allows a further observation: the way the newspapers focus on women in politics is inextricably connected to a generalized gender bias. There is an abundance of literature showing that women are underrepresented in news coverage (Lundell and Ekstrom, 2008; Norris, 1997) and that, even when they finally achieve coverage, women are presented more in their private life than in the parliament, more attention is paid to their appearance and age, and they are often mentioned by their first name (Trimble et al., 2013; Lachover, 2012). Nowadays this trend is strengthened all the more by the process of personalizing politics so typical of today's political life and by the appearance of celebrity politics (Wheeler, 2013; Marshall, 1997). Even if it is common to both men and women, this personalization has a specifically negative effect on the latter. As personalization concentrates especially on the values and attributes of womanhood such as appearance, age, motherhood and other gender stereotypes, the resulting focus increases the pre-existing distance between the idea of womanhood and public life (Van Zoonen, 2006). However, when set against the focus of celebrity politics, in which we can include Queen Sofia, the gap is widened even more. Indeed, "while individual male and female politicians may have to come to terms with the same kind of pressures, on the level of gender discourse celebrity politics seems to produce a stronger symbolic distance than before between hegemonic ideas of femininity and the political sphere" (Van Zoonen, 2006: 297).

The second phenomenon that is visible through the changes in the discourse on the Queen in *El País* and *El Mundo* was the change in the relations between La Zarzuela and journalists, and the King's loss of control over the agenda. During his reign, Juan Carlos I benefited from a certain complicity of the media based on the role he

played during the transition to democracy (Preston, 2004a; Powell, 1995; Zugasto, 2007). The media, wishing to protect the Spanish democracy, decided to protect the symbol of Spanish political change as well. This protection, which took the form of a partial self-censorship, mainly translated into avoiding the publication of private news that could be annoying for La Zarzuela. This attitude was not unrelated to *El País* and *El Mundo*, whose coverage never included controversial events. Private affairs occupied a small place and their focus was controlled by La Zarzuela; for instance, the Royal Family's holidays in Palma de Mallorca, a subject that was generally covered by all the media, were a traditional aspect of the communication strategy of Spain's Royal Household. Likewise, private affairs that should theoretically not be covered by the press, such as the first communion of one of the royal grandsons, were covered with a professional photograph of the respective child with his grandparents, leading one to conclude that La Zarzuela helped the media to disseminate this information. Although reports were never published on the matrimonial life of the Monarchs, Queen Sofia was presented as a loving and caring mother and grandmother. The return of Juan Carlos I from his safari trip to Botswana profoundly destabilized the balance of power between the Crown and the fourth estate in favor of journalists (Widlak and Pont, 2015). In this new context, the media started to cover themes that had been protected by the self-censorship policy until then.

In this particular context of tabloidization and liberalization of the press coverage of Queen Sofia, the focus on the Queen's role as a royal wife and mother became more emotional and more subjective. *El País* decided to portray the Queen in her private role by adopting an institutional angle of analysis. The paper recognized unbreakable bonds between the monarchy and royalty and confirmed that the stability of the monarchic institution is based above all on the internal stability of the Royal Family. Consequently, Queen Sofia started to be seen as the essential stakeholder within Spain's Royal Household with a genuine influence on the

preservation of the monarchic institution. Her capacity to deal with her personal problems and to act for a greater good thus became the main focus of attention for *El País'* journalists.

Event	Portrayal of the Queen in *El País*	Portrayal of the Queen in *El Mundo*
The budget of Spain's Royal Household in the context of the economic crisis and the Institute Nóos case	Indirect representation in the press coverage of the presentation of the Royal Household's budget and of La Zarzuela's decision to lower it in comparison to the previous years	Indirect representation in the press coverage of the presentation of the Royal Household's budget and of La Zarzuela's decision to lower it in comparison to the previous years
The King's knee operation in the context of his health problems (January 2011)	A wife, always close to her husband	A wife, close to her husband, who gives good news (positive information about Juan Carlos I's health condition)
The Nóos case and its negative influence on the Royal Family's unity	A person divided between her official role as a queen obliged to follow La Zarzuela's official decision to break off contact with the Duke and Duchess of Palma de Mallorca, and as a mother who cannot easily separate herself from her daughter's family	A mother, but above all a grandmother, who refuses to leave behind her daughter's family even if her son-in-law is a suspect in a corruption case
The firearm accident of Felipe Froilán de Marichalar	A grandmother often visiting the hospital during Froilán's stay. A public person criticized for extending a chauvinist tradition according to which women try to repair mistakes made by men	A grandmother, the first to arrive at the hospital (with the mother). A public person who tries to downplay the seriousness of the situation
The Botswana safari and the Monarchs' marital problems	A person who lives in a contractual marriage and only keeps up appearances for the sake of her family and the institution she represents	A woman hurt by her husband's infidelity and who suffers because of the position she finds herself in because of her husband

Table 3. Portrayals of the Queen by *El País* and *El Mundo* in events damaging the Crown's public image

Source: Prepared by the authors on the basis of data collected from the press clippings analyzed.

In a different way, *El Mundo* adopted a societal angle in which the Royal Household was seen as a family which should serve as an example for the Spaniards because of its prominent position, rather than being seen as a political institution. The scandals involving different members of the Royal Family were thus seen in this case not as a crisis of the institution but as a crisis of values. The general discourse about the Crown became more moralistic and negative, but even so the Queen succeeded in maintaining a positive image. A large concentration of personal affairs

led to an emphasis on feelings and emotions and to a focus on her image as a victim, suffering in silence from her family's breakdown and the loneliness in her marriage. Even if the right-wing newspaper noted some minor mistakes on the part of the Queen (for instance *El Mundo* criticized her for her lack of interest towards her husband after his accident in Botswana or for her attempts to dismiss the gravity of the use of a firearm by her grandson), in the final balance the discourse on the Queen in *El Mundo* was marked by the newspaper's approval of her moral conduct during the *Annus Horribilis*.

4. Conclusions

As a final conclusion it should be noted that the portrayal of the Queen by the newspapers using both monarchic and royal paradigms offers the press the possibility to embrace the duality of the Queen's role. Overall, the coverage of the public activities of the Queen helped to delineate the Queen's official function. However, the newspapers' discourse also supported the Crown's narrative. Indeed, the frequent coverage of the Queen's public actions created a public image of the Queen who conscientiously fulfilled her duties. Consequently, she contributed to the validation of the image of the Bourbon's dynasty as a modern reigning family that was concentrated on working for the Spanish democracy. However, despite this image of "professional Monarchs" (Blair, 2002), the newspapers did not acknowledge that Queen Sofia had any genuine political power. Her public role was limited to the traditional representative functions of a typical first lady (Beasley, 2005; Burns, 2008) and her public function was clearly presented as a complement to the King's role.

An outburst of scandals involving the Royal Household of Spain had negative consequences for the public image of the Crown and the King. It also influenced the public image of the Queen, although it may be affirmed that during the *Annus*

Horribilis she managed to maintain a positive press coverage and, paradoxically, even to improve it. In the case of Sofia of Greece, the information about her private problems allowed her image to be "humanized". Indeed, for many long years the

Queen was perceived only in the light of her official role: she was a "great professional" with "royalty in her blood" (Vilallonga, 1993: 195), but her ability to get close to the public opinion was impeded by her discretion. The new press coverage showing a woman who, on the one hand, struggled to keep her family united and, on the other, became a guarantor of institutional stability, created an emotional resonance in the discourse, which generally has a positive impact on the perception of a public person in the public eye (Dakhlia, 2008). The deconsecrating of the Queen's image and the tabloidization of her press coverage put a more intensive spotlight on her and gave rise to a new kind of a political celebrity on the Spanish public scene (Street, 2004; Babock and Whitehouse, 2005).

Despite the differences between the two newspapers, it may be observed that the depiction of the role of Queen Sofia as both a member of the Royal Household and an actor in Spanish political life does not easily adapt to the narrative parameters of a quality print medium which, by its close relationship to the public sphere, traditionally "reinforced the norm of politicians being men and portrayed women as novel exceptions" (Wright and Holland, 2014).

However, a different perception of the role of the Royal Household determined the focus that each paper adopted in its treatment of the Queen. *El País* centered its attention on the institutional aspect, whilst *El Mundo* concentrated on the royal facet. In consequence, the left-wing newspaper focused on the Queen in terms of her actions on the political scene and their influence on the stability of the institution. The right-wing daily, on the other hand, singled out her role as a mother and wife.

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"Annus Horribilis" and its impact on the royal image: How scandals influenced Queen Sofía of Spain's press coverage in newspapers El País and El Mundo from 2012 to 2014

Abstract

The present article analyzes press coverage on the Spanish Queen Sofía of Greece during a time when an outburst of scandals involving different members of the Spanish Royal Family took place. Its main objective is to display changes in the media treatment of the royal spouse caused by these scandals. Research for this article principally involved using content analysis and semiotics to examine coverage on the Queen between 2012 and 2014 in two newspapers, *El País* and *El Mundo*. Documentary research and in-depth interviews were also used. Paradoxically, findings indicate that when the media most heavily criticized the Crown, the Queen's image improved.

Keywords: Spanish press, monarchy, Queen Sofia, scandals, crisis, El País, El Mundo.

"Annus horribilis" y su impacto en la imagen de la monarquía española.

La Reina Sofía en los diarios El País y El Mundo (2012-2014)

Resumen

El presente artículo analiza la cobertura de prensa de la Reina Sofía durante el periodo de erupción de una serie de escándalos en los que se vieron implicados varios miembros de la Casa Real española. El objetivo principal de este trabajo es

estudiar los cambios operados en el tratamiento mediático de la es- posa real en el contexto de dichos escándalos. La investigación se apoya principalmente en el análisis de la cobertura de prensa de la Reina en los diarios *El País* y *El Mundo* entre 2012 y 2014, utilizando los métodos del análisis del contenido y de la semántica. La investigación documental y las entrevistas en profundidad completaron este trabajo. Los resultados principales demuestran que ante el deterioro de la imagen de la Corona, la de la Reina apuntó paradójicamente una mejoría.

Palabras clave: prensa española, monarquía, Reina Sofía, escándalos, cirsis, El País, El Mundo.

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. Research aims and scope. 3. Transforming the King and the Crown's public image; 3.1. Protection of the young Spanish democracy as the foundation of the monarchic legitimacy; 3.2. From silence to scandals: A degrading monarchic image. 4. Analysis of press coverage on Queen Sofia; 4.1. General description of the press clipping; 4.2. Portrayal of Queen Sofia by *El País* and *El Mundo*. 5. Conclusions. 6. References.

1. Introduction

Being Queen of Spain is not a political responsibility, but rather a symbolic function. The Constitution does not assign her any particular role (Abellan Matesanz, 2003) and there is no law that would do so. Nevertheless, the Queen of Spain plays an important public role in the Spanish media and abroad. She publicly represents Spain and the Spanish Crown, especially in the fields of social actions, culture, and international cooperation. Additionally, the Queen receives support from the King's

Office: the Queen's Bureau forms an integral part of the General Secretary of the Royal House, and as of 2014, the Queen's salary has become part of the Crown's budget as well.

Although the Queen lacks hard political power, she enjoys public visibility, which is essentially based on her social status. Despite the fact that her function is rooted in absolute monarchy, the Queen Consort's present-day role in Spain's parliamentary democracy is comparable to that of the modern first lady in other democratic systems. Like other spouses of heads of states, she is "a celebrity by extension", "a secondary character who exists publicly only in relation to the main character" (Le Bras-Chopard, 2009). Like other women whose popularity is strongly connected to their husbands', the Queen of Spain uses her fame to accomplish one essential goal staging the power of the King and the institution he represents before the public. In this way, her role goes beyond simply accompanying the King at official acts and visits. Ultimately, the Queen participates in creating a positive image for her husband by acting in the fields of emotion and proximity, usually inaccessible to a head of state who is concentrated on national and international politics. She complements her husband's image and builds a feeling of trust that her husband can take advantage of to win over public opinion (Le Bras-Chopard, 2009).

The Queen's dominant representative duties imply strong ties with the media. Indeed, in many countries the media serves as a connector between a spouse of a head of state and the public opinion (Beasley, 2005; Burns, 2008), just as it does for the Queen of Spain. Of course, putting the Queen in the spotlight is also a double-edged weapon, which could harm both the King and the Queen. The media holds a key position in the battle between supporters and detractors of politicians and political factions (Beasley, 2005). Consequently, political spouses like the Queen can quickly become targets of media attacks that aim to tarnish public perceptions of their husbands (Burns, 2008). Furthermore, since the Queen solely

exists in the public eye because she is the spouse of the head of state, her image inevitably depends on the popularity her husband enjoys.

The King and Queen's simultaneous influence is particularly interesting in the context of recent events that modified public perception of the Spanish Crown. King Juan Carlos I and the Crown in general have recently suffered the most important image crisis since the restoration of the monarchy in 1975. This crisis is negatively reflected in media portrayal of the King. Under these circumstances, one cannot but wonder how the media portrayed image of Queen Sofía of Greece has changed in relation to the scandals affecting different members of the Royal Family. Finally, it is pertinent to ask oneself whether the Queen's new image improves or damages public perception of the Crown.

2. Research aims and scope

The research used three principal methods: press analysis, documentary research, and in-depth interviews, all of which offered pertinent answers to the initial questions.

The primary method of investigation consisted in analyzing press clippings of different scandals concerning the Royal Family in which Queen Sofía appeared. It was decided that general newspapers, being the most prestigious and high-impact mediums in Spain, should be the data sources (Imbert and Vidal, 1986, Seoane and Sueiro, 2004, van Dalen, 2012). Among different titles, two general newspapers, center-left *El País* (Imbert, Vidal, 1986) and center-right *El Mundo* (Ramírez, Robez, 1991) were selected. The choice was based on two conditions. Firstly, *El País* and *El Mundo* are the two general information newspapers with the highest distribution[37]

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[37] According to the Office of Justification of Diffusion, El País closed 2013 with an average daily distribution of 172,400 copies. During the same period El Mundo had an average daily distribution of 133,140 copies.

and readership[38]. Secondly, the ideological contrast between these publications allows us to, on the one hand, illustrate the strong political partisanship of different newspapers in the Spanish media (Hallin, 2012), and, on the other, to get a bigger picture of how the media represents Queen Sofía.

The articles selected from these publications were those that both narrated scandals and other events damaging the image of Juan Carlos I or of the Spanish Crown, and contained words or phrases referring to the Queen (such as "Reina Sofía" or "Doña Sofía"). Moreover, only the articles published in the periods of peak media coverage on the Crown's problems between April 2012 and January 2014 were included in the research data. The first peak corresponds to April and May 2012 (covering scandals related to King's trip to Botswana, the royal grandson's accident with a firearm, and the royal son-in-law's corruption scandal); the second, from March to June 2013 (covering the King's health problems and a corruption scandal involving one of the King's daughters); the third peak takes place in September (regarding the King's health problems and the same corruption case); and the last peak goes from December 2013 to January 2014 (focusing again on the King's health problems and on the corruption case).

The analysis mixes two methods of investigation: content analysis (Taylor, Bogdan, 1984, Wimmer, Dominick, 2010) and semantic analysis (Barthés, 1964, Eco, 1978), offering complementary quantitative and qualitative text analyses as well as a qualitative analysis of the pictures accompanying the texts. These two methods were chosen to help define the media-projected image of the Queen and to understand the role and importance the media has attributed to the Queen in this particularly difficult period for the Spanish Crown. Each of the selected articles was

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[38] According to information on 2013 readership in Spain from "Marco general de los medios en España 2014", El País and El Mundo reached a turnout of 4.6 million and 2.8 million readers, respectively. "Marco general de los medios en España" is an annual publication edited by the Association for Communications Media (Asociación para los medios de comunicación).

analyzed according various factors: the interest the newspapers have shown on the subject (frequency of publication and the articles' place in the newspaper), the emphasis given to the Queen (noted from 1 to 4, 1 being an article about Queen Sofía and 4 being a single mention of her name), emphasis given to other members of the Royal Family (noted with the same system), the subject matter (namely the primary and secondary subject matters of each article), semantic analysis of the pictures accompanying the text (focusing on connections between the message of the picture and the message of the text), the description of the Queen (whether adjectives have been used, analysis of grammar structures, connotations, rhetoric, etc.) and the general contextualization of the events described in the articles.

The second method of investigation, documentary research, offered a general context and allowed for the bigger picture to come through in the investigation. Above all, it served to retrace the history of the Spanish Crown, paying special attention to Queen Sofía. It also helped define the role of a public person's spouse and analyze interactions between politics and media, especially with regards to the lionization of public life. Regarding the first topic, it is no surprise that the King has always attracted the most the public attention. However, for some years, a rising interest in the Queen can be noted. Notwithstanding the absence of scientific publications on the Queen (akin to biographies on the King by Preston (2004) or Powell (1995)), journalistic publications on the Queen have been soaring in the Spanish market (Peñafiel, 1994, 2006, Carol, 2012, Eyre, 2012). The Queen even participated in a series of interviews that were quoted in a controversial book by Pilar Urbano (2009). As for the spouses of public people, a deficiency of texts analyzing the role of the consort queen in Spain's monarchy hindered the investigation work. Consequently, it was decided to turn to texts studying the role of female spouses in presidential or semi-presidential systems and extract information that could apply to the modern queen consort. The third and final theme concerning media and politics served to understand new mechanisms governing the relationship between

the two estates and its impact on the public view. The lionization of Spanish politics (Sanders, Canel, 2004) has had a deep impact on the media and on public posture regarding public people's right to privacy (Maciá Barber, 2009) and this seems particularly relevant in terms of the recent media coverage on the Royal Family.

The third method used in this investigation involved in-depth interviews with two specialists on the Royal Family's media coverage. This particular approach allowed for analysis of possible royal influences on agenda setting, and allowed us to obtain detailed descriptions of the relationship between the Secretary of the Royal House and journalists. The first interview was held in September 2012 with Pilar Eyre, a journalist and author of various books on the Spanish Crown. The second interview took place in October 2012 with Marius Carol, director of *La Vanguardia* and former *La Vanguardia* correspondent to the Royal House. Interviews were initially intended to account for the bulk of research in this paper, but a very low response rate among journalists (only two of the thirty journalists and publications invited participated in the interviews) obstructed this plan. Thereupon, in-depth interviews became a peripheral method, and were solely used to understand or further explain particular points of interest in the research.

3. Transforming the King and the Crown's public image

3.1. Protection of the young Spanish democracy as the foundation of the monarchic legitimacy

According to Balmer et al. (2006) modern monarchies are powerful, internationally renewed brands. Crowns, whose reputations are based on decades and sometimes centuries of constant effort, are often the most popular national institutions, and their members' public activity brings measurable benefits in the fields of business, tourism, and public image.

