# SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

## Hate speech in the age of Twitter

**Student Name: Christoforou Sevasti**

Student Number: 384122


Supervisor: Janelle Ward


Master Media Culture and Society

Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Erasmus University of Rotterdam


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## Abstract

The thrust of this study is to discern how Twitter is changing the patterns of political communication and political expression. In particular, this paper aims to examine the ways Twitter enables the generation of hate speech and intolerance discourses. It is an attempt to obtain a first perception of the hate speech phenomenon within the Greek Twittersphere and to demonstrate what forms of hate speech are being produced, as well as what are the attributes of hate speech messages. Undoubtedly, hate speech on a popular social media platform like Twitter, could possibly obstruct the constructive process of deliberation and also threaten democracy.

The research of this paper was based on the case of the murder of a leftist rapper Pavlos Fyssas by a member of Golden Dawn, a right-wing political party in Greece and the tweets that were produced 24 hours after this incident. 2052 tweets related to the event were collected, analyzed and classified into categories based on communication form, content, hate speech characteristics, hate speech targets and hate speech producer's attributes.

**Keywords:** social media, Twitter, hate speech, hate speech online, political communication, political expression, Greece

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## 1. **Introduction**:

The meaning of this study is to provide a better understanding of how Internet and Twitter in particular, has affected the patterns of political communication and political expression. More specifically, I will be analyzing the news circulation of the killing of a leftist hip-hop singer by a member of the Greek far-right party -Golden Dawn- on Twitter and the hatred messages that this incident generated.

The growing use of Twitter by both politicians and citizens and the role of Twitter as a news' channel during crucial sociopolitical events, highlight the importance of examining the "dark" side of Twitter's unregulated and open nature. On the one hand, Twitter serves as an open social networking platform that allows the expression of different voices and opinions. On the other hand, Twitter is a network where connections between users occur according to "following" relationships. Hence, users have the opportunity to choose the people they follow and in a sense select the content of the messages they are being exposed to, resulting to the formation of ideologically homogeneous clusters (Himelboim et al., 2013). Thus, Twitter provides a fertile ground for discourses of 'us' against 'them' to be generated, especially within the context of political talk. In addition, Twitter's openness to free expression and limited legislation against hate speech can also enclose the admission of offensive and insulting language.

Hate speech discourses during critical events can lead to the demystification of sociopolitical actors, as well as to an overall confusion among citizens which might finally result in their political disengagement. Moreover, in a public space where messages of hatred and intolerance are allowable, people might feel frightened and intimidated to express their points of view. In other words, hate speech on a popular social media platform such as Twitter, could possibly obstruct the constructive process of deliberation and threaten democracy. Also, the fact that it is very hard –if not impossible- to control and regulate hate speech content on Twitter, intensifies the need to identify and make sense of the hate speech phenomenon in order to find the right solution for its diminution without challenging the right to free expression.

This paper is an attempt to obtain a first perception of the hate speech phenomenon within the Greek Twittersphere and to demonstrate what forms of hate speech are being produced, as well as what are the attributes of hate speech messages. 2052 tweets with hashtags and keywords related to the event (only tweets that were produced 24 hours after the murder) were collected and examined. To examine what role Twitter plays in political communication, I will discuss its discrete features and characteristics. Accordingly, I will try to illustrate the way in which different forms of communication available on Twitter facilitate political expression and in expansion the creation of hate speech statements.

After the theoretical review of Twitter's role in the realm of political communication, I will focus on the different definitions of hate speech, as well as the definition used in this study[1]. In a next step, I will aim to provide insight on how cyberspace in general facilitates the generation and dissemination of hate speech. Even though hate speech online has attracted a lot of academic attention, very little empirical research has been conducted to evaluate the presence of hate speech on social media in general and Twitter in particular. However, I will seek to identify the reasons that explain why social media can reinforce the phenomenon of hate speech. I will close with a discussion concerning the different types of hate speech producers as described in the recent study of Erjavec and Kovacic (2012)[2]. I will end this paper by addressing these matters empirically.

