

BOOK REVIEW

Médias : à droite toute ? La « droitisation » de l'espace médiatique à l'épreuve des sciences sociales. Dossier coordonné et présenté par Nicolas KACIAF et Enrique KLAUS, *Politiques de communication*, printemps 2024/1 (N° 22). Presses Universitaires de Grenoble. 198 pp. €25.00.

This issue of *Politiques de la communication* is aimed at interrogating the emergence of “a common media discourse of extreme-right”, given the “growing visibility of the extreme right, of its organisations, actors and ideas within the mass-media” (Kaciaf and Klaus 2024, 6). Even if this *déravage* was already denounced within the public sphere, the *Introduction* is trying to clarify the methodological orientations to approach the topic, in the light of the terminological advancements in social sciences. As such, the *Introduction* developing the state of the art is strewn with interrogations: no less than 42 research questions are here launched, in order to assess the need for more empirical studies, and to contextualise the overwhelming magnitude of this phenomenon. It invites to an open debate on change and transformation in political science, media studies and systemic analysis, political communication, and sociology of organisations. The proposed *démarche* is qualified as “precautious” (p. 5) and marked by “rigorous objectivation” (p. 9), and reveals three main difficulties: (1) in terms of definition of the two concepts: both the concepts of *right* (or *extreme right*) and *mass-media* are “polysemic” and “charged with ambiguities”; (2) in terms of historicity, given their “scale” and further “evolutions” in relation to the emerging forms of interdependency between the media organisations and the extreme right political actors in the *longue durée*, and (3) in terms of conceptualization of these “intersecting dynamics of expression of radical orientation” within an international comparative perspective (pp. 5–10).

Three empirical studies are included hereafter in this thematic issue, all of them exploring the French current developments of the topic. The first paper is an elaborated sociological investigation conducted by Safia Dahani (EHESS) on

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the *Rassemblement National*¹ 2.0, and the professionalization of online political communication within the party (pp. 55–90). The paper is exploring the “bypass” strategy of the RN faced to the *mainstream* journalistic coverage, via the perpetual use of a traditional victimisation perspective in relation to mass-media, and, in parallel, the direct, relational use of the new technologies to approach their public (p. 83). The second paper signed by Gaël Stephan (Université de Lorraine) displays a longitudinal study (2007–2022) on the professionalization in France of the so-called “mass-media of *re-information*” (pp. 91–122). This paper is elaborating on a so very French illustrative terminological development on the topic that is, “*réinformation*”². The author states that this “concept” was launched as an ideological line within the Foundation Polémia, in order to assess a counter-discourse to the hegemony of mass-media perceived as “agents of disinformation”. The third paper is a case-study conducted by Pierre Lefébure (Université Sorbonne Paris Nord), Émilie Roche (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle) and Claire Sécaïl (CNRS), and interrogating both the “polarisation and right-wing orientation” of the French presidential campaign of 2022 at television (pp. 123–165). This paper is focused on the “controversies” around the “concrete modalities for applying pluralism during the presidential campaigns” (p. 126), via a “morphology of audiovisual electoral programmes” (p. 130), by exploring their *dispositif*, method and corpora. Finally, the *Dossier* is accompanied, in varia, by an investigation signed by Daniela Gonzalez (Université Paris 8), exploring the online activist practice of 116 Latin American “anti-gender” groups in 11 countries (pp. 163–198), in order to open the debate at international level.

The authors of this issue are travelling throughout the contemporary sociological reality in a habile manner, from both a methodological and empirical standpoints. Overall, this makes a valuable contribution, by putting together the French evolutions, developments and perspectives to this emergent research topic that is, the ambiguous relation between right/far right and mass-media. From this journey, for instance, the two French untranslatable idioms “*droitisation*” and “*réinformation*” remain illustrative and should be remembered for further extrapolations on the topic, as observed in other

¹ *Rassemblement National* (RN), since 2018, formerly the *Front National* (FN).

² An invented word based on wordplay, created in relation to “disinformation”, loan translatable as *re-information*.

European and non-European *milieus*. Given the huge contemporary coverage in scholarly literature published in English of the right and far-right orientations across the world, this short presentation was aimed at including into the general debate an integrated French perspective on the matter, that should not be missing from the big picture.

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