In Europe, monarchies transmuted after World War I. The center of power shifted from dynasties to the people and democratic institutions. Thus, monarchies lost their power and since then, have strongly depended on public and parliamentary approval and consent for institutional support. This particular situation has required a constant effort on behalf of royal houses, mainly via long-term management and symbols that strengthen the crowns' positions in the public imagination (Balmer, 2006).

In Spain, Juan Carlos I was able to create this strong symbolism and legitimize his rule during the democratic transition (Beckner, 1996; Preston, 2004; Demange, 2010). The King, who was named head of state in the will of the deceased dictator, Francisco Franco Bahamonde, had to find a new place for the Spanish Crown in the new democratic reality. Although he was an important stakeholder during the political transformation (Preston, 2004), in reality, just one night had a profound impact on his public image. On February 23, 1981, a military coup broke out in Spain. A few hours after the coup, King Juan Carlos I appeared on TV, wearing the Chief of the Spanish Army uniform, defending democratic values, and calling the army to obey. At that precise moment, he altered his image from being a successor of Franco to being a defender of the Spanish Constitution (Powell, 1995, Preston, 2004, Vilallonga, 1993). In this manner, he not only strengthened his political role, but also succeeded in creating the myth of a leader who was able to protect the Spanish whole (Vilallonga, 1993). As analyzed by Herrero de Miñon[39] (2006), Juan Carlos I was able to emphasize the Crown's symbolic role of state representative by demonstrating the Crown's continuity despite regime changes. He demonstrated his authority as military leader and showed the plasticity of the Monarchy, which was able to simultaneously incarnate the unity and diversity of Spain.

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[39] Miguel Herrero Rodríguez de Miñón (PhD in Spanish Constitutional Law) is one of main authors of the Spanish Constitution.

The King's role as guarantor of the Spanish democracy not only generated massive popularity for the monarchic institution (generally expressed in yearly Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) polls on the trust people have in Spain's political institutions), but also permitted the King to enjoy a certain degree of media complicity, especially regarding his private life (Zugasti, 2007; Preston, 2004; Powell, 1995; Chicharro, 2013; Falcón, 1998; interview with Pilar Eyre, 2012). The media's attitude came about in large part due to persistent fears of another tentative coup destabilizing the country. As long as the shadow of a new overthrow was visible, the Spanish press would not attempt to weaken the King's authority nor decrease his popularity. Consequently, the media's willingness to support the Crown eventually turned into a certain form of self-censorship and in some extreme cases, blatant concealment of information. One of the most illustrative examples of this behavior was when *¡Hola!* magazine purchased nude pictures of the King in 1996. Falcón (1998), who describes this situation in her book, explains that the editor-in-chief of the gossip magazine bought said photos from a paparazzo with the sole aim of hiding them from other media players in order to protect the monarch's public image.

3.2. From silence to scandals: A degrading monarchic image

In the beginning of the 21st century, media self-censorship began to gradually relax and the initial signs of a sullying image of the King and the Spanish Crown could be observed. Their degrading image can be explained by various political, social and media factors.

At the political level, the consolidation of the Spanish democracy dispelled the specter of a future coup and consequently invited the media to rethink the public role of the King. With the solidification of the Spanish state and with the memory of the King's intervention during the coup slowly receding (Preston, 2003), the media

started to act more freely toward the King and adopted a more aggressive behavior (Powell, 1995). In parallel, the political game evolved as well. After years of entente cordiale with Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez and good relations with Prime Minister Felipe González, Juan Carlos I had to cope with two prime ministers, José María Aznar and José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, who attempted to increase their political leadership on national and international planes (interviews with Marius Carol and Pilar Eyre). These top political leaders' attitudes opened the way to criticizing and challenging the King, which had previously seemed inconceivable.

On the social level, new generations of Spaniards have become more critical and demanding of Spanish institutions and media. Born and raised in a democratic state and having easy access to information, they have claimed more media control of their political leaders, especially after the breakout of the financial crisis in 2008, when huge manifestations due to public disapproval of political elites took place. Consequently, media boundaries have moved, and the media is expected to cover private and public aspects of politicians' lives (Maciá Barber, 2009).

As regards the media, for many years, the Royal Household of Spain did not have a genuine long-term communications strategy for press relationships and the institution's relationships with journalists were highly unbalanced. Restrained access to direct information, and pressure on journalists and editors forced journalists to restrict themselves to positive coverage of the Crown. Furthermore, journalists and editors often had to look for secondary sources of questionable reliability for information on the Crown. Though journalists appeared to be on equal footing, the Crown often provided information to its favorite journalists in private (interviews with Marius Carol and Pilar Eyre). Moreover, the Crown, which was accustomed to the media's favorable attitude, had not prepared a solid crisis plan. When a crisis came about, the Royal House's delayed reaction increased the gap between the Crown and Spain's citizens.

145

As a result of these changes, the image of the Spanish Crown became tarnished and was marked by perceived anachronism and disconnection from modern Spanish society. The Crown's popularity progressively stagnated. In 2011, the first visible sign of unpopularity appeared when the CIS published its annual poll on public trust toward national institutions. For the first time, less than a half of its respondents declared that they trusted the Crown.

Nevertheless, a genuine institutional crisis[40] began in April 2012 when the media covered the injured Juan Carlos I's return from his trip to Botswana. Media coverage after the King arrived at a Madrilenian hospital exposed shocking facts on the King's luxurious travels. For instance, the King hunted animals (though he was honorary president of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), which fights for animal rights), had marital problems, and was involved in an alleged extramarital relationship with one of his close coworkers. The media had already released another story on the royal son-in-law's corruption case, which also tarnished the Crown's image. The media started to use the expression *Annus Horriblis* (Horrible Year) to describe the Royal Family's fragile situation. As other scandals regarding different members of the House of Bourbon kept erupting, and with the Royal Household's delayed response, the Crown's public image was continuously deteriorating. The Horrible Year spilled over to 2012 and is still going on in 2014, resulting in a prolonged rupture between the Crown and Spanish society.

4. Analysis of press coverage on Queen Sofía

4.1. General description of the press clipping

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[40] By crisis, we understand a breaking or abnormal situation characterized by uncertainty and threat (Boin, 2005; Dobry, 2009). In this particular case, the Spanish Crown's legitimacy stands on both parliamentary and popular approval (Balmer et al., 2006). Losing public trust can be considered a sign of an institutional crisis for the Crown.

The press clippings that met with the selected conditions[41] amounted to a total of 108 articles: 37 articles in *El País* and 66 in *El Mundo* (detailed monthly information is presented in Table 1). Among the four detected peaks, the first one (lasting from April to May 2012) was the highest. At the beginning of the crisis referred to as *Annus Horriblis* 45 articles were released. The second peak, corresponding to the period from March to June 2013, resulted in 31 articles. In September 2013, 13 articles were published, and finally, in December 2013 and January 2014, 14 articles were included.

Month and year	Number of articles in *El País*	Number of articles in *El Mundo*
April 2012	8	20
May 2012	7	10
March 2013	5	4
April 2013	4	4
May 2013	3	3
June 2013	3	5
September 2013	4	9
December 2013	1	3
January 2014	2	8
Total	37	66

Table 1. Number of articles in the coverage of Queen Sofia related to royal scandals (per month)

During the monitored period, despite the fact that the Queen never authored a scandal herself, her name appeared in the context of image-damaging situations caused by other members of the Royal Family. In these cases, the newspapers would describe her presence (or absence) among the members of the Bourbon family facing the issues. In some cases, the media looked to analyze her reaction to such controversies.

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[41] The conditions for selecting press articles on Queen Sofía were that they (i) cover a scandal or a potentially image-damaging situation for the Spanish Crown and (ii) be published during a period of peak media interest in those matters.

In April and May 2012, news on the King's accident during his safari trip to Botswana dominated Crown press coverage. In the space of a few days, the scandal turned into an important image crisis and contributed to the breakout of other scandals connected to the royal trip. Consequently, the King's accident and his stay at the hospital fed the debate on whether he was capable of remaining in the Spanish throne. Moreover, information on the trip being financed by a Saudi businessman raised questions about links between the business world and Juan Carlos I. In addition, the fact that the King had hunted law-protected elephants provoked the ire of ecologists. Notwithstanding, the media did not limit itself to solely covering the public side of the scandal. For the first time, they broke the unwritten rule on the non-disclosure of the King's personal matters and went public with the news that the King, who traveled to Botswana on his personal time, was accompanied by one of his close coworkers, Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein. Rumors about a royal romantic affair spread through the Spanish media. Moreover, the Queen's distant attitude toward her husband fueled the media's interest in their private matters.

Furthermore, besides the "Botswana gate", which overshadowed the rest of the coverage, the Queen was mentioned in two other scandals involving members of the Royal Family: in April, the twelve-year-old royal grandson Felipe de Marichalar y Borbón shot himself in the foot while illegally playing with a fire arm; during the same period, new details on a corruption case involving royal son-in-law Iñaki Urdagarin negatively impacted the image of the Crown and provoked the first profound divisions within the Royal Family.

A year after the fateful events in Botswana, the media's mentions of the Queen once again appeared extensively in press coverage on royal scandals. From March to June 2013, the newspapers thoroughly covered Juan Carlos I's health problems, and also covered the Spanish Crown's plummeting popularity, which was exacerbated after the corruption scandal involving Iñaki Urdangarin and his wife

148

Infant Cristina. Moreover, AshleyMadison.com, a website for married people to engage in "discreet encounters", led a controversial ad campaign that clearly alluded to the King's matrimonial problems.

In September 2013, all of these controversial topics came back. This new wave of negative press was fed by Juan Carlos I's second hospitalization and new information on the corruption scandal involving the King's daughter, Infant Cristina.

Two months later, in December 2013, coverage involved image-damaging news again. Indeed, the press continued to reveal decreasing public approval rates of the monarchy and disclosed further problems within the Royal Family, prompted by the corruption scandal involving the Kings' daughter. In addition, the King was hospitalized again, and his 76th birthday reinvigorated questioning of his capacity to rule the country.

Analysis on the newspapers' emphasis of the Queen confirms that Queen Sofía is a person of interest to the press. Indeed, the newspapers gave her a privileged place in articles. To further define her place in the media, the space and emphasis given to the Queen in each article is measured on a scale going from 1 (simple name mention, corresponding to a small space and no emphasis on her person) to 4 (article title and the most of the article devoted to the Queen, strong emphasis). Then, mathematic formulas of arithmetic mean ($\bar{x} = \frac{\Sigma x}{n}$ where $\bar{x}$ corresponds to the mean, x to the values and n to the number of values) and median ($\tilde{x} = \frac{n}{2}$, where $\tilde{x}$ corresponds to the median and n to the set of values) were used.

This method applied to the clippings of articles from El País and allowed us to observe that 23 articles dedicated to the Queen involved her throughout most of the text, with 19 of them also mentioning her name in the title of the article. In the other seven articles, at least one paragraph per article was devoted to her. Finally, in the last seven articles her name was simply mentioned. Consequently, the

average visibility of the Queen in the press clippings from El País was situated at a high level of 1.94 with a median importance of 2.

On the other side, *El Mundo* seemed to attach a lesser, though still high, importance to the Queen. Queen Sofía was the protagonist of 31 articles: her name appeared in 24 titles and in the next seven she appeared extensively throughout the text. She was the subject of brief one-paragraph-length mentions of interest in 11 articles. However, in a large amount of articles the Queen does not enjoy any strong visibility: in 24 of the *El Mundo* press clippings her appearance was limited to a simple mention of her name. Thus, the average and median visibility of the Queen in *El Mundo* situates her at 2.53 and 3, respectively. Although it is difficult to fully explain the gap between the two newspapers, we can assume that the result was influenced the Queen's low visibility in the articles from *El Mundo* in April and May 2012. With the passage of time, the right-wing newspaper started to pay more attention to the Queen, offering her more extensive exposure. However, this late focus did not compensate for the initially low interest in the Queen when compared to *El País*.

As regards the articles' tones, neutral ones dominate. A total of 69.4% of all the articles in *El País* and 85% in *El Mundo* were neutral. The press coverage on the Queen is generally poor in adjectives or other forms of stating approval or disapproval of the royal spouse. Positive articles come in second with 16.6% and 9% respectively, and exceed negative articles, which represent 14% and 6% respectively. However, in an attempt to retain neutrality, the majority of articles with marked positions toward the Queen are published in the "Opinion" section of the newspapers.

4.2. Portrayal of Queen Sofia by *El País* and *El Mundo*

The analysis of the portrayal of the Queen in *El País* and *El Mundo* led to a categorization of her image in terms of the four comprehensive roles assigned to her by the newspapers: mother, wife, and queen; negotiator and peacekeeper; spokesperson and preferred ambassador of the Royal Family; and ordinary woman.

The triple role of mother, wife and Queen is the principal function newspapers assign to Queen Sofía of Spain. As the Royal Family acts in both private and public spheres, Queen Sofía is perceived through the lens of her place within the Bourbon family and in the institution of the Crown. According to the newspapers, while executing those functions, Queen Sofía proved her great devotion toward her family and the Crown and demonstrated her willingness to sacrifice. As written in *El País*, "It is difficult to see doña Sofía losing her smile in public, even if the situation is unpleasant. Her sense of responsibility keeps her feelings in check."[42] However, since 2012, the newspapers have covered the Queen's problems with tying her private and public roles. Firstly, both *El País* and *El Mundo* criticized Queen Sofía for her ambiguous attitude toward the Duke and Duchess of Palma de Mallorca, who were accused of corruption. She was accused of being dominated by her maternal feelings and of being unable to make well-thought-out decisions. Secondly, the uncovering of the King's affair in 2012 provoked a sharp reaction from the Queen, who used to be renowned for her composure. The media extensively commented on her absence from the hospital during the first four days following the King's accident. In addition, the King's announcement that he would cancel the commemoration of the royal couple's fiftieth wedding anniversary revived unhappy royal marriage coverage in the news.

Nevertheless, media coverage on the royal couple's matrimonial problems had a paradoxically positive influence on Queen's image in the newspapers. The press started to portray a woman who was recognized by her husband for her public

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[42] El País, "Cincuenta años de contrato", May 11, 2012

actions, even though he had abandoned her in the private realm. The image of the Queen in the newspapers became marked by suffering and loneliness, two emotions with great potential for arousing empathy and compassion, and seen by modern politicians as an asset in creating proximity with citizens (Fasser, 2002, Revault d'Allonnes, 2008, Boltanski, 1993).

The role of peacekeeper and negotiator is the second role the press assigns to Queen Sofía. Although this role generally takes place in the family environment, the role holds great importance for the country as it ensures the monarchic institution's stability. It also pushes her toward the position of genuine leader of the Bourbon family, as she is the one to stabilize and deal with the Royal Family members' competing interests. This function was enhanced during the *Annus Horriblis*, when family bonds weakened. Many articles highlighted the Queen's efforts to reconcile the Duke and Duchess of Palma de Mallorca with the King and with Prince Felipe. Furthermore, some feature stories that analyzed the Queen's functions more deeply stipulated that she had assumed a similar role from the very beginning of her accession to the throne. The articles claimed that Queen Sofía made constant efforts, "working, withstanding and pacifying the family"[43] to help her son Felipe succeed his father as the next king of Spain.

The role of ambassador for the Royal Family refers to the Queen's representative function as a member of a public institution. During the studied period, the Queen progressively increased her function in this role. In April and May 2012, her role was limited to occasional statements before the press concerning the health of other members of the Royal Family. A real breakthrough came in December 2012, when *El Mundo* published a feature article[44] analyzing the results of a poll conducted by the Elcano Royal Institute, which measured the popularity of the

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[43] El País, "Cincuenta años de contrato", May 11, 2012

[44] El Mundo, "La Reina y el Príncipe superan al Rey como embajadores de la marca España", December 4, 2012

Spanish political class. The results showed that the Queen was not only perceived as the most popular member of the Spanish Crown, but also as the most popular politician in Spain. Data on Queen Sofía's high popular approval appeared in the press several times in 2013, thus enhancing the Queen's positive image. The press started to describe the Queen as "Spain's best ambassador abroad", stressing that the Queen had never caused a scan- dal and that she had multiplied her public duties since the beginning of the *Annus Horriblis*. A cycle of similar news the subsequent year (thanks to a new poll, which reiterated the preceding year's results) was often shown in contrast to the low level of public trust toward the King and the Crown, reinforcing a perception of an empowered Queen on the public stage. Furthermore, analyzing *El País* revealed an amplification of the Queen's duties: in 2012 the left-wing newspaper, which apparently did not attribute much importance to the Queen as a political stakeholder, portrayed her as a mere assistant to her husband[45]. One year later, the newspaper presented the Queen as an independent contributor to Spanish representation abroad and showed her as a regular participant in cooperation projects[46].

The fourth role attributed to the Queen by the newspapers, that of a common woman, is the least present. However it could potentially have a strong impact on readers, as it appeals to emotions and identification with the Queen (de Graaf, 2011, Dakhlia, 2008). Although the Queen is Greek, she shares her "Mediterranean character"[47] with Spaniards, most outstandingly: her love for the island of Mallorca and the sea. Furthermore, beyond this cultural proximity, the Queen seeks contact with common people as well. In articles describing her participation in local events, it is often written that Queen Sofía favors contact with the public rather than with

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[45] El País, "Cincuenta años de contrato", May 11, 2012

[46] El País, "La Reina intenta recuperar la normalidad", April 7, 2013

[47] El País, "Del paraíso al infierno real", April 7, 2013

politicians. In this particular context, the Queen's modesty and simplicity are often emphasized.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be observed that the *Annus Horriblis* had a positive impact on Queen Sofía's press coverage. Whilst most of the members of the Royal Family suffered from bad press, the Queen enjoyed a favorable attitude from the newspapers' behalf, mostly based on the victim status that the media attributed to her. Moreover, regular repetition of the information on Queen Sofía's high popularity contrasted with declining trust in the Crown and the King, which made the notion of the Queen's empowerment more widespread.

The attribution of various functions to Queen Sofía, some executed on the private stage (mother and wife), some on the public stage (queen, spokesperson, and best ambassador of the Royal Family), and some hovering between the two spheres (negotiator and peacekeeper), illustrates the complexity of her character. In this context, different scandals gave way for the newspapers to explore different aspects of her multi-faceted image, which would normally be difficult to understand. The scandalous backdrop had two major consequences on the Queen's coverage: firstly, it reinforced the emotional aspect of her discourse, probably helping it cause a greater impact on readers (Kepplinger, Geiss, Siebert, 2012) and secondly, it led to the tabloidization of press coverage on the Queen.