## 1.1 Research Question and Sub-questions

Given the rising popularity of Twitter and the claims that hate speech can be harmful to individuals, groups and to society as a whole (Nemes, 2002), I think is not only interesting but also important to examine if and how Twitter serves as a platform that enables expression of hate speech and intolerance. Yardi and Boyd (2010) underlined the need of examining hate speech, along with polarization and extremism, in contemporary online platforms like Twitter (p.316). Additionally, the

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[1] On this thesis, I look on hate speech which is mostly stimulated from political and ideological differences. The majority of studies focusing on the phenomenon of hate speech included discriminatory and offensive language on a racial, religious, national and sexual level. I will further expand on this issue in Chapter 2.

[2] Erjavec and Kovacic's (2012) study focused on the motives and values of hate speech producers by looking on website messages. Four groups of different hate speech producing personalities emerged, such as soldiers, believers, players and watchdogs. I will expand on the findings of their study in Chapter 2.

importance of this research was implicitly stressed by boyd and Ellison (2008), in the conclusion of their paper, when they mentioned the significance of exploring the role of social media outside the U.S. Therefore by focusing on a Greek exemplar, I present the following research question:

R.Q.: How is Twitter facilitating discourses of hate speech?

My aim is to examine if and how twitter has the capacity to accommodate and spread discourses of hate speech and intolerance by looking at tweets conducted right after the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, an antifascist rapper, by a member of the extreme right party Golden Dawn (G.D., Χρυσή Αυγή, X.A.). In order to answer this question, I think it is wiser to conduct a step by step research. For this reason, I will examine the following three sub-questions:

S.Q.1: In what forms were messages of Pavlos Fyssas's death circulated on Twitter?
S.Q.2: Do messages of Pavlos Fyssas's death include hate speech?
S.Q.3: What are the attributes of hate speech messages on Twitter?

In examining the first sub-question I classify messages according to different forms of communication identified in the data. In the second sub-question I monitor the appearance of hate speech messages on Twitter.  Additionally, the content of hate speech messages will be analyzed based on the different forms and characteristics of hate speech. Finally, sub-question three involves the evaluation of the hate speech tweets' attributes, in an attempt to identify in those attributes elements of Ervajec and Kovavic's (2012) hate speech producers.

## 1.2 Twitter and the Political Realm

 The number of politicians, journalists and citizens that use Twitter for political communication and participation is rapidly rising. As a matter of fact, recent events demonstrate the role of Twitter in political communication.  Barack Obama tweeted "This happened because of you. Thank you" to announce his victory of the

US elections on 2012 (The Telegraph, 2012). Likewise, the former prime minister of Greece George Papandreou used Twitter to publish the main keystones of the country's intentions for the debt negotiation process during the Euro summit in Brussels on the 26th of October 2011 (BBC.uk, 2011).

In addition, an interesting example that shows the power of Twitter within the realm of journalism and political communication is the case of the arrest of a Greek journalist, Kostas Vaxevanis, on the 27th of November 2012. Vaxevanis was arrested after publishing a list- the so-called "Lagarde list"- which included names of almost 2000 Greeks tax evaders with undeclared deposits in Swiss banks (LIFO, 2012., Smith 2013). He spread the message of his arrest through his Twitter account, while the police together with a district attorney were stationed outside his house – "They are entering my house now. I am being arrested. Spread my message".  This example is a great illustration of how Twitter can add to the journalism practices and news reporting. The platform's capacity to instantly disseminate small fragments of news, while enabling citizens to sort information anytime and anywhere creates a new form of public communication.

Apart from politicians, political strategists and journalists, Twitter has been a powerful communication tool for citizens as well. Twitter has been adopted from citizens for not only communicating socio-political issues but also for creating virtual communities and mobilizing the public towards socio-political change. Some current examples are the emergence of "Black Twitter" in the US that appeared after the Zimmerman's trial (Jones 2013) or the adoption of Twitter by Saudi women who pursue equal rights in employment. In the light of those examples, it is apparent that Twitter plays an important role in circulating news and opinions but also starting up discussions and mobilizing people.

At first, such a development in political communication seems promising, in the sense that news in Twitter are traveling fast and everyone can instantly comment on them, freely express their opinions and views and stimulate discussions. However, there are always two sides in every coin. In this paper, I am focusing on the negative side. My intension is to examine a potential shortcoming of the free political expression on Twitter. Could the openness, the low cost, the speed and other positive attributes of Twitter backfire? Could freedom of speech along

with the convenience of creating online content from your personal space, sharing no physical contact with other people turn Twitter into a useful tool for producers of hatred messages?

Many scholars focused their attention on hate speech online and cyberhate, each one of them looking at different angles of this phenomenon. Some focused on hate speech incitement in the general space of the Internet, other looked at hate group web sites created by extremist and far right groups, while recent studies examined hate speech discourses on news web sites comments. In addition, some scholars focused on the legal aspect of the issue, examining the potential implication of regulating online speech. However, to my knowledge, there is only one recent paper with regards to hate speech on Twitter. [3]

## 1.3 Twitter in Greece

The majority of Twitter users participate in geographically local networks (Quercia et al. 2012 as cited in Ausserhofer &Maireder 2013). In a country as Greece, which has around 11 million inhabitants and it is slowly moving to the social media adoption, the number of Twitter users is remarkable, considering also the small life span of Twitter.

From 2008 and following there has been a considerable presence of Greek citizens on Twitter. Throughout 2013 there were overall 300.000 active twitter users in Greece -139.000 more than 2012- with 6 tweets per second. Statistics show that on the epicenter of Greek Twitter users' attention were mostly issues of socio-political level (#skouries, #occupyert, #ert, #ertopen, #killahp etc.). The accounts most followed by Greeks are mainly maintained by celebrities rather than journalists, media outlets or politicians. Out of 100 tops accounts in Greece just 16 of them are maintained by news websites, 5 by journalists and 1 by the prime minister of Greece. However, interactions between Greek Twitter users are mostly occurring between users with politicians, journalists and social media personalities. What these trends seem to indicate about the Greek political Twittersphere is that even though there is not a reciprocal relationship between users and actors of the political

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[3] Haque's paper (2014) focuses on the phenomenon of hate speech within the Pakistani cyberspace in general. More reference to his paper in Chapter 2.

and media field, users tend to address political issues and attempt to interact with political public figures on Twitter.

More importantly, the killing of Pavlos Fyssas caused an outburst on social media in general and Twitter in particular with almost 28,000 hashtagged tweets about Fyssas (#killap) and approximately 30.000 about Golden Dawn (#goldendawn, #xa), excluding messages with no hashtags or mentions and excluding replies, favorites and retweets.

*Twitter's content boundaries and 'freedom of speech' in the European and Greek law*

In order to better understand the free and open nature of Twitter, as well as the freedoms that Greek people have with regards to self- expression and hate speech expression, it is essential to look in two places. Firstly, it is important to examine Twitter's policy towards violent and abusive behavior and secondly, to present the fundamental human right of freedom of expression as outlined in both the European and the Greek legislations.

According to Twitter's policy, users are not allowed to publish or directly post specific threats of violence against others. It is prohibited to post threats against a person or a group on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age or disability. It is clear that Twitter's policy against violence, does not include any restrictions against hate speech or threats on the basis of political and ideological beliefs. However, Twitter urges users to contact local authorities, if they consider that the content or the behavior they want to report violates the local law.