It is also important to note that the scandalous backdrop is characterized by the presence of a narrative. Direct or indirect references to other scandals, which were found in a great deal of analyzed articles, created a continuous and evolving narrative line. This could be compared to the traditional narrative structure proposed by Propp (1928) in his study of folktales: the history begins with a sudden

outburst of hard- ship(s), continues with the struggle of the hero of the talk, and finishes with a positive ending. In the studied coverage on the Queen, we can detect the initial sequence illustrating the scandal's explosion, the second phase in which Queen Sofía undertook efforts to save the image of the Crown and the Royal Family's unity, and the final and rewarding phase, symbolized by her progressive public empowerment and by the first signs of her family publicly acknowledging her achievements.

The analysis of press on the Queen in *El País* and *El Mundo* reveals differences in their attitude toward the Crown. *El País* covers events from an institutional standpoint in which the Queen's reactions have an impact on the public perception of the monarchical institution, as she is an important member of the Royal Family. In this discourse, her significance is attributed to her role as negotiator and peacekeeper, and the Queen is seen as a pillar of monarchic stability in Spain. On the other hand, *El Mundo* has adopted a societal angle in its coverage. The newspaper covers scandals while primarily focusing on the scandals' consequences on the Bourbon family. The Queen is generally seen as a mother and wife who sacrifices herself for the good of her family.

Finally, it can be affirmed that the Queen has positive, albeit minor, influence on the image of the Spanish Crown. According to Balmer's (2006) premise, the legitimacy of a crown resides in the citizens' approval of it. The Crown's positive image is thus the essence of institutional stability. In Spain, the demise of the King's popularity was matched by declining trust toward the Crown. We can hence presume that the scandals involving the King and other members of the Royal Family had adverse effects on the image of the Spanish monarchy. The Queen, who has surged in popularity since the beginning of the *Annus Horriblis*, is partially counterbalancing this negative aftermath. However, her increased popularity does not seem to have had a significant effect on public perception of the Crown, as the polls continue to show low levels of public trust toward the Spanish Crown.

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b) COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This part presents results of the comparative analysis on the first ladyship in Poland, France and Spain. It contains a scientific paper, entitled "Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain", that will be published in December 2016 in the journal *Anàlisi*. The paper focuses on the role media has played in the empowerment of the first ladyship in the studied countries and at the same time displays its limitation, mainly due to the gendered attitude of the media toward presidential wives. In a broader specter, the article raises the issue of women's participation in politics in the modern environment marked by a dependence of the political word on the media and by a market-driven logic applied to them.

ANÀLISI

QUADERNS DE COMUNICACIÓ I CULTURA

La present és per a certificar la col·laboració d'Ewa Widlak, en coautoria amb Carles Pont i Jaume Guillamet, de la Universitat Pompeu Fabra, com a autors de la revista *Anàlisi. Quaderns de Comunicació i Cultura*. El títol de l'article, que serà publicat al número 55 de la revista que sortirà al desembre, és " Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain".

Cordialment,

Anna Tous i Silvia Martínez

Directores

Bellaterra (Cerdanyola del Vallès), 15 de juliol de 2016

Title: Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain

Título: ¡He aquí la esposa del jefe de estado! El estudio comparativo del ascenso político de la primera dama en Polonia, Francia y España.

Abstract

Profound changes in media and political communication contributed to grant private life a greater importance in political reporting. Not only did media shift their attention from parties to politicians, they also took an interest in the politicians' entourage. The first lady, as the wife of the supposedly most powerful man in the country, became an object of public attention. Her ability to comply with the social demands became of capital importance for the good image of her husband. Over the course of the last century, and despite an ambiguous media towards her political empowerment, the first lady has managed to emancipate herself as a new actor on the public stage.

This article studies the way in which the media became a key player in the creation, empowerment and definition of modern first ladyship in selected democratic countries: Poland, France and Spain. It does it through a mixed-methods approach: qualitative and quantitative content analysis of the press and extensive documentary research in the fields of political science, media and gender studies, political communication and first ladyship studies. The research finds that the press normalizes the presence of first ladies on the public stage and shapes public expectations toward spouses of heads of state.

162

Resumen

Los profundos cambios experimentados por los medios de comunicación y la comunicación política han contribuido a conceder a la vida privada una importancia mayor en la cobertura política. Los medios han cambiado el foco desde los partidos hacia los políticos y sus familias. Así, la primera dama, en tanto que esposa del que se supone el hombre más poderoso del país, se ha convertido en un objeto de escrutinio público. Su habilidad para dar respuesta a las demandas sociales se erige en un elemento de importancia capital para la buena imagen de su marido. A lo largo del siglo pasado, y pesar de una cobertura mediática ambigua, la primera dama ha logrado emanciparse y erigirse en un nuevo actor en la escena pública.

El presente artículo estudia cómo los medios de comunicación se han convertido en un actor clave en la creación, empoderamiento y definición de la figura moderna de la primera dama en una selección de países democráticos: Polonia, Francia y España. La aproximación metodológica es de carácter mixto: el análisis de contenido cualitativo y cuantitativo de la prensa y una investigación documental extensiva en los campos de la ciencia política, el periodismo, los estudios de género, la comunicación política y los estudios sobre la institución de la primera dama. La investigación concluye que la prensa normaliza la presencia de las primeras damas en la esfera pública e influencia las expectativas que tiene el público respecto a las esposas de los jefes de Estado.

Palabras clave: Influencia mediática, primera dama, marco de género, empoderamiento de las mujeres, política

1. Introduction

The first lady is at the same time a symbol of modern times, where the private becomes the public, and a recall of the Ancient regime, with Queens and their courts. It is one of the most controversial personalities on the political stage whose presence can awake antithetical reactions and question structures of modern democracies. The wife of the head of state is generally one of the most powerful persons in her country with a strategic value for her husband, yet she is generally underestimated and reduced in the public eye to the role of a mere decoration.

The first ladyship is an example of a never crafted political office that has gone through a deep evolution since the tenure of Martha Washington, the first to hold such position. Although the function originated from ancient social norms, strictly reducing the place of women to the private sphere, during the 20th century it evolved from a simply protocol role, to a professionalised and institutionalised political function. This paper states that this evolution would not be possible without the extremely significant role of the media in both promoting and shaping the institution.

2. Theoretical background

Emergence of modern political communication and transformation of political process

The birth of modern political communication resulted from a double process of State's democratisation and the development of communication, both based on the 18th century democratic ideals (Wolton, 1989). Since then, it has strongly evolved and passed through distinctive stages. This last, postmodern stage is characterised by a strong professionalization of both the candidate and his team (Norris, 2004)

and a strategy concentrated on short terms and immediate results (Denton & Woodward, 1989).

Modern communication is characterised by a major shift toward continuous media presence and by an emphasis to the candidate rather than to the political program or his party's ideals. Putting the candidate in the spotlight automatically lead to a public interest in his private life (Mazzoni & Ciaglia, 2013), especially since the irruption of the Internet and the informational excess. It caused an increasing professionalization of politicians in the management of the media (Cristante, 2011) and a boost of media and political populism caused by an excessive interest in private life and in emotions (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999) and the "politicisation of private persona" (Trimble et al., 2013).

Another crucial characteristic of the modern political life in advanced democracies is its relationship with media (McCombs et al., 2011), that shifted from the domination of politics over media to the active influence of media on politics. Not only did media become the privileged channel of communication between politicians and citizens, it also obliged the politicians to adapt to the rules of media logic, dominated by societal processes and storytelling (Stromback, 2008). Media influence expands over both politicians' behaviours and issues they have to treat. Although researchers diverge about the extent of the media power in the formulation of public issues (Casero-Ripollés & López-Rabadán, 2014), they generally agree that such an influence exists (Melenhorst, 2015; Schudson, 2002).

Women, politics and the media: between empowerment and the gender gap

Over the last century, the political empowerment of women became one of the major processes in international politics, increasing political representativeness, consistently reducing poverty and improving peace-building processes (Narayan,

2005). In many countries, a greater participation of female politicians has had a positive impact on further involvement of women as citizens (Thames & Williams, 2013).

Despite significant advances in this field, women are still politically underrepresented and suffer from a gender stigma, mainly because of the persistence of stereotypes (Dittmar, 2015). Whether in politics or economy, the most prestigious positions are associated with male traits and women are more exposed to criticism (Bligh & Kohles, 2008).

Additionally, media reality continues to be male-dominated and powerful women in news media are still exceptions (Lachover, 2012), what reinforces the vision of politics as a man's world. As to the coverage itself, the frame on women in gendered roles of sex symbols or mothers, emphasis on the private life and use of explicit body markers rather than a focus on their public statements engenders a de-legitimisation of women as political leaders (Trimble et al., 2013). Subsequently, the distorted media representation of female politicians helps in maintaining the gender gap on the political stage and negatively influences further possibilities of greater female empowerment in public life.

3. Research aim, scope and method

The expectation of this research is that media has strongly impacted, both positively and negatively the development of the first ladyship. Facing a lack of a commonly accepted method regarding first ladyship research (Sulfaro, 2007) and a severe limitation of scientific interest outside the United States (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015), an approach based on press content analysis and documentary research was adapted with the aim of creating a workable and reliable methodology.

The content analysis method, working on both quantitative and qualitative variables (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984), was applied on a large selection of press articles from two print media deemed among the most influential in crafting the function of the first lady: general information newspapers and women's magazines. The logical-semantic and logical-aesthetic methods of Muchielli (2006), belonging to the group of content analysis' procedures were used. The first approach seeks to display main frames of the coverage through three principal axes: theme, frequency and attitude. The second one concentrates on the portrayal of discourse's protagonist by analysing speech figures (passive or active verbs, choice of the vocabulary, connotations…). The actors' frame is an approach commonly used in first ladyship studies (Beasley, 2005; Burns, 2008; …). Consequently, the main objective of data codification in the present study was to obtain relevant information regarding the actor and not covered events. All selected articles were published during the tenure of each first lady and implicitly quoted them by the first and/or second names (articles quoting only the role (i.e. "first lady", "the spouse", "presidential wife") were excluded).

The research covers cases of first ladyship in Poland, France and Spain and although it does not properly include the United States, the American model is present as the main reference on both methodological and substantial levels. Beyond the European character, the common thread is their belonging to democratic societies. Indeed, as empirically demonstrated in democracies, the first ladyship is a durable institution and not a passing fade, as some conditions necessary to the endurance of the institution, such as female political emancipation, press freedom and stable rules, are met. Moreover, the more powerful the head of state is, the strongest the public presence of his wife is, and vice versa. In order to reflect this relation, chosen countries represent different levels of executive and legislative prerogatives held by heads of state. Poland is a parliamentary republic

(the most common political system among Western democracies) and a young democracy with fifty years of Communism lying behind it. France represents the model of semi-presidential republics, with a relatively strong president, whose power can be strongly limited when an opposition party dominates in parliament and government. Spain is a parliamentary monarchy, with a politically weak king as the head of the state, in which queens consorts fulfil same responsibilities as first ladies in republican countries (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015).

As for general information newspapers, the main corpus was composed of articles from benchmark dailies from Poland (Gazeta Wyborcza), France (Le Monde) and Spain (El País and El Mundo)[48]. In total, 1140 items were collected from Gazeta Wyborcza (table I), 1477 from Le Monde (table II) and 666 from El País and El Mundo (table III). Time-lapses were adapted to each case in consideration to national political and cultural specificities (yet the final year of all of them was 2014). Indeed, the first ladyship being a process of unequal development in the world, a linear time analysis would offer a limited and erroneous view on the function. Consequently, the sample on the Polish first ladyship includes articles from 1990, the year of first democratic presidential elections, while the span of the French case covers the whole period of the 5th Republic since 1958. Regarding the Spanish case, 2009-2014 period seemed pertinent as it is strongly representative of the whole tenure of Queen Sofía (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015; Widlak, Pont Sorribes & Guillamet Lloveras, 2016)[49].

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[48] Given the strong partisanship character of Spanish media (Hallin & Mancini, 2004), it was decided to analyse two politically opposed titles: left-wing *El País* and right-wing *El Mundo*.

[49] Since the implementation of constitutional democracy in Spain in 1979, until 2014 the only Queen to hold the office was Sofía of Greece.

	Danuta Wałęsa (1990-1995)	Jolanta Kwaśniewska (1995-2005)	Maria Kaczyńska (2005-2010)	Anna Komorowska (2010-2014)	Total number of articles
Gazeta Wyborcza	111	626	170	233	1140

Table I. Coverage on Polish first ladies 1990-2014 in *Gazeta Wyborcza*

	Yvonne de Gaule (1959-1969)	Claude Pompidou (1969-1974)	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing (1974-1981)	Danielle Mitterrand (1981-1995)	Bernadette Chirac (1995-2007)	Cécilia Sarkozy (2007)	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy (2008-2012)	Valérie Trierweiler (2012-2014)	Total number of articles
Le Monde	0	4	29	360	578	78	314	114	1477

Table II. Coverage on French first ladies 1959-2014 in *Le Monde*

	Queen Sofía (2009-2014)
El País	209
El Mundo	457
Total number of articles	666

Table III. Coverage on Queen Sofía in *El Pais* and El *Mundo* 2009-2014

Regarding women and gossip press, articles were selected from leading women's magazines from each country: Viva! and Twój Styl in Poland (41 items – table IV), Elle in France (169 items – table V), ¡Hola! in Spain (173 items – table VI). The sample of the Polish women's magazines covers the same period as that of dailies. The French and Spanish samples cover however shorter periods as in France the

genuine process of mediatisation of the President and his spouse, started in 2007 with the tenure of Nicolas Sarkozy (Mayaffre, 2012), while in the Spanish case a three-year time-laps (2011-2014) was considered as offering a large vision on the issue.

General information newspapers and women and gossip magazines, those two significantly different press media best correspond to the research objectives. General information newspapers allow collecting data that offer a reliable socio-historical testimony (Franzosi, 1987) and display information interesting for public opinion (Schudson, 2002). Moreover, it is also a medium of critical importance for politicians as an important influencer on social and political perceptions (Kiousis, 2001). Although since the 20th century the press had to continuously readapt to changing media realities marked firstly by the appearance of radio and television (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) and more recently the irruption of the Internet (Briggs & Burke, 2014), news presented in the press are still considered as the most trustworthy, outrunning news presented online and in TV (Kiousis, 2001). Regarding women's and gossip magazines, although their analysis may seem controversial in the study of media and politics, their influence cannot be neglected. Their emotional storytelling matches new standards of political communication marked by the use the persuasive force of emotions to impact and engage voters. Moreover, the characteristic focus on women and a new interest in politics (Demarest & Garner, 1992) opens a new communication channel for new heroines from the political world and among them, first ladies. Additionally, although this medium does not provide politically relevant information, it transmits ideas relative to class, family and the women's place in society (Ytre-Arne, 2011), becoming thus an interesting mirror on the evolution of the role of the first lady in particular political and social contexts.

Table IV. Coverage on Polish first ladies in *Twój Styl* and *Viva!* 1990-2014

	Danuta Wałęsa (1990-1995)	Jolanta Kwaśniewska (1995-2005)	Maria Kaczyńska (2005-2010)	Anna Komorowska (2010-2014)	Total number of articles
Twój Styl & Viva!	2	31	5	3	41

	Cécilia Sarkozy (2007)	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy (2008-2012)	Valérie Trierweiler (2012-2014)	Total number of articles
Elle	5	128	36	169

Table V. Coverage on French first ladies in Elle 2007-2014

	Queen Sofía (2011-2014)
¡Hola!	173
Total number of articles	173

Table VI. Coverage on Queen Sofía in iHola! 2011-2014

The second method, documentary research, allowed for the validation of results from the press content analysis and their contextualisation. It was based on four different strands in the literature: studies on first ladyship and testimonies on different first ladies, political communication, gender studies and historical scientific works. It was complemented by public opinion polls conducted by the most prestigious institutes of public opinion in each of the countries of interest: Polish CBOS, French IFOP, Spanish CIS and BRIE and American Pew Research Center.

5. Results

Media attention as a crucial factor in the empowerment of the first ladyship

Quantitative results demonstrate that in all studied countries there has been a significant and constant growth of the press coverage on first ladies, testifying the increase of media's interest. The analysis of pics of the said growth indicates two types of elements influencing the coverage: micro- and macro-level.

Table VII. Average monthly presence of first ladies in analysed newspapers and women's magazines (expressed in number of press items published monthly)

	First lady	Average monthly presence in analyzed newspapers	Average monthly presence in analyzed women and gossip magazines
Poland	Danuta Wałęsa	1,82	0,033
	Jolanta Kwaśniewska	5,17	0,26
	Maria Kaczyńska	3,21	0,09
	Anna Komorowska	3,82	0,05
Spain	Queen Sofía	5,55	4,8
France	Yvonne de Gaulle	0	NC
	Claude Pompidou	0,07	NC
	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing	0,35	NC
	Danielle Mitterrand	2,14	NC
	Bernadette Chirac	4,01	NC
	Cécilia Sarkozy	15,6	1
	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy	6,16	2,51
	Valérie Trierweiler	5,7	1,8

Micro-level elements correspond to media interest in particular first ladies or events, generally due to three reasons. Firstly, first ladies breaking with traditionally accepted attitudes of the political spouse generate large, yet strongly polarised coverage. For instance, Danielle Mitterrand (1981-1995), by refusing to play a traditional role of the presidential spouse and being extremely active in the

field of human rights, attracted an unprecedented public and media interest. Secondly, some first ladies willingly enter into the political game and seek for media attention, like Jolanta Kwaśniewska (1995-2005) who put the role of the first lady on the political map in Poland. Thirdly, a crisis situation or a scandal can also generate media coverage on the spouse of the head of state, like in case of Valérie Trierweiler (2012-2014) whose political faux pas generated a public debate in France about freedom of expression of the first lady.

Macro-level elements indicate political, social and cultural processes that marked the media attitude toward first ladies. Primarily, the normalisation of women's public activity over the years naturally raised media interest in female politicians and, subsequently, first ladies (Eksterowicz & Paynter, 2000). As illustrates the French case, the peaks in media coverage match the crucial moments of women political empowerment. It rampaged in the 1980s and continued to increase since then, matching to the period of the opening of the political agora to French women and their appearance in the news media (Bard, Baudelot & Mossuz-Lavau, 2004).

Secondly, the increase of media attention on first ladies is due to a positive-sum game between media and politicians. While free, but market-driven media intrude progressively into private lives of public figures, politicians adapt to this logic to communicate with voters. The first lady, floating between the private and the public spheres (Burns, 2008; Gutin, 2008), appears as a natural beneficiary of such an interaction. This particular process of first lady's mediatisation could be observed in France during the tenure of Nicolas Sarkozy. Cécilia Sarkozy and Carla Bruni-Sarkozy became at their turn active actors in his communication and generated large press coverage. Although it was not particularly positive, the spotlight cast on them attracted public interest toward their function, giving it a new significance on the public stage.