In Greece, hate speech is protected under the Article 14 of the Greek Constitution. This Article guarantees the freedom of speech and of the press, forbidding censorship and any other preventive measure[4]. According to the European Convention of Human Rights, everyone has the right to freedom of

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[4]However, there are some exceptions with regards to freedom of expression through the press. The seizure of newspaper is allowed in case of: a) an offence against the Christian or any other known religion, b) an insult against the person of the President of the Republic, c) a publication which discloses information on the composition, equipment and set-up of the armed forces or the fortifications of the country, or which aims at the violent overthrow of the regime or is directed against the territorial integrity of the State, d) an obscene publication which is obviously offensive to public decency, in the cases stipulated by law.

expression[5]. This right includes the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. Consequently, everyone in Greece, under both the Greek and the European law and without any Twitter restrictions,  has the opportunity to freely form their political opinion and publish it online in every form of communication, without having to face any legal consequences.

## 1.4 The political landscape of Greece and Golden Dawn

*1.4.1 The Greek political arena*

As I mentioned earlier in this paper, the purpose of this study is to examine Twitter's role in enabling hate expression and hate speech by looking closer on the Greek case of the murder of a leftist rapper Pavlos Fyssas by a member of Golden Dawn, a right-wing political party in Greece. In order to get a better understanding of this murder case and the conflicts that it stimulated, it is essential to obtain an overall outlook of Greece's political landscape and controversies.

Going back to the 1980s and 1990s, when right-wing radicals and populists' parties started to gain electoral power in the wider region of Europe, it seemed that analogous political factions in Greece remained stationary on the marginal space of the party system (Georgiadou, 2013). The Greek political landscape was characterized by a constant alteration of power between the socialistic party (PASOK) and the conservative party (New Democracy or ND). There was a general stance towards the center of the ideological spectrum, leaving no space for extremist parties in the political arena.

The situation in Greece started to change in 2007, just before the onset of the great financial crisis. The political landscape shifted again more radically after the crisis struck Greece with full force between 2010 and 2012 (Georgiadou, 2013). The length and magnitude of the Greek recession took a big toll on Greek society, ultimately resulting to the collapse of the traditional party system (Ellinas, 2013) and

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[5] European Convention of Human Rights, European Court of Human Rights, Council of Europe

consequently to Golden Dawn's electoral breakthrough in the 2012 election, as well as a ND-led government coalition with PASOK and DIMAR[6].

However, it was not just the crisis that brought Golden Dawn inside the central political arena. The uprising of Golden Dawn can be addressed to a number of political and social factors. Firstly, it was the overall feeling of frustration and the lack of trust towards political institutions that generated the citizen's aversion to the ruling political parties. Media also played an important role in the incubation of the far-right phenomenon. The following quote from the article of Marchetos (2012) in The Guardian constitutes a clear manifestation of traditional media's role in the uprising of Golden Dawn:

> The rise of fascism also owes a lot to mainstream media. Effectively unregulated by the state and owned by a few small Berlusconis, Greek television channels have for decades been cultivating chauvinism, racism, sexism and anti-immigrant hate. Now they habitually present Golden Dawn cadres as normal people, explore their lighter side and even turn them into lifestyle icons or tele-celebrities. They rarely discuss the violent crimes for which many of these people have been accused or convicted. (para. 5)

In addition, Xenakis (2012) blames the lack of attention given to recording, reporting as well as studying the far-rights' involvement in the culture of violence. On the contrary, violence that came from far-left groups and movements were always in the centre of attention.

Other important factors that led to the growth of Golden Dawn were the tolerance expressed from the PASOK and ND side towards GD and the fanaticism towards immigrants that both leading parties inspired. After the elections, the government coalition of ND and PASOK felt threatened by the loss of their voters and the rise of the front opposition, left-wing party of SYRIZA. However, the growth of Golden Dawn seemed rather beneficial than dangerous, as it was taking votes from

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[6] DIMAR: Democratic Left- social-democratic political party, left the three-party government coalition in 2013

SYRIZA and therefore ensuring the coalition's stay in power. In order for the coalition to secure political stability, it came up with the 'theory of the extremes', which is the most notorious communication strategy imposed by the government.

The 'theory of the extremes' or 'the theory of the two edges' constitutes a creation of the ND's communication strategy, in an attempt to strengthen its electorate profits by portraying Golden Dawn and SYRIZA as extremities and equally dangerous for democracy and stability. This theory was equally promoted by the Greek and European traditional media.

### 1.4.2 Golden Dawn

Undoubtedly, Golden Dawn and its recent growth in the 2012 Greek legislative elections brought conflicts and debates in the surface of Greece's offline and online political sphere. Golden Dawn's popularity, raised concerns and questions in an international level too, especially due to the party's pro-Nazi and fascist views.

Golden Dawn existed since 1980, but is was officially established in 1985 although it was not registered as such until 1994, which was also the year that it participated for the first time in the elections (Georgiadou, 2013). The far-right party openly embraces the Nazi's rituals, as it has adopted symbols like the swastika and Hitler's salute. Ellinas (2013) went through the party's documents to explore in depth their beliefs and ideologies. His findings mostly demonstrate that, even though they deny the label of a Nazi label, "party members are asked to embrace a biological form of nationalism reminiscent of Nazi ideology" (p.7). In particular, an essay written by Nikos Michaloliakos (1987), the party's leader, which opens with the words, "Hitler for a thousand years," and ends with the jubilant cry of "Heil Hitler," sets forth the ideological principles of Golden Dawn (Georgiadou, 2013). In addition to the endorsing of the Nazi practices, GD's ideology also includes traditional conservatism, sexism and homophobia. After their election's success, they also declared their support of traditional values and the Orthodox Church (Sotiris, 2013). Finally, Ellinas (2013) also mentions that the ideological proclivity to Nazi ideas is reinforced by GD's anti-system, anti-Semitic and anti-Communist rhetoric.

Apart from the Nazi theoretical background and the nationalistic and conservative beliefs of the Golden Dawn, the main factor that differentiates it from other far-right formations is its involvement in violence and most importantly in murderous violence. In general, Golden Dawn's verbal and non-verbal violence is mostly targeting leftists and immigrants (Ellinas, 2013).

The murder of Pavlos Fyssas was just one incident in a long series of violent acts perpetrated by party members. Attacks on leftists and immigrants have been common throughout Golden Dawn's history. Their violent action reached also a peak in June 1998, when Periandros Androutsopoulos - then Golden Dawn's deputy chairman - led a group that attacked three left-wing students, nearly killing one of them (Sotiris, 2013).

It is believed that a great amount GD's criminal actions remain hidden, while the perpetrators stay unpunished. This belief is based on two main facts. On the one hand, the Greek law enforcement officers have been increasingly accused of collaborating with Golden Dawn. Sotiris (2013) reports that in both 2012 elections the percentage of Golden Dawn votes in polling stations where policemen voted was substantially higher than the national average, with some suggestions that as many as 50 per cent voted for the party.[7] On the other hand, the party's general-secretary Nikos Michaloliakos has been accused of collaborating with the Greek Central Intelligence Agency (KYP).

However, the most alarming case that implied a relationship between Greece's police forces and GD, was when a group of anti-fascists got arrested after a clash with GD supporters. Fifteen protesters were tortured and beaten up by police officers during their custody in Attica's General Police Directorate (GADA). Moreover, according to The Guardian, police officers apart from humiliating them, videoed them on their mobile phones and threatened to post the pictures on the internet and give their home addresses to Golden Dawn (Margaronis, 2012).

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[7] Cooperation between the police and Golden Dawn has taken many forms, from Golden Dawn members emerging from behind police ranks to attack anti-fascist protesters, to police helping Golden Dawn's 'spatial' tactics, with raids against self-managed squats that blocked Golden Dawn's control of neighbourhoods in Athens. (Sotiris, 2013)

## 1.5 <u>The murder of Pavlos Fyssas</u>

The hatred between different -mainly political- ideologies and Golden Dawn became extremely intense after the recent murder of the 34-year-old Pavlos Fyssas on the 18th of September in 2013 by Yiorgos Roupakias. Roupakias was an active member of the extremists' group, even though GD first denied any connections with him. Pavlos Fyssas was a hip-hop musician, who expressed his anti-fascist and leftist beliefs through his lyrics.