Finally, the globalisation and Americanisation of political marketing's standards further contributed to public exposure of the spouse of the head of state. The interest shown by foreign media in the figure of the American first lady awoke interest in the same figure on the national stage. Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing (1974-1981), a supposed French Jacqueline Kennedy, was the first spouse of a President of France massively exposed in French media. In the late 1990s, the Polish press noticed influences of Hillary Clinton on the first lady's style of her Polish counterpart, Jolanta Kwaśniewska.

The increased coverage and a progressive shift of information from local pages to more relevant sections, such as national, international or political news, has normalised and legitimised the presidential spouse in the public eye and was acknowledgment of her increasingly political feature. Constant press coverage on various duties of presidential spouses, helps codifying the role and partially institutionalize it.

An analysis of public opinion polls shows that first ladies have entered the political world and are often more popular than their husbands or other politicians, like it was the case of Jolanta Kwaśniewska or Queen Sofía. They also display public change of heart. In the United States opinion polls by Pew Research Centre since the 1990s, the popularity of American first ladies has grown especially among men[50]. In Poland public opinion strongly changed its preferences since 1996, when a retraced model of the first ladyship was preferred[51] and opted after for the

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[50] Detailed results for 2009-2014 retrieved from: http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-questionnaires/01-27-14%20topline%20for%20release.pdf

[51] Study by CBOS from October 1996 entitled "Portet żony prezydenta" (Portrayal of the president's wife).

strongly mediatised type of Jolanta Kwaśniewska[52]. In Spain since 2011 popularity Queen Sofía was raising[53] while the Crown and King Juan Carlos II were suffering from popular distrust[54]. In France since the mid-2000s presidential spouses have been a frequent theme of surveys and during pre-campaigning for 2007 and 2012 presidential elections French respondents chose not only their candidate, but also the potential first lady[55].

This popularity can be explained by the fact that in general first ladies gain more easily positive or neutral coverage. In extreme situations, abundant and empowering media coverage can propel the first lady to the top and turn her into her husband's political adversary and an independent public stakeholder. Such was the case of Jolanta Kwaśniewska, whose political popularity was so great that she appeared as a potential adversary of her own husband in the run for the president's office, generating a public debate about gender, politics and a possibility that a first lady trespasses the unwritten rule of being fully engaged in politics.

Beyond the influence on individual cases, media also formulated clear opinions about the first ladyship as a political institution, especially regarding its transparency. For instance, in Spain, in 2011 media enquiries about the financing of the Royal Household (and thus the Queen) led to an annual publication of the

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[52] Information based on various opinion polls, among them: April 1998 "Najpopularniejsze kobiety w polskiej polityce" (The most popular women in Polish politics"); December 2003 "Polacy o kandydatach w wyborach prezydenckich" (Poles about candidates in the presidential elections).

[53] "Barometro del Real Instituto Elcano" from December 2012

[54] A historical analysis of CIS opinion polls shows that since 2011 Spanish people have distrusted the Crown (their level of trust has been continuously lower than 5 out of 10).

[55] Information based on various opinion polls, among them: December 2008 "Les Français et la Première Dame de France" (French people and the First Lady of France); March 2012 "Le couple présidentiel préféré des Français" (The presidential couple preferred by French).

institution's budget and to granting the Queen an official salary. The political facet of the first ladyship seems to be of increasing interest also to women's magazines as evidenced particularly by the politicised vocabulary of the articles. In all analysed media at least one first lady was presented as her husband's political co-worker, or directly called "a politician".

Media representation of the first ladyship

In addition to granting it notoriety and legitimising it in the public eye, the media are by no means neutral but rather frame the first lady through strong gender stereotypes and can prone partisan critics according to their political alignment. This in consequence reinforces the sensitive challenge that political wives have to face: they are demanded to play an active role on the public stage, yet their legitimacy is questioned when they exceed what is traditionally conceived as their responsibilities.

Frames on first ladies are very similar in both newspapers and women's and gossip magazines and are set in four major roles: that of woman and mother belonging to the private domain and that of a political celebrity and social stakeholder being a part of the public domain. All those functions are inextricably connected and display the fluidity of the public and the private in the construction of the first lady's figure.

The roles coming from the private sphere are dominant, as media use them to both justify their interest in the first ladies and to illustrate political and cultural ideologies. Like in the American case (Burns, 2008; Beasley, 2005), the first ladyship in the studied countries embodies national perceptions on womanhood, captured in particular moments. The personal character of each first lady plays a role in the construction of her public image. However an observed tendency to retract or moderate attitudes after media critics (for instance, a radical change of

first lady's style of Carla Bruni (2008-2012) between the beginning and the end of her tenure) demonstrates that it is rather to the first lady to adapt to the public imaginary than the other way round. This demand to fit to some kind of common imaginary is especially visible in press articles covering foreign state visits, concluding with the reflection on whether the first lady worthily represented women of her country. This representation is based however on physical attributes, and not on the content of her public presentation, reinforcing thus physical- and role-related stereotypes. In all collected data, the most used adjective was "elegant", testifying the importance of aesthetics in the first ladyship, but also that of social norms, as it refers to a socially-established vision of what is acceptable regarding one's appearance.

The role of the mother derives directly from the previous role and has lasting consequences in terms of public expectations towards a first lady's behaviour and responsibilities. Although some variations in the frame illustrate differences in the conception of gender roles between the studied countries, the ideal of the first lady, recurrent in women's and gossip magazines, is nearly the same. As a good mother she has to be smiling, patient, caregiving and empathetic. She gives as much attention to her family as to other people, and especially children, in distress (Widlak & Guillamet Lloveras, 2015). The notion of sacrifice, for her husband, family, but also for the country, is underlined. All her public actions result not from political calculations, but from moral blamelessness, modesty and her will to do the right thing. She incarnates thus an idealised version of politics, contrasting with the political world dominated by men and linked to negative stereotypes.

This exalted vision of the political mission of the first lady from women's and gossip magazines is articulated in general information newspapers through a description of acceptable behaviour, such as charity, and a criticism of the ones seen as transgressive, especially independent acting on the political stage. Our research confirms results of American studies (Sulfaro, 2007; Troy, 2006; Scharrer & Bissell,

2000) following which the more a first lady is covered, the more the media examine her role on the public stage and the more polarised her coverage is. For instance, in Poland, Maria Kaczyńska (2005-2010) in her mid-term became a target of virulent attacks after publicly taking positions that disconnected with positions of her husband's party. Additionally, Cécilia Sarkozy suffered from critics in 2007 after having participated in a diplomatic mission to liberat Bulgarian nurses imprisoned in Libya. Although Le Monde did not express openly its criticism toward the political playing of the presidential spouse, the newspaper chose to present negative opinions of the political class, creating an aura of wrongdoing and overstepping of some unwritten rules.

The role of the social stakeholder emanates directly from the status of the "first woman and first mother". Generally, newspapers articles about social activities represent the biggest part of each first lady's news coverage (with some exceptions like Danielle Mitterrand), making it the principal duty of each spouse of a head of state. Paradoxically, this role is generally given a very small salience: the article is generally published in a less visible section of the newspaper and the first lady is often mentioned in the headline and in no more than one sentence of each article. This shows how newspapers use the first lady as a "decoy" to attract readers' interest and to increase the prestige of the covered event. In women's magazines, the role of the social stakeholder embodies public activity that concentrated on people and close to them, the opposite of "traditional" politics. The first lady is also an alter ego and ally of her spouse: while the head of state deals with important, yet remote from the ordinary citizen, issues, his wife acts to compensate.

Eventually, the particular status of the first lady elevates her figure to a celebrity position. Throughout the studied periods, media has increased their coverage, passing from a simple description of their presence on institutional events to more complex analyses of the function and its political influence. Nevertheless, the interest in their private life has also grown and the label "wife of", placing them in a

secondary position toward the political class, also persisted. In some particular cases, like those of Carla Bruni-Sarkozy and Jolanta Kwaśniewska, the role of the "jet setter" constituted a part of the coverage and both media narrated stories of friendships with music stars and other celebrities.

Table VIII. Dominant framings on first ladies from Poland, Spain and France

	First lady	Dominant frame	Dominant tone	Dominant context
Poland	Danuta Wałęsa	• Woman • Presidential helpmate	Neutral	• Institutional events
	Jolanta Kwaśniewska	• Social stakeholder • Political celebrity	Neutral / positive	• Social events • Presidential elections
	Maria Kaczyńska	• Social stakeholder • Public stakeholder	Neutral / positive	• Institutional and social events • Political statements
	Anna Komorowska	• Wife • Mother	Neutral	• Institutional events
Spain	Queen Sofía	• Woman • Mother • Social stakeholder • (After Annus Horriblis) Public stakeholder	Neutral / positive	• Institutional events • Social events • Member of the Royal Family
France	Yvonne de Gaulle	-	-	-
	Claude Pompidou	• Social stakeholder	Neutral	• Social events
	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing	• Woman • Social stakeholder	Neutral	• Institutional events
	Danielle Mitterand	• Human rights activist	Neutral	• Diplomatic actions / incidents
	Bernadette Chirac	• Woman • Political stakeholder	Neutral / positive	• Institutional events • Political game within the political party UMP
	Cécilia Sarkozy	• Woman • Political celebrity	Neutral / negative	• Private life • Fashion • Public incidents
	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy	• Woman • Political celebrity	Neutral / negative	• Private life • Fashion • Public incidents
	Valérie Trierweiler	• Political celebrity • Woman	Negative / neutral	• Public incidents • Private life

6. Conclusions

The results of the research confirm that media have played a crucial role in the evolution of the first ladyship and allowed for its political ascension. By putting first ladies into spotlight and offering a deeper coverage of their activities, media have normalised their public presence and contributed to the sustainability, legitimacy and institutionalisation of the office. Subsequently, in all studied countries, the institution got strongly professionalised and first ladies have nowadays their own teams with the prominent figure of press assistant and work in a strict cooperation with the office of the head of state. Nevertheless, media discourse, as the principal source of information about first ladies, impacts public expectations and obliges politicians to adapt to those expectations in order to gain public approval. It seems that nowadays the gap between the genuine empowerment of the first ladyship and the media trivialization of the figure is growing, as journalists' look on the matter is still heavily shaped by gender stereotypes, turning first ladies into political celebrities and reinforcing the dichotomy between women and politics. Polarising media coverage of some first ladies proves that there is yet certain reluctance to a complete political empowerment of first ladies and reveals a strong inconsistency in media attitude, which expects first ladies to take a public role in the name of existing traditions and at the same time limit it severely in the name of democratic values. A further paradox sees media diminishing the political relevance of the first lady all the while taking a political alignment, which leads sometimes to direct attacks against her.

The contradictory attitude of media reinforces existing prejudices about relations between women and politics and the inferiority of the first lady and about first lady's responsibilities as inextricably connected to the private sphere, relegating her to the peripheries of the political scene. From a broader perspective, the gendered vision also epitomises the difficulties of female politicians on the political agora who still have to deal with gender stereotypes to confirm their leadership.

The historical analysis of media's attitude toward first ladies highlights that the whole process was strongly impacted by the modification of the media landscape in the 20th century and changes in the media-politics relations, but even more importantly, by the difficult relationship between the democratic principle of equality among citizens and a biased look of gender that continues to exist. This in consequence represents a difficulty for the further development of the first ladyship, as media imperil the idea of the first lady as a genuine political leader. Arguably, as long as such a point of view persists, possibilities of social acceptance of a further empowerment of the function are bound to be compromised.

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c) EXTRACURRICULUM

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES:

- *"From the Presidential Spouse to the First Lady - how have the media created a new political actor? A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in France, Spain, Poland and the US".* **First conference of the International Journal of Press/Politics, Oxford University**, Oxford, 16-18/09/2015

Abstract:

Many authors have demonstrated various ways in which media influence politics going from setting political agenda (Combs, Shaw, 1972) to making and breaking political careers (Foerstel, 2001). Nevertheless, few have researched on the media power on creating new political actors. The First Lady is an example of such a (at least partial) media creation.

The development of mass media contributed to grant private life a greater importance in political reporting. The First Lady became a new object of public attention, her ability to comply with the social demands being of capital importance for the good image of her husband. Notwithstanding this gendered public image, progressive change in media frame allowed the First Lady to emancipate herself as a powerful "outsider" of the public stage.

The presented paper is based on results and conclusions of a four-year PhD research entitled "The First Lady: From the kitchen to the podium. How the gender equality revolution and the media forged a new political actor in democratic systems" regarding the media impact on the First Ladyship. The methodology is constructed on the basis of a mix of various investigation's techniques: qualitative and quantitative analysis of the press (sample of more than 3500 press articles), 52

in-depth interviews and extensive documentary research in the fields of political, media and gender studies and political communication.

- *"The First Lady or the rise of the political outsider within modern democracies".* **Workshop on Gender and Politics, British Political Science Association**, London, 15/05/2015

Abstract:

Although her role has never been legally crafted, the First Lady has succeeded to play a part on the political scene. Using her social status of the Head of State's spouse, she reached to attract attention of the public eye and then, impose herself as a political actor.

The institutionalization of the First Ladyship varies by country, due to heterogeneity of political systems and cultural norms, especially those concerning women's issues. Nevertheless, some common patterns exist and the most significant one is the fact that because of the informal process of political emergence and strongly gendered rules of political game that apply to them, First Ladies are today political outsiders with a significant, yet in many cases unveiled power.

The presented paper contains results and conclusions of a four-year PhD research entitled "The First Lady: From the kitchen to the podium. How the gender equality revolution and the media forged a new political actor in democratic systems". The study is mainly based on French, Spanish, Polish and American cases.

It tends to answer three main questions regarding the First Ladyship as a specific model of women's leadership. Firstly, which mechanisms have allowed First Ladies to appear on the public stage? Secondly, how much power do they have and which

factors can limit them? Thirdly, how do they position themselves on the public stage face to their spouses and their parties?

The methodology is constructed on the basis of a mix of various investigation's techniques: qualitative and quantitative analysis of the press (sample of more than 3500 press articles), 44 in-depth interviews with Polish citizens and extensive documentary research in the fields of political and gender studies, political communication and American First Ladyship's studies.

- *"Première dame – symbole du système patriarcal ou preuve vivante de l'autonomisation des femmes? Etude du cas français"*. **Interdisciplinary conference "Women – from object to subject", University of Toulouse**, Toulouse, 17/01/2015

Abstract:

La communication proposée s'articule autour du paradoxe de l'image de la femme que véhicule la fonction de la première dame en France ainsi que de son évolution pendant la V République.

Par le fait de baser sa visibilité publique sur leur statut social de femmes ou compagnes, les premières dames ont toujours été vues surtout dans leur rôle secondaire de la « femme de ». Cette vision les a réduites dans les yeux de l'opinion publique à une incarnation du modèle patriarcal, où la femme demeure en position inférieure par rapport à l'homme. Toutefois, tout comme la place de la femme dans la société, la fonction exercée par les épouses présidentielles et leur image ont évolué. Alors qu'elles continuent à être vues par le prisme des stéréotypes du genre, aujourd'hui elles démontrent aussi une envie d'exister sur la scène publique par elles-mêmes, en tant qu'êtres indépendants de leurs maris.

La présentation est fruit d'un travail de recherche de trois ans dans le cadre d'une thèse sur le thème des premières dames en Europe. L'auteure a utilisé les méthodes de l'analyse du contenu et la recherche documentaire.

- *"Media portrayal of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish newspapers".* **20th Conference of Sociedad Espanola de Periodistica**, Barcelona, 17-18/06/2014

Abstract:

The proposed paper concentrates on the display of Queen Sofia of Greece in Spanish dailies. The royal spouse occupies a prominent, yet legally undefined place in Spanish public life. Consequently, this position depends strongly on how media represent her.

The main objective of this study is to bring out featuring elements of this image and analyze the role that media assign to the Spanish Queen Consort. In addition, the investigation tends to answer to the question of possible influences on the Queen's image of different scandals erupting in the studied period and implicating other members of the Spanish Royal Family.

The research is based on an analysis of a selection of articles from two dailies, El País and El Mundo, published between May, 2011 and August, 2012. The author applied methods of content analysis, news discourse analysis and semiotics. Moreover, this investigation was supported by a large documentary research related to the history of Spanish monarchy and biography of the Royal couple, spotlight put on public people's spouses and presence of emotions on politics and press.

Principal conclusions of the research allow us to affirm that there is a duality in the Queen's image based on separation between private and public domains. Consequently, Sofia of Greece is perceived both as a Queen and a mother and a wife. Emotions play thus a significant role in her press framing, reinforcing her public visibility. Moreover, eruption of scandals involving the Royal Family has a paradoxically positive effect on the Queen's press coverage, as it provoked a certain "tabloidization" of her image and her lionization on the public stage.

- *"Carla Bruni and Nicolas Sarkozy: trespassing borders between politics and show business".* **Celebrities couples' conference, Southampthon University**, Southampton, 23/11/2012

Abstract:

Almost nothing seemed connected them: Nicolas Sarkozy was the French President issued from a right-wing party; Carla Bruni was a former top model and a singer, mainly known for her numerous relationships and her attachment to the left's ideology. When the 15 of November 2007 the French media published their picture on a romantic meeting in Disneyland (Paris, France), the general reaction was stupefaction and belief that this relation was nothing but a marketing action mounted by the President's spin-doctors looking for a new partner for a freshly divorced President and Carla Bruni herself looking for a recognition in the improbable role of the First Lady. After a quick wedding, they became one of the most famous French couples, creating curiosity, and at the same time some kind of admiration and tough critics.

We can note that Nicolas Sarkozy and Carla Bruni reached to create a common communications' strategy in which they managed to use their respective popularities to create media buzz and popular interest. They have both evaluated

and adapted their images to the complex codes of politics and show business. After losing the Presidential Elections in 2012, Nicolas Sarkozy announced his retirement from politics. However the media interest about the future of the former President who declared re-becoming "a Frenchman among Frenchmen" shows that even after a change of status he will be still present in the French press. At least as a husband of Carla Bruni who announced her return into music.

VISITING FELLOWSHIP:

Fellowship at the Jagiellonian University, Department of Journalism, Media and Social Communication. September – December 2012.

5) COMPLEMENTARY RESULTS

Because of time constraints and large waiting time for reponse from scientific journals, the presented thesis does not contain papers analyzing French and Polish models of first ladyship that are still under revision in different journals. The objective of the present part is thus to present the part of the doctoral research that has not been published yet and that is necessary to fully present the subject.

a) THE STATUS OF THE MODERN FIRST LADY

i) LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In France, Poland and Spain, the quasi-inexistence of the first lady in legal texts is both striking and meaningful. Firstly, the legal fluidity of the function makes it customary and semi-official and represents its most impacting constraint. Indeed, there is no clearly defined perimeter of the first lady's actions and duties what reinforces the influence of cultural and political habits and traditions as well as social and public climate at any given moment. Some events, such as social movements or crisis, as well as media interpretation of those events and public opinion attitude can impact a first lady's tenure (Eksterowicz & Roberts, 2004). Secondly, the lack of presence of the first lady in legal texts displays the fragility of the role of the first lady and is a sign of a lack of her official recognition as a political actor. In consequence, such a situation weakens her legitimacy and makes her an easy target of public attacks.