The night of the murder, the victim was watching a football match with his girlfriend at a cafeteria located in an area known as "the cavern" of Golden Dawn supporters. After the end of the game there was an altercation between the people within the cafe. Then Fyssas was attacked by a group of 15 men and finally fatally stabbed. Witnesses said that the attack occurred in the presence of police units. Before his death, he managed to identify his attacker to his friends and the police.

At first, media reported that the attack was due to a disagreement concerning the football match, causing the uproar of the leftist and the anti-fascists. Later, the murdered was arrested and finally confessed to both the murder and the political nature of his action. The majority of the public and a great amount of national and international newspapers refer to the event as a political assassination. After the murderous action, mass demonstrations took place across the country, with hundreds of anti- fascist supporters gathering to protest against GD and its fascist nature.

Given the fact that Golden Dawn and its members stimulated such an outrage and hatred in Greece's political spheres, I assume that Twitter messages and discussions are providing a fruitful place for research.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Previous Research

### 2.1 Web 2.0 and Social Media

Internet is developing into something more than "a collection of static pages of HTML that describe something in the world" (O'Reilly & Battelle, 2009, p.2). The development of Web 2.0 and its participative nature attracts a great interest over potential implications on society on a social, political and economical level. One important aspect of Internet's development has been the emergence and growing popularity of social media. Social media have influenced the traditional 'rectilinear' pattern of communication, by introducing a more interactive and participative one. According to Henderson and Bowley (2010), "social media enable participation, connectivity, user-generated content, sharing information and collaboration amongst a community of users" (as cited in Grow & Ward, 2013,p.2).

Social media undoubtedly altered the landscape of media communication. Nowadays, everyone has the opportunity to produce and consume media content online. For news communication that means that social media destroy the monopoly traditional media had until now, on the selection and dissemination of news and information (Loader & Mercea, 2011). According to Hindman (2009) "the openness of the internet would allow citizens to compete with journalists for the creation and dissemination of political information"(p.2). Social media also present opportunities for collaborative and interactive assessment of current sociopolitical concerns and issues. In other words, social media fulfill all the necessary criteria for becoming an important component of the wider political public sphere.

It seems that both citizens and political actors can highly benefit from the functionalities of social networking platforms. However, there are also some deficiencies that should be taken into consideration when addressing social media's role in political communication. In the following sections I will concentrate on examining the relationship between social media and political communication. In order to provide insight on how social media affect the practices of political discourses. By doing this, I aim to explain how social media facilitate the generation of hate speech in their content.

*2.1.1. Web 2.0 and political communication*

For the past two decades, many academic studies focused their attention on Web's potential to influence our social, political, cultural, business life etc. According to Karatzogianni (2004) "the internet is viewed as a vehicle for educating individuals, stimulating citizen participation, measuring public opinion, easing citizen access to government officials, offering a public forum, simplifying voter registration and even facilitating actual voting" (p.17). Central to this paper is to concentrate on the sociopolitical uses of the Web and its implications on the public discourse, as well as on the political talk. This part of the chapter discusses literature on online communication and discussion within a political context.

A significant amount of studies focus their attention on the potential benefits of the Web and its features, to create a more democratic and egalitarian space for discussion. However, scholar papers also examine contrary perspectives, by considering potential risks and dangers that might come along with the Web's promising functions. Here, I will discuss some of the dominant perspectives, both positive and negative.