Regarding the Constitution, the most important legal document of each country that sets its organization, in the three countries the spouse of the Head of State exists in only one of them. There is not any notion to spouses of presidents in the French and Polish Constitutions, yet the figure of the Queen exists in the Spanish Constitution. The inexistence of the function of the first lady in Polish and French Constitutions is inextricably connected to the spirit of the Republic, where legitimacy of politicians is earned through public elections and where exerting public function because of connections with elected politicians can be interpreted as nepotism. In Spain, a constitutional monarchy, the figure of the Queen makes part of the political landscape. It is interesting however to notice that the article 58[56] on the Queen Consort or Consort of the Queen does not define parameters of role or her duties. Following the article, the Queen will *not* be able to fulfill any constitutional duties except in the case of regency. This means that even in the situation of exerting fully legal and legalized power, the Queen would rule until the legitimate heir would attend the age to do it personally. Moreover, the use of the negative sentence can be interpreted as an indirect interdiction for Queen to exert any power.

The semantic analysis of the fragment of the Spanish Constitution regarding the head of state offers as well an interesting insight on the gender approach toward the State's leader. The chapter II (entitled "The Crown") uses solely the word "Rey" (King), clearly referring to the male monarch. The preference for masculinity is even more clearly highlighted in the article 57 ("Succession to the Crown"):

> *"1. The Crown of Spain shall be inherited by the successors of H.M. Juan Carlos I de Borbon, the legitimate heir of the historic dynasty. Succession to the throne shall follow the regular order of primogeniture*

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[56] English version of the Spanish Constitution published by Agencia Estatal Boletin Oficial del Estado (Official State Gazette Agency): https://www.boe.es/legislacion/documentos/ConstitucionINGLES.pdf

195

and representation, in the following order of precedence: the earlier shall precede the later lines; within the same line, the closer degree shall precede the more distant; within the same degree, the male shall precede the female; and for the same sex, the older shall precede the younger."

In like manner, the use of the masculine form of the "Crown Prince" shows a preference for male heirs. The inclination for the male offspring on the hand, limits (at least partially) women's possibilities to access the Spanish Throne and on the other, displays the influence of the Salic law in the modern political system of Spain and of the traditional women's exclusion from the public sphere.

Finally, the only female figure indicated in the Constitution of Spain is the Queen. Indeed, while the article 58 nominates both the Queen Consort (female spouse) and Consort of the Queen (male spouse), its side note in the official version of the Constitution is entitled "Queen", clearly referring to the woman. This gender-biased description of the organization and functioning of the Crown, the highest representative institution in Spain, is thus in clear contradiction with the article 9 ("Liberty and Equality") that requires the public authorities "to promote conditions which ensure that the freedom and equality of individuals".

Aside Constitutions, the existence of first ladies is made visible through diplomatic protocols. Those guidelines setting relations between states were defined by General de Gaulle as "the expression of the order in the Republic" (Deloye, Haroche, Ihl et al., 1996, p. 11). Given that the role of the diplomatic protocol is to create a hierarchy and to structure the political scene, the recognition the presence and the rank of the first lady is de facto recognition of her existence in the political life, as well as on the international stage. Beside this recognition, the fact that the

Protocole mentions her presence allows the spouse of the head of state to participate in the staging of national power and authority.

Diplomatic protocols vary from country to country and in big part are not written, yet a reference to the spouse of the Head of State appears in the majority of them (although the degree of recognition varies slightly). In the French protocol, the role of the spouse in general is recognized, yet the text does not make any direct reference to the first lady of France. Although the decree 89-655 on the order of precedence does not include her, French first ladies traditionally accompanied their companions during important State's visits or acts and during foreign visits follow their own agenda (Paupade, 2014).

In the Polish Protocol [57] the first lady appears in the context of diplomatic ceremonies and official visits (Orłowski, 2010). She is supposed among other to welcome with her husband chiefs of foreign countries at their arrival to the Presidential Palace and to accompany her husband during the annual meeting with ambassadors. Indirectly, the Protocol defines thus the role of the first lady as the companion to the President and the hostess of the Presidential Palace. Her function is thus highly symbolic, as her embodiment connects sphere and public spheres. Her influence on shaping Nation's visual representation is underlined by at the first sight small detail: before a State visit advance teams of two countries coordinate the harmonization of cloths of both spouses. The concern about the wardrobe displays the importance of visual representation in politics and subliminal messages.

Following the Protocol, one of the most important duties (at least given to the place it occupies in the text) is accompanying the spouse of the head of state during her

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[57] Polish diplomacy does not have its own official book text of the diplomatic protocol. Nevetheless, the Ministery of Foreign Affairs of Poland and its diplomatic posts use the book about the Polish diplomatic protocole written by a former chief of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Tomasz Orłowski.

visit in Poland. During such travels, the first lady of the visiting country has her own agenda, just as the first lady of Poland has when she participates in State's travels abroad. It is important to notice that this practice is widely spread in the world and generally, all first ladies during their travels abroad have their own visit program.

> *"After the exchange of gifts, spouses[58] leave the Palace and they start their own program. Its schedule is accorded before and is connected to areas of interest of the guest's spouse. In the past, this was the most often visits of museums of monuments of the capital, presentation of local handicraft or even a fashion show or luxury shopping. Today, such an exhibition of luxury is rather avoided because of the negative public perception. By the same token, the spouse of the head of state increasingly involves herself into help for children, the sick or disabled persons, engages in charitable activities or help talented youth. Her actions are guided by her own convictions, but at the same time such a behavior is considered as an example for others. Her own agenda is thus adapted to such actions and she is accompanied by the spouse of the host, often also with spouses of the minister of foreign affairs and chief of the Protocol."*

(Orłowski, 2010, p. 347)

The shift in activities displays various changes in the role of the first lady. Firstly, the generalization of this phenomenon proves that the function of the first lady follows a process of homogenization on the international level. Secondly, the recognition of the impact of her actions on the public opinion shows that the presidential spouse is not a private person, but belongs to the political universe. Thirdly, the choice of activities shows that the first lady is required to play the role of the "First Citizen" – politically neutral, yet strongly engaged in the civic life. Such

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[58] The word "spouse" appears solely in its female form.

a model corresponds to that of first Republican women who were excluded from politics, but they were required to show their patriotism through charity.

The Spanish Protocol goes even further in the recognition of the importance of the royal spouse. The diplomatic order of precedence, regulated by the royal decree 2.009/1983, places the Queen in the second highest position, just after the King and before heirs to the Crown and the Prime Minister. Another royal decree, 1.560/1997, states that when the national anthem is played during official acts in the presence of the Consort Queen, it should be played in its long version. Given that the long version of the anthem is played only in the presence of the King or during acts honoring the flag, the privileged position of the Queen is underlined once again. By the same token, a new foreign Ambassador in Spain after presenting his credentials to the King must request an audience with the Queen (Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 2001). This procedure shows that the Queen is recognized as the second most important representative of Spain not only in the country but also abroad.

Except the Diplomatic Protocole and some Constitutions of constitutional monarchies, few laws on first ladyship exist. Some countries legalized *certain* aspects of the function of the first lady, in various cases as a reaction to a particular episode rather than as a comprehensive response to a legal void. The fact that the said regulations have been often made in the context of public and/or political dissatisfaction and strong questionings of the first lady's legitimacy, influences on the perimeters of the first lady's function which are not solid and are made erratically. For instance, in the United States, the country where the first ladyship was born and where the office is the most developed, only few laws have been created to regulate various aspects of the function. Among the most important ones there is the "Bobby Kennedy Law" that was voted in 1978 and was aimed to

prevent hiring president's family members in governmental structures. In consequence, it has prevented first ladies "from having salaried positions into federal governments" (O'Connor, Nye & van Assendelf, 1996, p. 839). The same year's Executive Accountability Act provided however a budget for the first lady to assist her husband in his duties. Another important statement on the first lady's status in the United States was made in 1993, made in the context of strong critics of Hillary Clinton's engagement in works on the health care reform. The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons that called into question the legality of the advisory role of the President's Task Force on National Healthcare Reform, led by Hillary Clinton asked the court to address the issue of the legal status of the presidential spouse. US Court of Appeals decided then that the first lady was a "full-time employee in the government" however without any salary for her work (p. 839, O'Connor, Nye & van Assendelf, 1996).

On the other hand, in Colombia in 1914, and as a result of social and political questioning of the public involvement of Ana Milena Muñoz de Gaviria, the Constitutional Court was required to regularize the status of the first lady. The Court announced then (Sentencia C-089A/94) that the first lady can hold high public offices providing she is not appointed by the President. On the legal plan, the said document had two important consequences. Firstly, it recognized that although the first lady is a common citizen of Colombia, the fact of being married to the President makes her a "particular person" ("una persona particular"). Her status of the public stakeholder was thus officially acknowledged, legitimizing thus her acting on the public stage. Secondly, the fact of forbidding the Presidential appointment also demonstrates the will of the Constitutional Court to show that the first ladyship is not an office inside the Presidential Office, but a public function (Molina Bentacur, 2003).

In the studied countries, there is no particular laws regulating the first ladyship, except the French law 55-366 from 1955 that allocated the half of the presidential

pension to his spouse in the case of his death. It is interesting to stress that the text is gendered on the lexical level, as the word "widow" is declined only in its feminine form.

By the same token, an alternative way of legal recognition of the function entails the effective inclusion of the first lady in the office of the head of state. Although in Poland and in France first ladies do not have an official status nor are considered as proper employees of the Presidential office, they are granted with their own teams, financed by the budget of the Presidential office. They also have a representative budget. It is however impossible to estimate its amount, as it is not systemized and depends mainly on personal decisions of each head of state and implication of each first lady. Generally, information about the cost of the first lady's office is not released except on parliamentary requests. For instance, in March 2013 depute Guillaume Larrivé asked the prime minister about the costs of the office of Valérie Trierweiler[59]. In his official response, the prime minister announced that Valérie Trierweiler's team was composed of five people and the salary budget corresponded to 19.742 €, what represented lower costs than those generated by the office of Carla Bruni, who had eight employees for the cost of 36.448 €. In addition, two external companies were paid 25.714 € for the management of the web page of the first lady. In total, CarlaBruni's office generated more than 60.000 € of expense for the President's office.

The budget attributed to the first lady is also a highly sensitive subject. On the one hand, a first lady and her husband can be criticized for spending public money or generating costs while she is not a public servant. It was for example the case of Cécilia Sarkozy who in July 2007 was criticized for the use of a credit card of the

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[59] Full text of the official parliamentary request and its answer (in French) is avalaible of the page of the French Parliament: http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q14/14-20735QE.htm

Public Tresor for buying gifts for other spouses of heads of state. Although the exchange of gifts is a diplomatic tradition and customarily the purchase of such gifts is a responsibility of first ladies, Cécilia Sarkozy had to confront heavy critics of using public money without being officially allowed to do so and to use it without any control of an external political or administrative body. On the other, public expectations regarding first ladies public representation do exist and if a first lady does not meet those expectations she is criticized as well for not fulfilling her function.

In France and in Poland first ladies do not receive any salary, as it is considered an honorary function. Nevertheless, for many the fact of not paying the first lady for her work is a reproduction of the social inequality on the highest level of political institution. Indeed, a lack of financial contribution for the first lady displays that she exits on the political stage as a "wife" and not a "candidate". This is a classic example of the concept of a "two-person, single career" marriage (Papanek, 1973), in which the wife is informally required (Taylor & Harley, 1975) to support her husband, provide unpaid services for his job (Pavalko & Elder, 1993) and abandon her own professional career. In changing societies where the unpaid women's work is recognized as a social injustice, the status of the first lady is seen as an embodiment of women's difficulties. For instance, in Poland in August 2015, few days after the inauguration of the presidential tenure of Andrzej Duda, a feminist blogger, Anna Kowalczyk, posted on her blog "Boska Matka" an article entitled "The First Slave of the Republic of Poland"[60] where she strongly criticized the situation where a woman is obliged to give up her own job and sacrifice her professional carrier without receiving any salary or even social security contributions. The post became viral and opened a debate, largely covered in Polish media, about the funding of the role of the first lady in Poland and more generally, about the role of

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[60] Link to the blog post (in Polish): http://boskamatka.pl/spoleczenstwo/pierwsza-niewolnica-rp/

the first lady. Almost one year later, in July 2016 the leading party in the Polish Parliament, PiS, proposed a law project introducing a lifelong salary for the presidential spouse. Following the project, the pension would correspond to 55% of that of her husband and in return, the first lady would be obliged to publish her tax return and respect the law limiting commercial activity for public persons. The project ultimately failed. Nevertheless, the President's office started to pay first lady's social security and pension contributions, allowing her to include years spent in the Presidential Palace to pension calculations.

ii) POLITICAL EXISTENCE

The first lady's political existence is mainly made through her husband and this dependency conditions the place and public role of the spouse of the head of state. As defined by Bernadette Chirac:

> "Involve oneself is useful for the President of the Republic who has no time to follow an important number of questions, secondary of course in opinion of some people, next to daily responsibilities, national and international, that belong to him."[61]

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[61] Paris Match (digital version), Bernadette Chirac: "J'ai aimé la vie à l'Elysée" [Bernadette Chirac: « I liked the life at Elysee]. Posted online on 9th February 2014.

We can detect three main functions of the first lady in the environment of the head of state:

- *Assisting the head of state in ceremonies and official acts*; This is the most basic duty of the first lady ensuing from the protocol and from the traditional role of the spouse as a hostess to her husband. Because of its limited aspect, where a first lady is seen but not heard (Gutin, 2000; Mayo, 2000) and only sends a message of support to her spouse (Erikson & Thomson, 2012), the model of the first ladyship where the spouse of the head of state limits her actuation solely to this role is seen as obsolete (Gutin, 2000) and inefficient today (Watson, 1999).

- *Advising the president;* The first lady can advise the head of state in two ways: unofficially, through the so called pillow-talk influence (Watson, 2000; Simonton, 1996) and officially or semi-officially, by occupying position of formal advisor (Borrelli, 2002). The pillow-talk influence of first ladies on their spouses undergoes through the traditional inter-influence of spouses within the marriage (Kan & Heath, 2006). However, this influence, born from private relations, impacts the public area sphere and because of its not formalized character can lead to tensions (Borrelli, 2002; Widlak, 2015a). Official or semi-official power is mainly expressed through the place a first lady occupies in the official hierarchy of the office of the head of state or though appointments to special tasks (Borrelli, 2002).

- *Participating in the presidential communication;* This duty, probably the most strategic, consists in spreading political ideas of the spouse and promoting him on the public stage using available channels of communication (Gutin, 2000). The first lady, without having strong legal legitimacy, is indeed an important stakeholder in her husband's tenure as she allows him to expand his communication strategy. On the one hand, the "private/public" dichotomy of the first ladyship allows the wife of the head of

state to base her communication on proximity and emotions, something usually distant from the traditional communication of the head of state that has to reflect the authority of the institution. The first lady is thus an alter-ego of her spouse. While the head of state embodies the highest level of political power, the first lady embodies the closeness with citizens. The first lady adapts the role of the political surrogate during, but sometimes also before her spouse's tenure (Burrell, Elder & Frederick, 2011; Shoop, 2010). The spouse of a head of state can act on both elective and institutional fields. Indeed, she can be engaged into actions aiming at maintaining or rising his popularity and/or represent the office of the head of state, for instance as the Presidential representative in the country as well as abroad and in the country (Smith, 1997; Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015).

The analysis of official web pages of heads of states offers an interesting insight on the institutional perception of the first lady's role. The analysis of the web pages of the French, Polish and Spanish heads of states allows concluding that their spouses occupy a prominent place within the office of the head of state. In Spain, the organizational chart available on the official web page of the Spanish Royal Household indicates that the Office of Her Majesty the Queen forms part of the General Secretariat of the Royal Household (Picture 1 Organizational chart of the Spanish royal Household). Additionally, since the abdication of king Juan Carlos II and the arrival to the throne of king Felipe II, in the section "Royal Household", the subpage entitled "Her Majesty Queen Letizia" is placed directly after the page of king Felipe and before the page dedicated to Infant Leonor, destined to be the future Queen of Spain, reflecting the order of priority indicated by the diplomatic protocol. Similarly, on the web page of the Polish president, the section "First Lady" ("Pierwsza Dama") appears on the top of the page, after the section "President", but before "the Office" (

Picture 2 Web page of the president of Poland). Also in France, before 2014 and the separation of Valérie Trierweiler and Francois Hollande, the first lady had her own subpage on the presidential site that was situated after those of the president and former presidents and before the presentation of the political institutions of the V Republic (Picture 3 Web page of the French presidency).