Himelboim et al. (2009) underline Web's capacity to overcome limitations imposed by traditional and profit-driven mass media. They also consider the open and interactive nature of the Internet as well as the new computer-mediated discussion tools, as important factors in allowing greater participation on political discussions. Even though their arguments do not present a clear stance with regards to the Web's role in political discussions, they seem to hold a rather optimistic viewpoint. Karatzogianni (2004) acknowledges Web's distinctive role in the practices of activists and consequently in "the spread of the peace movement". She argues that due to the Web's developments, political communication becomes more autonomous, as it is instant and cheaper and new groups previously not accepted can now participate in political issues without feeling excluded through the new technology (Karatzogianni, 2004).

On the contrary, Papacharissi (2004,p.260) explains that Web's features, such as the low costs (both social and financial) and the anonymity of online expression, have led people to speculate that the Internet will result in 'fragmented, nonsensical,

and enraged discussion (otherwise known as flaming)' (as cited in Witschge, 2007). Indeed, Loader & Dutton (2012) discuss the changes followed by the social Web's arrival and result in acknowledging some disadvantages and dangers within the Web's overall capabilities. Between others, they mention the potential reinforcement of socio-economical inequalities, the emergence of online harassment, the fear of cybercrime etc.

Witschge (2008) presents both sides of the coin regarding Web's potentials within political communication. On the one hand, she endorses Brant's (2008) views of a "horizontal, open and user-friendly nature of the Internet", which affords people with opportunities for greater participation in the public sphere. On the other hand, she subscribes to Dalhberg's (2001) counter arguments and the notion that the Web might facilitate abusive postings and even contribute in silencing some voices. She finally argues that whether the Web enables deliberation or not, it depends on how people utilize the opportunities provided on the online world.

Counter to Witschge's perspective -which follows an approach close to the Social Shaping of Technology (SST) theory[8]- , Wright & Street (2007) present a rather technological deterministic perspective. They argue that technology is both shaped by, and shaping, political discussion on the Internet and that the democratic possibilities of the Web depend on the way in which a technology is constructed. More specifically, they stress the importance of the technology design as well as the nature of the technology's interface by supporting that: "the form of the technology, rather than the fact of it, is responsible for the observable effects upon dialogue" (p.854).[9]

The common ground among the studies above was the notion that the online political world provides open platforms for discussions on any topic, anytime. Everyone who has access to those platforms has the right to express positive or negative positions and arguments and to participate in online sociopolitical discussions without significant limitations and restrictions.

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[8] See Williams, R. & Edge, D. (1996). The social shaping of technology, *Research Policy*, *25*, 865-899.
[9] Wright and Street (2007, p. 853) comment on the shape of the UK Houses of Parliament – the government on the one side and the opposition directly opposite- to support their thesis concerning the relationship between design and the kind of discussion. This shape facilitates the creation of a hostile and adversarial environment.

## *2.1.2 Social media and political communication*

At the present time, the aforementioned propositions need further research due to the emergence of social media and social networking sites, which allow greater flow of information and new forms of interactivity and participation.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (p.61). In their paper, they divide social media in six different categories: collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), Blogs, Social Networking Sites (SNS), content communities (e.g. Youtube), visual social worlds (e.g. Second Life) and virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft). According to their classification in 2010, Twitter is embedded in the Social Networking Site's category which includes applications that capacitate connection, interaction and communication between users (p.63). In 2011 though they position Twitter under the micro- blog category which "stands halfway between traditional blogs and SNS" (2011, p.106)

It is highly common for social media to integrate political communication, while users are able to contribute to the political media content through their activities in various social media platforms (Himelboim et al, 2013). Stieglitz and Dang Xuan (2013) mentioned the capacity of social media – particularly focusing on Facebook and Twitter- to provide both politicians and citizens with an ideal place for political participation and interaction. Indeed, on the one hand social media serve as tool for citizens to 'inspect' their political representatives and intervene in the political agenda. On the other hand, politicians use social media to come closer to citizens, to address political issues through their accounts directly to people and to present a more approachable side of their image.