PICTURE 1 ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE SPANISH ROYAL HOUSEHOLD

(retrieved from the web page of the Spanish Royal Household www.casareal.es, on 17/07/2016)
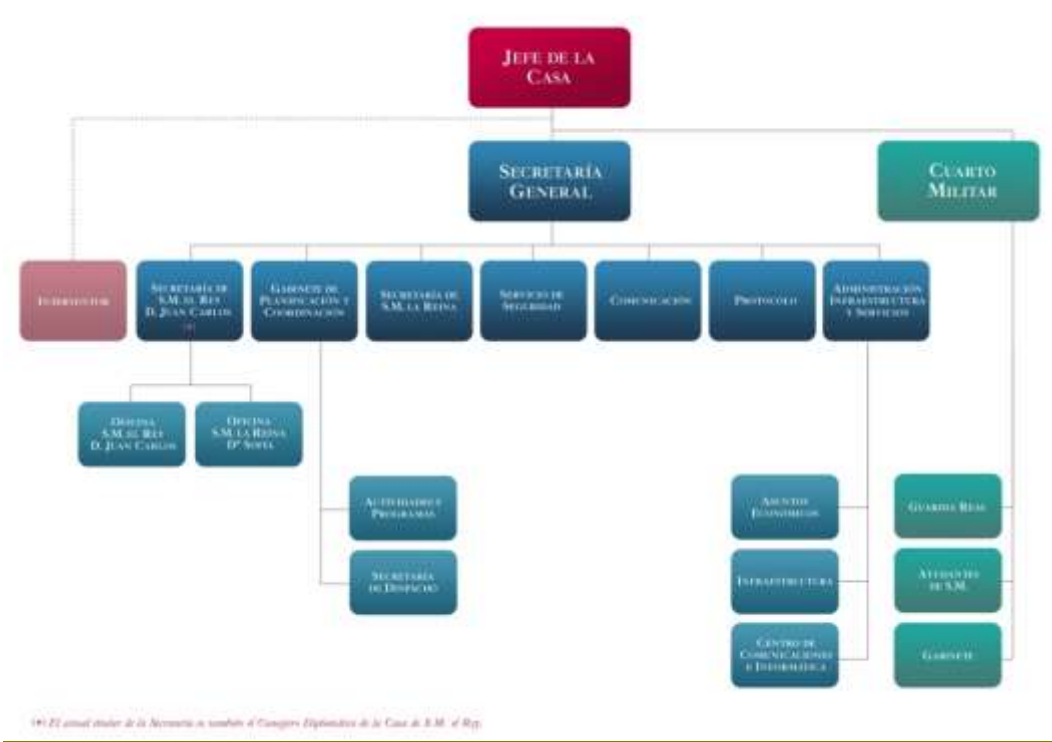
PICTURE 2 WEB PAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF POLAND

(Main sections of the page, from left to right: "News", "President", "First Lady", "(President's) Office", "Legislation", "For Media", "Archives"; screen capture retrieved on 17/07/2016)
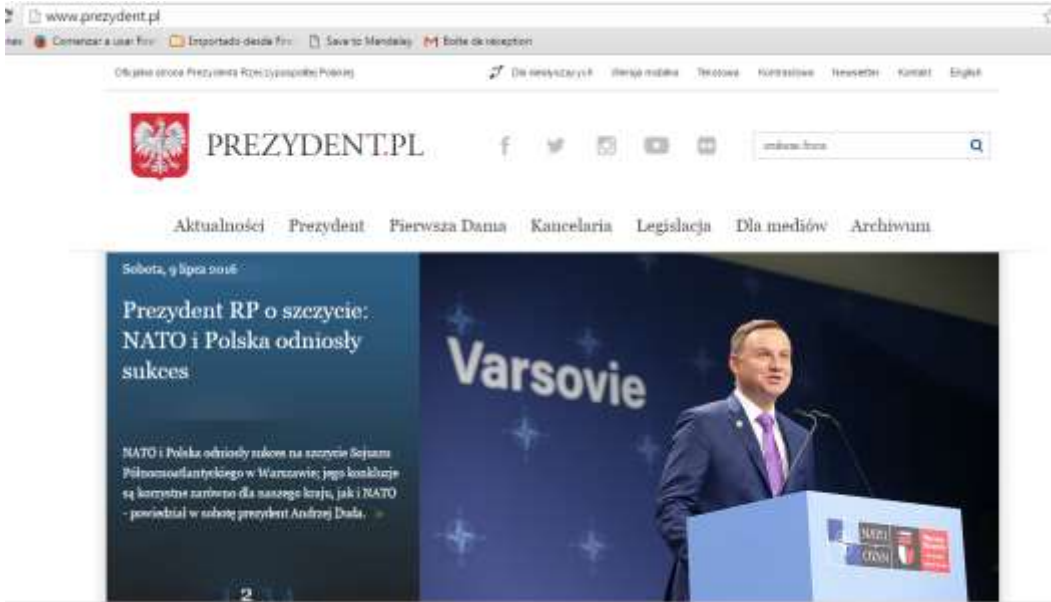
PICTURE 3 WEB PAGE OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY

(The screen capture made on 12/05/2012 and published on the web page of Europe 1, http://lelab.europe1.fr/la-passation-de-pouvoir-numerique-2485)

As to the content of those web pages, the analysis of web pages of Anna Komorowska, Queen Sofia and Valérie Trierweiler showed that the sites, despite their dissimilar forms, served over all to project a first lady's vision on her function, stress message to convey and participate in public image shaping.

The subpage destined to the first lady of Poland, Anna Komorowska opened with a statement, presenting her vision of the function and fields in which she decided to engage the most, such as family's protection, education, culture and ecology.

> *"The role of the Spouse of the President of the Republic of Poland is not only a privilege, but over all a great opportunity for efficient action of good of the biggest number of Compatriots.*
>
> *I support my husband in his work for common well-being, for the good of our Motherland. I also want to share and serve with my own life experience. This is my aim and wish.*
>
> *(…)*
>
> *The Spouse of the President of Poland does not enjoy and special privileges nor funds. However, the authority of the function my husband fulfills gives me strength and hope that my actions will obtain good results.*
>
> *I want to inform you about realized projects, share with you good ideas, and look for support for important ventures."*
>
> (Fragment of the text on the welcoming page of Anna Komorowska)

The page is composed of the following sections: "Biography", "Chronicle" and "Agenda of Anna Komorowska" containing information about her activity, "Pictures", "Speeches", "Charity Auctions", "Honorary Committees", "Prices and distinctions", "Patronage" and ultimately "Walk about the Belvedere Palace". This specific choice of sections as well as their order displays three crucial pieces of information about the tenure of Anna Komorowska. Firstly,

the five first sections underlined the professionalism and engagement of the first lady. A calendar allowing following all public activities of the first lady created the impression of transparency. The sections concerning charity engagement define the field of activity of the first lady. Finally, the last section made clear reference to her role of the hostess of the Presidential Palace.

As for the page of Queen Sofía, in 2012 the whole site of the Spanish Royal Household was completely renewed to achieve objectives of enhanced communication of the Royal Household with citizens respecting "criteria of transparency, rigor and innovation"[62]. The pages of all members of the Royal

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[62] Information retrieved from the internet version of the newspaper El Mundo, found in the article entitled "Nueva web, misma Familia Real" (New web, same Royal family) http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2012/09/10/espana/1347267344.html

Household became thus standardized. The page of the Queen attracts firstly with its banner containing a picture of the Queen and a quote from one of her speeches, defining issues considered as strategic for the Queen (each subsection contains a different quote). Three visible without scrolling sections are "Activities", "Speeches", "Official travels". Those sections refer to Queen's "professional" duties. Photo slide belonging to the section "Activities" creates not only an impression of dynamism, but overall abundancy and displays the big level of Queen's engagement. Lower on the page, one can find sections "Biographic album", "Official portrayals" and "Biography", "Foundation Reina Sofía" and "Book of visits", related to the royalist side on the tenure of Queen Sofía.

PICTURE 5 SCREEN OF THE OFFICIAL WEB PAGE OF QUEEN SOFIA OF SPAIN (BIOGRAPHY SECTION)

The web page of Valérie Trierweiler was in comparison the poorest in information. The main page contained biographical information, solely focused on Trierweiler's professional experience and was accompanied by a picture made by the photographer of celebrities, Stephane Ruet, showing the first lady in a candid way.

Only reference to her role of the presidential companion was found at the bottom of page, where various pictures from an event in the Presidential Palace and presumably organized by Valérie Trierweiler could be seen. Such a presentation matched to the will of Trierweiler to create a public image of an independent, empowered woman who has her own professional career.

PICTURE 6 BIOGRAPHY OF VALERIE TRIERWEILER RETRIEVED FROM HER OFFICIAL WEB PAGE

With the evolution and a general empowerment of the first ladyship, spouses of heads of state started (although still timidly) to take political stances and express their opinions (Widlak, 2015b). Political activism is however still very sensitive and potentially dangerous for the popularity of the first lady and the head of state, as it trespasses traditional boundaries or the first ladyship as a cultural influence and transforms into political power. A first lady can exert political power together with

her husband forming a political super couple (Troy, 2000) or as an independent political actor (Widlak, 2015a), usually arousing popular reject as contradictory to the traditional image of the first lady as supportive and loyal to her husband (Troy, 1997; Scharrer & Bissell, 2000). In France, Danielle Mitterrand was strongly engaged in defense of human rights in the world, a very sensitive issue for a first lady as it can create potential international conflicts. Indeed, Mitterrand's critics of human rights violation in Morocco and Turkey had a very negative impact on their relations with France. The next first lady, Bernadette Chirac also engaged in politics although in a less controversial way. She was the only first lady to hold an elective mandate during her first ladyship when she was a member of the County Council of Correze. Her political influence was also extended to the national level. After the arrival of Lionel Jospin as the prime minister in 1997, seen as a defeat of the Right and Jacques Chirac, Bernadette Chirac reinforced her political influence on her husband, but also within her political party where she would become a leader of the chiraquien wing and a supporter of Nicolas Sarkozy (Chirac & de Carolis, 2001).

iii) CULTURAL EXISTENCE

The private nature of the relation between the first lady and the head of state results in a creation of a public image of the couple based on the dichotomy: while the president representsthe public and the State, the first lady represents the private and an idealized vision of the Nation and while the president represents masculinity, the first lady represents femininity. This double role is in constant evolution, just like cultural norms and conception of woman's in the society are (Sulfaro, 2007; Widlak & Guillamet Lloveras, 2015).

In Poland, society has been soaked for centuries with conservative values where the family was seen as the base of the Polish nation and woman was its greatest defender (Heinen & Portet, 2010)[63]. Despite a superficial empowerment, women did not reach to genuinely improve their situation and patriarchal structures were maintained in the society. In the 1990s they position was still vulnerable as they were loosers of the political transition (Penn, 2005; Graham & Regulska, 1997). Despite obstacles to implement full gender equality, such as a reluctant change of heart (Gerber, 2011) and the traditionalist influence of the Catholic Church (Mandes & Rogaczewska, 2013), positive changes in this field took place, especially since the entrance to the European Union. Simultaneously, we can observe that the period when the first ladyship in Poland was the most severely reduced corresponded to the first ladyship of Danuta Wałęsa, between 1990 and 1995. The first tenure of Jolanta Kwaśniewska, between 1995 and 2000, marked the rise of the function on the public stage, yet in a limited and strongly gendered form. Only since the 2000s the popular outlook on first ladies changed and presidential spouses established their position as a public actor.

Similarly, the evolution of women's situation in the public space in France was followed by the empowerment of the first lady's role. Although French women obtained their right to vote in 1944, after the WWII they were confined to the reproductive role, considered as natural to women, yet missing any form of recognition (Duchen, 1991)[64]. The rise of feminist movements in the 1960s and the events of May 1968 that rejected postwar values represented first changes in the conception of the place of French women within the society (Duchen, 2003). However, women did not appear massively on the political scene until the 1980s

[63] For a more detailed presentation please refer to the section "Women in Polish society" on the page 14.

[64] For a more detailed presentation please refer to the section "Women in French society" on the page 17.

and continued to reaffirm their position in the next decade (Sineau, 2011; Mossuz-Lavau, 2007), despite the visible antifeminism in French politics rooted in fear of male politicians to share power and of modification of the symbolic of masculinity (Bard, 1999). Keeping with this timeline, the first ladyship in France was almost inexistent until the tenure of Valery Giscard d'Esteing in the 1970s and its genuine rise started in the 1980s with Danielle Mitterrand and continued to maintain its strong place on the public stage in France, despite controversies provoked by the frenetic privatization of politics since the tenure of president Sarkozy and vulgarization of political debate (Widlak, 2015a). Since 2014 the role (temporarily?) disappeared with the separation of the couple Hollande-Trierweiler.

Finally, in Spain, the shift from the francoist dictatorship, promoting traditionalist values (Enders & Radcliff, 1998; Manrique Arribas, 2003), to democracy, based on social, economic and political equality, resulted in an opening (at least partially) the political stage to women (Radcliff, 2002). Since then, although the two social models coexisted, women were progressively gaining more rights, leading to a decrease of gender inequality in various fields. In the beginning of the 21st century, Spain under the government of the socialist Prime Minister Zapatero undertook many efforts in order to reinforce gender equality, mainly through lawmaking and appointment of a large number of women to top-leading political posts (Calvo & Martín, 2009; Valiente, 2008; Valiente, 2010). Although the Queen fulfilled her function since 1975, until the end of the 20th century her role was perceived as limited to representation and charity. The 2000s and 2010s were decades of a profound transformation for the institution of monarchy in Spain, that in reality beneficiated the Queen. Queen's empowerment since the Annus Horriblis was also accompanied by a greatest public recognition. Since the abdication of King Juan Carlos II, Queen Sofía was replaced by her daughter-in-law, Letizia who presents an antipodal model of womanhood. Issue from the middle-class class, divorced, this

former journalist and the first commoner to marry a Spanish king embodies in a certain way the union of the two Spain.

Furthermore, the first ladyship mirrors not only the woman's place within the society at a determined moment, but also reflects the societal outlook on the family and the marriage. This most intimate relation is at the same time prescribed by laws, cultural norms and taboos, with a defined general shape and limits (Mandell, 2015; Udry, 1971). The composition of family has strongly evolved and includes nowadays various forms of conjugal relations outside marriage. However, the traditional marriage is still strongly implemented and important for the presidential image as testified by the case of two French first ladies, Carla Bruni-Sarkozy and Valérie Trierweiler. The first one, Carla Bruni married in 2008 to Nicolas Sarkozy after a very short, yet strongly mediatized time of dating and after public critics of "desacralizing" the presidential function and with aim to clarify the public status of Bruni[65]. By the same token, for years later in 2012, Valérie Trierweiler did not marry to Francois Hollande after he became president, provoking in the beginning a debate about her status. Although she was officially called first lady, the media, in France and abroad, often called her "first girlfriend" emphasizing the legally unregulated character of her relation with the French president.

> *"The duty of the president is to understand people, and his best way to connect with them is to live like them. However in the 21st century when the number of divorces and single people is increasing, we should ask ourselves if such a model (of traditional) family will not evolve. Personally, I think it has to evolve. Before the president was absent from the first pages of people magazines, today it's the reality. His role is in a media evolution, and so is the role of the first lady"*

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[65]"Le discret mariage de Nicolas Sarkozy et Carla Bruni" [A dicrete wedding of Nicolas Sarkozy and Carla Bruni] published in the digital version of *Le Figaro* on 4th, February, 2008. Link: http://www.lefigaro.fr/politique/2008/02/04/01002-20080204ARTFIG00057-le-discret-mariage-de-nicolas-sarkozy-et-carla-bruni-.php

The analysis of stereotypes attached to the representation of first lady shows that despite the influence of cultural norms of each country there exists a common imaginary based on universal gendered norms, sustaining the theory of universalism of patriarchy (Lerner, 1987; Fox, 1988). This also proves that despite some cultural differences, the first ladyship is today a globalized function and although there is not a precise description of the role, a common imaginary defines its boarders.

Following Deaux and Lewis (1984) there exist four categories of gender stereotypes: traits-, behavior-, physical characteristic- and occupation- related stereotypes. Regarding the first group of stereotypes, those related to traits, a common archetype of the first lady appears: the first lady is (or should be) above all emotional, caring, loving, friendly and empathic. Such a picture reveals several things. Firstly, one can observe the gendered division of emotions treat trespasses national borders. While the man retains his emotions, woman on the other hand exposes them. Such a presentation has two major consequences: although it can have a positive impact on popularity of first ladies as this helps them in generating closeness with citizens, it represents as well a handicap because it is antagonistic to the traditional image of leadership, based on strength and aggression. In addition, it should be noticed that this particular set of traits recalls a romanticized image of a mother or a nurse taking care of her family, her husband and symbolically of the whole country.

PICTURE 7 TRAIT RELATED STEREOTYPING

(Picture of Queen Sofía during a State visit to Haiti in 2011[66])

As for behavior related stereotyping here as well common trends exists. In connection with the previous description, the first lady's attitude must be marked by closeness. She also should be engaged, in her husband's presidency as well as in charitable and social projects. Her behavior also should be marked by loyalty, to her husband, but also to the country she represents, and sacrifice. In first ladies' discourse the notion of sacrifice is very present underlining professional but also personal efforts of the first lady. Although no legislation exists in that matter, public pressure on first ladies make them stop their professional activity. In France the only one who decided to pursue her career was Valérie Trierweiler who maintained her position of journalist in the magazine Paris Match. Her decision provoked however a vivid debate in the media not only about the professional status of the first lady, but also about her obligations toward the President and the country and her abilities not to generate conflicts of interest or controversies.

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[66] Retrieved from the web page of the magazine ¡Hola!, http://www.hola.com/realeza/casa_espanola/2011100854912/reina-sofia-visita-haiti/)

"I have to work to feed my family. Why am I refused this elementary right?"

(Valérie Trierweiler, Nouvel Observateur nr 2542, issued on 25th, July, 2013)

In addition, in Poland and France the patriotic accent is stronger. It can be explained by a more conservative political and social climate in Poland and a more traditionalist character of the institution of the Crown in Spain.

PICTURE 8 BEHAVIOR RELATED STEREOTYPING

(Danuta Wałęsa standing behind her husband during his presidential swearing on December, 22, 1990[67])

With regard to physical characteristics, those stereotypes seem the strongest as first ladies often reduced to the role of the companion and are placed in the role of silent actor. The elegance of the first lady is a shared exigency. The first lady's look is often carefully analyzed and serves as a base to judge whether she fulfill with her role of the representative of her country and of her female compatriots. By the

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[67] Credit: Getty Image/AFP/Janek Skarzynski

same token, it should be kept in mind that the word "elegance" refers as well to the respect of existing social norms that concern physical appearance. In case of younger first ladies, beauty is also a factor of evaluation, proving the mainstream culture's obsession with physical attractiveness (Yan & Bissel, 2014). However, just like physical ideals vary from country to country, so perception on physical characteristics on the first lady varies. In Poland modesty in clothing seems dominate, unless until Agata Korhauser-Duda, the first lady since 2015 who join the tendency of other countries where companions of heads of state are genuine often dictate fashion trends. In a country soaked by catholic culture and with a fresh communist past luxury or elitism are commonly condemned. In Spain, belonging to the royal institution allows the Queen to adapt a more sophisticated style based on a more expensive wardrobe. In France, one of the most important capitals of fashion, the first lady is not only allowed, but also expected to create an appealing style. In this domain the most successful first lady was Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, former model and singer. In 2011 Bruni-Sarkozy was rewarded by the American magazine *Vanity Fair* the title of the best-dressed woman in the world. Interestingly other three royalties exerting the role of the first lady made it to the top ten of the said list.

PICTURE 9 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTIC RELATED STEREOTYPING

Official portrait of the First Lady of Poland Maria Kaczyńska[68]

Official portrait of Queen Sofía of Greece[69]

Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, the first lady of France, during an official ceremony in August 2011[70]

The last set of gender stereotypes, related to occupation places the first lady in the roles of a mother, wife and woman as well as a public stakeholder. As for the last occupation, the first lady is expected to play more like an engaged citizen than a genuine politician. Such an attitude reflects the vision on the first ladyship similar to that on women in the 19th century world, when politics were an exclusive reserve of men and women did not have voting rights, but in many countries were morally obligated to involve themselves in the development of the country but through the private sphere, for instance through the influence they exerted on the family (Burns, 2008; Matthews, 1992). Charity work and social acting is thus widespread

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[68] Picture retrieved from the archives of the web page of the President of Poland: http://www.prezydent.pl/archiwum-lecha-kaczynskiego/pierwsza-dama/biografia/

[69] Picture retrieved from the web page of the Royal Household of Spain, section: "Oficial Portrayls": http://www.casareal.es/ES/FamiliaReal/Reina/Paginas/reina_album_fotografico.aspx

[70] Picture retrieved from the digital version of the French magazine Elle; article "Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, from podiums to Elysee" published on 24th, April, 2012: http://www.elle.fr/People/La-vie-des-people/News/Carla-Bruni-Sarkozy-des-podiums-a-l-Elysee/Carla-bruni-aout-2011

among first ladies in the world and many of them reinforce this aspect by creating their own foundations.

TABLE 11 LIST OF FIRST LADIES' FOUNDATIONS

Poland	France	Spain
Danuta Wałęsa: Fundacja Sprawni Inaczej (educational and medical help for people with disabilities)	Yvonne de Gaulle: Fondation Anne de Gaulle (help for young girls with the syndrome of Down)	Queen Sofía: Fundacion Reina Sofía (humanitarian and social help, education, culture)
Jolanta Kwaśniewska: Porozumienie Bez Barier (help for people with disabilities, promotion of the healthy life and fight against discrimination of elderly)	Claude Pompidou: Fondation Claude Pompidou (help for children with disabilities and elderly)	Queen Letizia: Fundacion Hesperia (social and cultural projects, help for young people with difficulties on the labor market)
Maria Kaczyńska: -	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Esteing: Fondation Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Esteing (children's protection)	
Anna Komorowska: -	Danielle Mitterrand: Fondation France-Libertes (protection of human rights, fight against injustice and exclusion)	
Agata Kornhauser-Duda: -	Bernadette Chirac: Fondation Hôpitaux de Paris – Hôpitaux de France (improving daily life conditions of hospitalized patients)	
	Cécilia Sarkozy: -	
	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy: Fondation Carla Bruni-Sarkozy (education, access to culture and fight against analphabetism)	
	Valérie Trierweiler: - (honorary president of the Foundation France-Libertes)	

PICTURE 10 OCCUPATION RELATED STEREOTYPING

(Bernadette Chirac, in 2014, pursuing her charity engagement and the biggest charity action of her first ladyship "Pieces d'or" (Golden coins)[71])

TABLE 12 SUMMARY OF GENDER STEREOTYPING

Stereotypes / national imaginary	Polish imaginary	Spanish imaginary	French imaginary
Traits	Emotional, caring, loving		
Behavior	Closeness, loyalty, engagement		
	Sacrifice		
Physical characteristics	elegant		
	modest	sophisticated	Seductive, fashionable
Occupation	Mother, wife, woman, public stakeholder		

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b) Evolution of the first ladyship: fragile empowerment

Undoubtfully, the first ladyship has evolved since its beginning, being progressively empowered. The definition of the term "empowerment" is problematic because it represents a wide range of concepts and a large field of application. Following Kabeer (2001), empowerment consists in increasing ability of an individual or a group to make strategic choices in a context of a previous impossibility to make such choices. In the presented study of first ladyship, the term was declined in three major lines: participation, autonomy and political and economic recognition of the first lady.

i) Participation in the public life

Just like "empowerment", "participation" is also a term that can be declined in various concepts. By "participation in the public life" the author of the presented thesis understands engagement in the public debate about civic life. The analysis of the analysis of the role of first ladies in France, Poland and Spain shows that globally the institution of the first lady gained public visibility allowing first ladies to participate in the public debate. This participation is however still limited and varies in function of each woman.

1. PROGRESSIVE EXTENSION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The analysis of first ladies' responsibilities as well as their relation with their husbands, politics and public opinion provides a picture of a global increase of first lady's competeneces in all studied countries. For such an analysis, first ladies were classified following typologies of Wekkin, Gutin and Watson. Although those typologies were created by the said researchers for the study of the American model, their universality allows applying them to different countries.

The first typology, that of Wekkin (2000) is based on the analysis of the attitude of the first lady toward power. "The conscript" refers to a first lady who is reluctant of the political life and is dragged there only because of her marriage. The role is marked by a strong political detachment. "The shield" describes a pre-feminist vision of the presidential spouse who supports the president mainly by "attending to his nonpolitical well-being" (p. 604). Although first lady's motivation is not political, she can interfere in the exerting of power, creating resentment in the presidential staff. "The courtesan" plays a role of a political gatekeeper to political elites without however seeking political power. The first lady's power lies in making and unmaking political carriers following her personal preferences. "The consigliere" describes the model of the first ladyship where the presidential spouse is an advisor and confident to her husband. She is the closest to play the role of the presidential alter ego. "The regent" is the presidential spouse who takes over a part of presidential responsibilities when he is unable to fulfill his duties, for instance because of his illness. The more advanced version of this, it the "Shadow President" variant, in which the first lady steps into the president's role. Finally "the co-president" describes a first lady who is an acknowledged political partner of her husband. In this case, political abilities of the first lady are recognized by the president and judged by him as needed in the exerting of power.

Secondly, Gutin (2000) proposes a classification concentrated on the public activity of the first lady. "Social hostess and ceremonial presences" corresponds to the model of a limited communicating activity of the first lady. Strongly ceremonial in their nature, public actuations of such a first lady are relatively rare and deprived of the political essence. "The emerging spokeswomen" describes first ladies who act as public communicators and in the political interest of their husbands. Generally, first ladies who adopt that model are reticent in their contact with the media, but consider it as a necessary evil. The last group, that of "independent activists and political surrogates", concerns first ladies who would use all available means of communication to impact the society or modify its position on a specific issue.

Finally, Watson (2000) proposes a typology based on the type of relationship between the president and the first lady. "The full partner" describes a first lady who is active on the public stage and is a key advisor to her husband. "The partial partner" is a presidential spouse who supports and advises her husband. "The behind-the-scenes partner" is a first lady who is publicly engaged in social issues, but who advises the President privately. "The partner in marriage" is a presidential spouse whose advisory power is limited to issues other than political ones. Finally, "the nonpartner" is the presidential spouse who shows little or no interest in the role of the first lady and in the public assisting of her husband and no interest in politics and policy.

TABLE 13 CLASSIFICATION OF FIRST LADIES OF POLAND, FRANCE AND SPAIN FOLLOWING CLASSIFICATIONS BY WEKKIN, GUTIN AND WATSON

Country	First lady	Classification by Wekkin	Classification by Gutin	Classification by Watson
Poland	Danuta Wałęsa	Conscript	Social hostess	Non-partner
	Jolanta Kwaśniewska	Consigliere	Independent activist	Full partner
	Maria Kaczyńska	Consigliere	Independent activist	Full partner
	Anna Komorowska	Shield	Emerging spokewoman	Partial partner
Spain	Queen Sofía	Consigliere	Emerging spokewoman / independent activist	Partial partner / full partner
France	Yvonne de Gaulle	Conscript	Social hostess	Non-partner
	Claude Pompidou	Shield	Social hostess	Partner in marriage
	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Esteing	Shield	Emerging spokewoman	Partner in marriage
	Danielle Mitterrand	Consigliere / Co-president	Independent activist	Full partner
	Bernadette Chirac	Consigliere / Co-president	Independent activist	Full partner
	Cécilia Sarkozy	Courtesan	Emerging spokewoman	Partial partner
	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy	Courtesan	Emerging spokewoman	Partial partner
	Valérie Trierweiler	Courtesan	Independent activist	Partial partner

Several conclusions can be drawned from the table above. Firstly, despite a global trend of increase of participation, there can be fluctuations, caused by various reasons such as negative attitude of a first lady toward her participation in the public life (i.e. Cécilia Sarkozy or Anna Komorowska) or a complex relation with the head of state (i.e. Valérie Trierweiler). Nevertheless those variations are never too strong. Secondly, first lady's involvement into the public life can vary during her tenure. For instance queen Sofía's involvement in institutional matters became stronger and more visible after 2011. Similaringly, Maria Kaczyńska shifted from a merely present first lady to an engaged (and often attacked for that) public stakeholder. On the opposite, Valérie Trieweiler was forced to step back and since

2013 she became more discreet and visibly tried to avoid controversies from the beginning of the tenure of François Hollande. Thirdly, Wekking model of the conscript characterizes only two first ladies, Danuta Wałęsa and Yvonne de Gaulle, who were the first ones to fullfil the duties of the presidential spouse. It can be assumed that this model existed because of conservative political and social contexts in which they both had to exist, personal attachement to traditional values of both women and a complete lack of infrastructure. On the other side, none of the listed first ladies was classified as the Wekkin's co-president, although two first ladies, Danielle Mitterrand and Bernadette Chirac were classified as "Consigliere / co-president". Danielle Mitterrand used her double status of human rights' activists and the first lady of France to act on the international scene, often against official political lines of France. Her relation with French power was ambiguous, where on the one side she is publicly accompanied abroad by French ministers in travels organized by her foundation and on the other, her independence had negative impact on diplomatic relations of France with Marocco, Turkey and China among other[72]. Differently, Bernadette Chirac established her authority and influence on her husband and his party progressively during the twelve years of her public presence as a first lady. Placed in the role of a simple companion and with no influence on her husband, Bernadette Chirac gained public approval through her social actions and became one of the success leverages of Jacques Chirac's reelection in 2002 and his closest advisor in his second tenure.

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[72] « Dans le nord de l'Irak l'attentat auquel a echappe mme Danielle Mitterrand a fait quatrze morts et qutorze blesses » [In the north of Iraq the terrorist attack from with Mme Danielle Chirac escaped, made 14 deaths and 14 injured], *Le Monde*, 8th, July, 1992

Considered in the beginning as belonging solely to the private sphere, first ladies lacked "official" legitimacy to participate in the public debate as a public stakeholder. This situation evolved, however not as a result of political gaming but rather as a result of media and public interest in her persona.

As for the reflection of first ladies in media, primarly it should be reported that in all analyzed media supports, the press coverage on first ladies increased both quantitatively and qualitatively[73]. Not only did articles became more frequent and focused more often on first ladies, they also shifted to more prestigious sections as national or international. First ladies who in the beginning were exclusively quoted by name as companions of heads of state, started to be protaginsts of articles. In addition, a relatively recent tendency in all studied countries appeared – journalists started to analyze influence of particular first ladies, their impact as well as utility and compatibility of the function within existing political and cultural system in each country. By giving greater coverage, media gave voice to first ladies.

First ladies also gained recognition with the increased public visibility. Public opinion polls in their great majority show that spouses of heads of state enjoy greater popularity than their husbands and that they are often treated as politicians and not simple public stakeholders[74]. Moreover, a certain public expectation toward first ladies to speak up in particular contexts can be noticed, especially in Poland. There exists a certain popular belief that the first lady represents a civic, balanced and

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[73] For more details please consult the article "Behold... the Head of State's Spouse! A comparative study of the political rise of the First Lady in Poland, France and Spain" published in the section "Comparative analysis" on the page 157 and its tables I to VII.

[74] For more details please consult the part "Results published in academic papers" on the page 71 and especially the sub-part "Comparative analysis" on the page 157.

unpoliticized voice that can bring a valuable insight in the public debate regarding social issues, such as women's rights or ecology.

"She (the first lady) is not so much shown in TV. And it's a pity. I would like to hear her more."

(Interview with Polish citizens; woman, 27 y.o., higher education, left views)

ii) AUTONOMY

1. PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

From a historical perspective we can observe that first lady's autonomy increased. The said growth Personal attributes is a result of a greater public recognition, and thus a greater independence regarding the president, but also of a greater use of personal attributes of each first lady.

Eksterowicz and Roberts (2004) argue those attributes, such as personal and professional ambitions of each first lady, as well as her professional, social, educational and cultural backgrounds, ideology and vision of the first ladyship define the model of her tenure and influence her agenda. Additionally, her relation with the head of state also seems having a strong impact as it decides about the integration of her office with the office of the head of state and influences the level of resources attributed to the first lady as staff and budget.

Despite the impression that personal attributes are insignificant and too volatile, a historical analysis of the first ladyship proves that the personal factor has played a major role in the empowerment and structuring of the institution in various countries, some first ladies actions marking turning points in the popular perception on the institution. Like in the classical case of female leadership, the legitimacy is achieved when one woman's success is recognized by a group, and in a turn by others and expands as new societal norms (Bullough et al., 2012; Lucas, 2003). This logic of the increase of legitimacy was observed by Watson (2003) who analyzed the American office of the first lady and concluded that the function followed an important extraconstitutional development that is seen above all in the infrastructure given to the presidential spouse. Also, Eksterowicz and Paynter (2000) pointed out an increasing professionalization of the office and its integration with the office of the President.

In Europe, Danielle Mitterrand, the first lady of France from 1981 to 1995, questioned the traditional image of the first lady as a presidential shadow and politicized the function (Mitterrand, 1996; Xenakis, 2006). Mitterrand who after the presidential victory of her husband in 1981 declared that she would not be "a window dresser" (Sauvard, 2012) shaped a new image of the French first lady liberated from duties imposed by the traditional gender division and the traditionalist vision of the function. She also introduced and normalized the image of a first lady who publicly stands for various, sometimes sensitive causes (Widlak, 2015a).

A decade after in Poland Jolanta Kwaśniewska revolutionalised the institution of the first ladyship in Poland. She became the first truly popular first lady and used this popularity to create first structures of the office of the first lady of Poland, something that appeared unreachable to her predecessor Danuta Wałęsa who complained about public reluctance and media negative coverage when she wanted to hire an assistant.

„I don't remember when the idea of creating an office for the first lady appeared. But public opinion made such noise... Journalists raised Cain that there was no money and that such a function was unnecessary. And I understand that situation. The next presidential spouse was in an easier situation. Simply, she did not inform about it. The office was there and that was all. I didn't have any assistant, any secretary, only my friends traveled with me. For instance, a friend who used to work as a hairedresser traveled with me and styled my hair"

(Interview with Danuta Wałęsa)

Not only Jolanta Kwaśniewska gain public popularity, she also enrolled the institution of the first lady into the political landscape. During her tenure she created thus bases of the function and created an infrastructure for the next first ladies. Her involvement influenced the shape of the first ladyship in Poland and also showed to Poles the necessity of such an office. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of Polish citizens interviewed for this research recognized the necessity and importance of the first lady's office.

2. MEDIA PRESSURE

"It's serious with Carla, but the JDD[75] will not choose the date (of the wedding) for us" declared Nicolas Sarkozy during a press conference on 8th, January, 2008. In

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[75] JDD – *Journal du Dimanche*, one of the leading weeklies in France

democratic countries, where media are free, the impact of media on politicians, and among them first ladies, is a recognized phenomenon.

Firstly, media in its search of information about politicians, not only political but also personal, obliges the first lady to be in the spotlight. Such a blurring of boarders between the right to inform and the transgression may have negative impacts on the head of state and his spouse in terms of the office's trivialization or drop of public popularity. This in consequence may induce politicians to try to exert pressure on media. For instance, Nicolas Sarkozy pressed French media not to leak information about the extramarital relation of his wife, Cécilia (Campus, 2010; Pilichowski, 2012). In Spain as well, self-censorship of the media regarding the Royal Household and the political class existed as well (Barrera & Apezarena, 2013). However, since a decade and especially after the outburst of *Annus Horriblis,* this media self-control has relaxed, surprisingly having a positive effect on the cover on Queen Sofía (Widlak & Pont Sorribes, 2015).

> *"It's truly difficult to receive information, because it's shielded information. Over time, a journalist learns how to look and interpret gestures. S(he) also shares complicity with some high-ranking officials of the Royal Household, guards, doctors. It's goog to have a close relation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs."*
>
> (Interview with Marius Carol, foreign correspondal to the Spanish Royal Household for La Vanguardia)

> *"When I prepare my TV programs sometimes I hear from my producers: you cannot say this, you cannot say that (…). There is a huge media auto-censorship provoked by the pressure of the Royal Household and by fear of possible retaliations."*
>
> (Interview with Pilar Eyre, journalist and author of books about the Royal Household of Spain)

Secondly, it can be concluded that the media interest toward first ladies is stronger nowadays, because first ladies are a perfect representation of modern canons in journalism and in popular culture. As a consequence of popularization of politics, the convergence between politics and entertainment increased, changing the meaning and the scope of the relation between citizens and politics (Campus, 2013). In order to re-establish the relation with citizens who have lost (at least) their interest in politics, politicians communicate about their private life (van Zoonen, 2005). Similarly, news content evolved as well, opening the door to the process of tabloidization of information with a blurred separation between news and infotainment (Jebril, Albaek & de Vreese, 2013; Esser, 1999). Although the result of this fight for mind is still uncertain, it would seem that media are currently marking more points. As stated Danuta Wałęsa during the interview:

> "Sometimes we call media the fourth estate, for me it's the first one. Journalists have access to information, to people (detain this information). (…) (Today) they have the power of destroying carreers and they forget that everyone has the right to mistake."

This trends of political and media personalization and privatization found a fertile ground in the contemporary celebrity culture. Politicians have become modern celebrities and have embraced this status, as proven by multiple photo shoots and interviews given to the gossip press. In France, in 2007 Nicolas Sarkozy even chose a photographer from the gossip press, Nicolas Warrin, to produce the official picture for his tenure (Dakhlia, 2007). However, the celebritisation of politics impacts negatively the image of the woman as it promotes a sexist vision of womanhood (Negra, 2009) marked by hyperfeminity and gendered morality (van Zonnen, 2005). The first lady is thus a perfect public personality to satisfy all the requirements of modern media. Floating between the public and the private, she addresses needs of both political and media worlds. Additionally, her status of the

first woman and her husband naturally attracts interest of the society, making it harder for the first lady to communicate.

> *"There is no clear communication strategy, because the institution itself does not have a clear boarder between the public and the private"*
>
> (Marius Carol, about the communication strategy of the Royal Household of Spain)

Thirdly the role of the media in her public rise is as ambiguous as in the case of "traditional" female politicians. Campus (2013) argues that historically media helped women in their rise on the political stage increasing their public visibility, but their outlook is still strongly gendered. The media role regarding political empowerment of the first ladyship is very alike: after very put the function on the political map, by normalizing the public presence of first ladies, legitimizing it and codifying the role, the media continue to look at the first lady as at the professional wife, allowed to act only in a narrow field. We can thus presume that as far as this attitude will not change, possibilities of a further empowerment of the first ladyship will be compromised.

Regarding the gendered coverage, the most common stereotype is that of physical characteristic. Descriptions of first ladies' cloths and dresses appear in all kind of articles: treating themes of state travels, social actions or even the question of first lady's political role. Their maritial status is constantly recalled by the use of expressions "presidential wife", "royal spouse", etc. The majority of the coverage is dominanted by information giving to first ladies secondary status, such as official visits. In consequence, the subliminal message given by the media about first ladies' activities often do not correspond to the reality. In addition, when media report about the influence of a first lady they use to describe it as an unofficial influence of a queen, intriguing with her court to maintain her influence on the

ruler. Such a presentation is in clear contradiction and sends a message of the first ladyship as relating to the Ancient Regime and incompatible with democratic rules.

Finally, although in its majority coverage on first lady is neutral, positive and negative tones display as well gendered attitude of media toward first ladies. Positive articles are characterized by the use of adjectives describing (female) emotions, while negative articles report behaviors that a first lady is not *supposed* to have or critize her targeting in reality her husband.

> *"The Palace was so distroyed that soon it was closed. In 1990 the Office of the City's Architect received a budget for its renovation. One year later the monument was given to the Office of the President. Since that moment critics started.*
>
> *„The presidential spouse [Danuta Wałęsa] demanded apartments for her little presidential children: each one with a golden bath...", "Mahogany, rosewood and marble will be furnished with antics, decorated with carpets..." – the weekly 'Spotkania' repeated popular opinions."*
>
> (Gazeta Wyborcza, "Nie ma zlotych wanien" [There are no golden baths], 9th, February, 1993)

TABLE 14 GENDERED COVERAGE ON FIRST LADIES

First lady		Physical stereotypes	Traits stereotypes	Celebrity status	Reference to the maritial status	2nd role coverage	„Royalist" influence on politics	Critics of a behavior	Criticics of a first lady targeting her husband
Poland	Danuta Walesa	×	×		×	×			×
	Jolanta Kwasniewska	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
	Maria Kaczynska	×	×		×	×	×	×	×
	Anna Komorowska	×	×		×	×			×
Spain	Queen Sofia	×	×	×	×	×	×		
France	Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing	×	×		×	×		×	
	Danielle Mitterrand	×			×			×	×
	Bernadette Chirac	×			×	×	×	×	×
	Cecilia Sarkozy	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
	Carla Bruni-Sarkozy	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
	Valerie Trierweiler	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

3. POLITICAL DEPENDENCY

When speaking about the first ladyship, it is necessary to mention the subject of relation between the head of state and his spouse. Indeed, first lady's legitimity being rooted in her private relation with the person exercing power, a natural dependency is thus created. First lady's first duty is thus serving his husband and his office through the role of a political surrogate (Esser & Pfetsch, 2004) conveying a positive image of her husband as well as his political ideas through different media. The importance of this role has increased with the development of the celebrity culture. Indeed, the "intimate" character of the first lady, created by her appartenance to the private sphere, makes of her a perfect material for a political celebrity and a selling subject also for her spouse. Celebrities respond indeed to new affective demands in contemporary media culture based both on "intimate" and "real" and create a relationship of trust (Nunn & Biressi, 2010).

> *"It was enough to put a little piece of paper with her name, "Valérie Trierweiler", on the door of one of the offices, on the third flor of the campaign's head quarter of François Hollande, avenue de Ségur, in Paris, so the team of the socialist candidate feel suddenly anxious. "We criticized the role of Cécilia Sarkozy in 2007 and here we do the same!", sights one of them."*
>
> (LeMonde.fr, "Valérie Trierweiler, compagne et discrète conseillère" [Valérie Trierweiler, companion and discreet consellor], 21st, January, 2012)

The intimate relation between the head of state and his spouse is the most difficult subject to study, yet various examples of president's pressure on his spouse exist. It is important to notice that spouses of head of state are sometimes reluctant to fulfill the public function of the head of state. Anna Komorowska in 2010 openely

expressed her reluctance toward the loss of privacy (although she did her public mea culpa only two years after assuring in various interviews that she needed time to genuinely appreciate her new public role). Similarly, Cécilia Sarkozy did not want to get publicly involved in politics and was compelled to do so by her husband (Attias, 2013).

By the same token, internal power struggle scan be experienced between spouses. For instance, Bernadette Chirac not only was a motor of Jacques Chirac presidential victory in 2002, she was also able to impose her political decisions, like she did by supporting Nicolas Sarkozy, who was in a personal and political conflict with Jacques Chirac. In the TV program "Une ambition intime" released on the channel M6 Sarkozy described his relation with the Chirac:

> *"Jacques did not want us to meet. I was the Minister of the Interior and we had to hide to see each other. (…) Why? To speak, because she wanted to tell me: "I will help you, you have to resist… I had Jacques who hit me and Bernadette who supported me."*

This political dependency toward the husband makes first ladies one of the most vulnerable targets of political attacks. Often, attacks on spouses are indirect attacks on heads of state themselves. In Poland in 2005, in the end of the tenure of Aleksander Kwasniewski, the Foundation of his wife and his wife herself were subjects of a parliamentary investigation and were accused of illegal traffic money and corruption. Although those accusations were proved false in the Court, the following first ladies decided not to create any foundation at their name to avoid this situation.

Moreover, because of the necessity of keeping neutrality, the first lady is often isolated and is not backed in case of conflicts, but other than her husband. Pilar

Eyre defined the situation of Queen Sofía in following worlds: "She is not supported by the Left, she is not supported by the Right. I said it many times: the Queen is very lonely". In consequence, the lack of any political ally fragilises the first lady and reinforces her image of the political outsider.

4. PUBLIC OPINION PRESSURE

The construction of the democratic system and advancements of institutional reforms aiming to increase democratic responsiveness, such as suffrage, nomination of candidates through the process of primary election and referenda, give to public opinion a capacity to mold or influence politicians and the decision-making process (Burstein, 2003). By belonging to the public sphere the first ladyship is also subject to this pressure.

The interest in first ladies generally increase during scandal or crisis situations and often reopens the debate about the legitimity and place of the first ladyship on the public stage. It can have both positive and negative consequences for a first lady in term of public approval. For Queen Sofía the institutional crisis that outbursted in 2011 has a positive impact as it reinforced her position of the political player and an important actor of the Royal Household (Widlak & Pont, 2015). At the other extreme, the controversy of the "tweetgate" authored by Valérie Trierweiler had disastrous consequences for herself, the image of the institution she represented and the President. In 2012 the first lady of France sent an infamous tweet during parliamentary campaign showing her support to the political adversary of Segolene Royal, ex-companion of President Hollande. This act met an angry reaction of public opinion and the political world and subsequently, Trierweiler failed to win popular

approval as first lady until the end of her tenure in 2014 (Frame & Brachotte, 2015; Murray, 2013).

Moreover, public opinion played an important role in the institutionalization or limitation of first ladies prerogatives. Danuta Wałęsa during the interview insisted on public critics she had to face when she wanted to hire an assistant to her help with her new duties. Following the popular opinion of that period, she was a private person who just happened to be the president's wife and should not enjoy any public benefits. On the other hand, current first lady of Poland, Agata Kornhauser-Duda was publicly criticized for not being involved enough in the public life. When the conservative party of her husband proposed a bill forbidding any form of abortion, some voice demanded her to publicly take a stand in defense of Polish women's rights. She as also criticized for not participating in the feminist civic meeting called "Congres of Women", in which participated all the presidential spouses since Jolanta Kwaśniewska. This situation shows that in 25 years the public perception changed drastically and despite existing reluctances, people in Poland not only accept the public role of the presidential spouse, but also demand her to play an active role on the public stage.

iii) LEGAL AND ECONOMIC RECOGNITION

The empowerment of the first lady tackles with the question of the rise of unelected institutions and stakeholders in democracies that challenge traditional democratic institutions such as popularly elected parliaments. The rise of an unelected institution can be seen as an issue for democracy both on practical and theoretical levels. On the one side it can be seen as reducing the political debate to a

technocratic problem and on the other, as a danger for the majority rule, lying in the heart of democracy (Vibert, 2007). In consequence, this can be troublesome for democracy and the first ladyship can awake antithetical reactions. In the case of the first lady, the argument for a legal recognition can be threefold: firstly, it allows to avoid a hypocritical situation in which a spouse of a head is pressured to work publicly and at the same time her work is officially not considered as such; secondly a legalization of the function would be a symbolic recognition of the woman's work and an end with the logic of the couple in which the woman has to sacrifice herself for the man; thirdly, a legalization of the role would put rules and make the spouse of the head of state accountable for her acts. Arguments against the legalization of the function are mainly two: the core of the institution reflects a monarchist political model and can be seen are contrary to democratic standards; by not being elected democratically the first lady's credibility in a democracy can seem very fragile; and finally the first lady coule be considered as the highest embodiment of the gender gap.

Debates about the first supporters and opponents of the first ladyship empowerment have taken place in many countries. In Poland the strongest debate outburst in 2015 with the arrival of Agata Duda whose implication in her husband's campaign and stylish wardrobe led to comparisons between her and Claire Underwood, the powerful and elegant first lady from the American series "The House of Cards". In France, the separation of Trierweiler and Hollande led to the questioning of the institution, as not founded in the democratic values and potentially damaging to the institution of the President. In Spain, since 2012 the Queen receives a salary as a result of public pressure of financial transparency within the Royal Household. As for now the legal recognition is weak however those debates demonstrate that there is a will to officialy integrate the first lady into democratic structures.

The economic recognition is also a sensitive subject and a subject of public debates. Although no legal texts exist in the matter, first ladies are expected to leave their previous jobs and dedicate themselves to the function. Despite the said pressure, their job, expect in Spain, is not financially recognized. In Spain the Queen receiving a salary was possible because the consort queen her status is the most legally advanced by being included in the Constitution. In Poland, there has been a public tendency to offer a first lady a salary. Consequently, a budget law included a salary for the first lady of 13.540 zl corresponding to around 3.400 euros monthly. France is the most reticient country in the matter of the first lady's salary, because the debate about the first lady's legitimity has being very intense since the tenure of Nicolas Sarkozy. Aside from the question of salary, economic recognition goes as well through a budget allowed to the functioning of the first lady's office. Firstly, once again it could be observed that only Spanish Queen the question of the budget for the Office (salary for the Queen excluded) has been included in the global budget for the Royal Household presented annually by the King. Secondly, there has been two important tendencies in the amount of budgets allocated to first ladies offices. In the beginning the size of spouses of heads of state grew[76], showing that just like in the United States the function gets professionalized. In both France and Poland there was no official help or infrastructure for first presidential spouses. The size of the office of the first lady in both countries significantly grew over the years. For instance, Bernadette Chirac had to her disposition more than twenty employees and representing a cost of 80 000 euros monthly following information released by Rene Dosiere, a French deputy specialized in spending of Elysee. Recently however allowed budgets were lowered and teams destined to work with first ladies were lowered. In Spain the arrival of Felipe VI was marked by the cut of salaries of all members of the Royal Household

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[76] It is difficult to quote precisely all budgets, especially from tenures of the first first ladies, because the question of financing an uninformal function has been a sensitive issue to tackle for politicians in democratic countries.

by 20% and was supposed to embody, on the financial level, King'e efforts in times of financial crisis, transparency of his institution and proximity with citizens. In the sake of this closeness with citizens and a symbol of the "normal" presidency[77], Trieweiler's teams was much more reduced than the one of Bruni-Sarkozy and costed three times less.

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[77] "Normal president" was the slogan of François Hollande during the presidential campaign in 2012, to underline his closeness with citizens and highlight excesses of the tenure of Sarkozy.

6) CONCLUSIONS

a. FROM A PRIVATE PERSON TO A PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER

A global look on the first ladyship in Poland, France and Spain allows confirming that the function, that in the beginning was inexistent in Europe, exists nowadays and first ladies are publicly recognized as influencing public stakeholders. Although the function appeared in the studied countries at different moments and has developed at different paces, a common path in this development can be seen. Firstly, the introduction of democracy was followed by freedom of media allowing to journalists to expose more freely the private life of national leaders. Thereafter, changes in societies as well as appearance of claims for women's rights and gender equality reinforced the visibility of first ladies. With no doubt, the high mediatization of American first ladies and their role in their husbands' political careers also created a strong example to follow for other spouses of heads of state. Currently, the first ladyship is strongly present in collective awareness, but its legal recognition is still left behind, showing the mainly cultural origin of the function that has started to evolve into a political role aftermath. Additionally, the unwritten character of the role also increases its fluidity and its adjustability to different contexts.

Duties of modern first ladies can be globally divided in two big areas: politics and culture. As for the political responsibilities they are mainly focused on providing assistance to the president, the *raison d' être* of each first lady on the public stage: accompanying the spouse in public events, advising him and participating in the communication of the head of state. The strategic importance of those duties often

makes of the first lady the most important player in her husband's team and one of the most impacting representatives of his tenure. Regarding social responsibilities of the first lady the dichotomistic character of her function and gender influences that have a strong impact on its shape, the first lady's main role is the representation of national womanhood. This role does not have a precise script, yet is a highly sensitive topic within a society and represent a strong challenge.

b. BALANCING ON THE LINE OR THE FIRST LADY'S FRAGILE EMPOWERMENT

Historically, in all countries, a shift in first ladies' responsibilities can be noted. Almost inactive and living in the shadow of their husbands in the beginning, first ladies benefited from the growing media and public interest to take an important step forward and affirm their public role. They went from the role of a life companion, confined to the purely private sphere, to social actors and in some cases political stakeholders. They remain however strongly connected and dependent on their husband and the model of first lady as an independent activist is still rare. Moreover, the small legal recognition, that persists and limits itself to the recognition of the representative role, weakens the function and obliges first ladies to balance on a fine line between doing too little and doing too much.

The first ladyship also experienced changes in other aspects. Not only did she reinforce her position within the office of the head of state, she also gained in independency. The spotlight on first ladies that has increased thanks to processes of privatization and personalization of politics and tabloidization and infotainment,

opened to them a possibility to publicly take stances. The increasing interest in first ladies translates into important popularity that obliges "traditional" politicians to consider seriously the possible political impact of first ladies on the public stage. It has also translated in a greater professionalization of the role. Being completely left out in the beginning, today first ladies can enjoy their own teams and a proper infrastructure integrated in the office of the head of state. Nonetheless, the fact that their financial status is not regulated, that there is a social pressure on them to abandon their careers and that their work as first ladies is still considered as a service to their country (and to their husbands) shows ambiguous public attitude toward valorization of women's work and a persistence of social belief that women can or should sacrifice themselves for the professional career of their husbands.

Although first ladies could increase their autonomy, their freedom of action is still not complete and depends largely on the strength of affecting factors. Modern media are one of those impacting forces. Their market-driven attitude naturally increases their interest in first ladies as fully marketable objects, generating public interest. However, the spotlight put on first ladies does not automatically translate into a greater support. Media treatment of first ladies shows that interests of those two stakeholders can be different, even antagonistic and that the image of first ladies is often trivialized in order to adapt to new rules of "saleability".

By the same token, first ladies are also dependent on their husbands. Various factors such as personal relation within the couple, vision of the tenure of the head of state or his political status can influence significantly a first lady's capacities to play a public role. Ultimately, first ladies can also feel the pressure from public opinion. In democratic systems, where citizens are supposed to have the final decision regarding the shape of the political landscape, first ladies have to adapt to public expectations. The first lady is thus an atypical political actor whose existence

is not rooted in principles of modern democracy, yet has today a place on the public stage; and who has raised in power despite important obstacles. Despite this significant empowerment, it is impossible to predict whether the further evolution of the role will continue the path of the rise in power or the first lady would remain a political outsider and a sort of the First Citizen always destined to work for the good of the Nation, but not taking crucial decisions for it.

c. The First Woman

The presented research demonstrates as well that there are more similarities than differences between the studied models of first ladyship. This proves that processes of political and cultural globalization and Americanization had an important impact on the role and international influences have led to a creation of a universal archetype. Additionally the fact that the studied models belong to different democratic systems and yet share so many characteristics shows that there is a common ground for the first ladyship in democratic countries. The homogenization of different models of first ladyship is also a sign of a progressive integration of the role into the democratic system.

The differences detected between the different models are based overall on the symbolic representation of womanhood that is still a strong reflect of national stereotypes and vision on the woman's place in the society. The perception of the woman's role extends or limits first lady's field of action. Such a perception evolves in time, and the same applies to the role of the first lady. By the same token, it is also important to stress that in this field as well there exist common

representations such as role of mother and wife, notion of care-taking and the aspect of elegance. It is thus another example that patriarchy, with its vision of men as central and women as subordinate, has no country.

Moreover, evolution of the first ladyship in the studied countries reflects not only an evolution of women's rights, but also an evolution of the popular perception on women in the society and evolution of moral orders and gender norms. The more women have been included in the political environment, the more it has been accepted that a first lady takes a public stance. We can hence conclude that the normalization of women's presence on the public stage, especially as active actors on the political scene, created a favorable ground for the development of the first ladyship in all studied countries. In the similar way, first ladies embodied this social and political change or even were strongly involved in the fight for greater gender equality.

d. FROM THE FIRST LADY TO THE FIRST GENTLEMAN

By the same token, the strongly gendered outlook toward first ladies should not be seen solely as a result of the "private/public" dichotomy of the institution, but also as a reflect of the persistence of gender stereotypes about women in society as well as in politics. If compared to a "traditional" female politician, the first lady is seen in the same manner, although in the case of first ladies those stereotypes are much stronger. In both cases, the persistence of those stereotypes represents a serious obstacle to further political empowerment and a negation of the democratic rule of

equality among all citizens. Nonetheless, first ladies are much more pressured to adapt to those gendered norms and, still more complicated, they are demanded to act between two registers: an inspirational and normal one. They have to at the same time represent an idealized and seductive image of national womanhood and embody an average woman in their country, creating a strong feeling of closeness and authenticity.

The mentioned before influence of media has also played a crucial role in shaping the function. The "je t'aime, moi non plus" relation between the media and first ladies shows that both sides try to influence each other, yet it seems that in this dance media have the lead. Moreover, although media has without a doubt propelled the first lady on the public stage and legitimized her in the public eye, they also applied a double treatment regarding her coverage. While treating first lady as a public actor and sometimes requesting her public opinion, justifying it by the sake of democratic standards, generally the media coverage has been strongly gendered and unrepresentative of a genuine work of a first lady. It led hence to a treatment of first ladies like political celebrities or even to a questioning of a first lady's legitimacy on the public stage.

The further evolution of the first lady's role is so much interesting as difficult to predict. The fact that the question of the legal status of the first lady and its legitimacy in democracy has been debated in public in all studied countries allows arguing that in all those countries the role will be to some extend legalized. Additionally, the fact that women have been slowly reaffirming their political leadership gives hope to the emergence of an alternative model of power in which a woman will not be always condemned to follow the man. Although in Poland and France women regularly run in presidential elections, they have never won. In

Spain, the next heir to the Throne is the Infant Leonor, however she will probably not take power in decades. Once again, we should turn our eyes toward the United States, where Hillary Clinton is the closest to win the presidential elections. Maybe the example of this former first lady will encourage other spouses of heads of state to take an active role on the public stage and will diminish the extension of gender stereotypes linked to this role.

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