In their paper, Zuniga et al. (2012) examined the influence of SNS use for news on public life within the social and political process, concluding that: "the inherent structure of the SNSs facilitates not only the acquisition of information but also the discussion of its importance and relevance with other members of a particular individual's social network in situ [....] "(p.331). Consequently, they argue that SNS can lead to a more democratized process of communication and discussion while it contributes to the reinforcement of people's social capital and also creates

opportunities for civic and political engagement. Similarly, Loader and Mercea (2011) in their study discussed the democratic potential of social media in bolstering the optimistic perspective towards a digital deliberation. They mention that the different forms of communication available on social media (such as text, visual, audio and graphic communication) give people the opportunity to a "widely experienced" political self- expression.

Although most of the studies with regards to social media and political communication seemed to hold a rather optimistic view, some scholars underlined the importance to also look at their potential with skepticism. For instance, Velasquez (2012) in his study about the role of cues in participating in online political communities concludes that social media features might be facilitating the creation of new, virtual inequalities and therefore affect the development of the ideal public sphere.

Moreover, Shirky (2011) introduces two factors that distort the ideal image of social media within the politics realm. Firstly, he mentions the phenomenon of 'slacktivism' (p.7), which translates to the tendency of users to seek social change through low-cost activities, such as following a cause online, signing petitions online etc. He adds that the social media tools themselves are ineffective and 'slacktivism' can lead to an actual political disengagement.  As a second factor he believes that mostly the state benefits from social media, as it now has in its disposal increasingly sophisticated means of monitoring the citizens. All in all, Shirky (2011) believes that social media produce as much harm to democracy as good.

To sum up, in the previous sections I introduced Web's and social media's potential in political communication by presenting both optimistic and pessimistic stances, as elaborated on previous literature. By doing this, I intended to provide readers with an overall perception of the relationship between the online world and political communication.  In what follows I will first discuss Twitter's role in political communication by addressing Twitter's characteristics and functions and the ways in which they facilitate sociopolitical arguments and discourses. Last, I turn to the notion that is central to this thesis: hate speech.

## 2.2 Twitter: Characteristics and Functions

Despite its relatively small span of life, Twitter and its potential in political communication and discussions received a lot of academic interest. Therefore, it is well established that Twitter plays a significant role in the way people communicate current political issues and discuss about them. However, little is known about the importance of the content of tweets and to what extent people use tweets to express their hatred towards others.

The main concern of this theoretical part is to investigate Twitter's role in political communication and to underline the features that makes it a fitting platform for the circulation of news and statements. By doing this, I aim to provide insight on how Twitter is likely to enable the generation of hate speech messages and the proliferation of insulting comments. Moreover, I consider important to emphasize on two particular aspects. Firstly, I will discuss the characteristics and features that differentiate Twitter from blogs and other social networking sites and secondly I will focus Twitter's functions that facilitate self-expression and discussions.

### 2.2.1. *Twitter's Characteristics and Features*

Twitter first launched in 2006 and currently it has more than 230 million active users per month. According to Twitter.com its mission is 'to give everyone the power to crate and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers'. It belongs to the family of micro-blogging sites (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011; Small, 2011), which are considered to be smaller forms or derivatives of a blog (Small, 2011; Larsson & Moe, 2012). However, Small mentions that blogs and micro-blogs appear to interact differently in the context of politics and political communication. The outcome of her research suggests that unlike blogs, for micro-blogs commentary and original reporting are second to informing.

In addition to the comparison between micro-blogs and blogs, Twitter is often compared to other social networking sites that allow the dissemination of information and contribution to the online content- either by producing content or interacting with it and with other users. Indeed, there are a lot of characteristics and

features that make Twitter an distinctive digital tool for disseminating online and instant (sociopolitical) information (Zhao& Rosson, 2009; Hermida, 2010; Kwak et al., 2010; Small, 2011; Tumasjan et al., 2011; Tinati et al., 2012) and facilitating public discussion and debates ( Bruns & Burgess, 2011; Larsson & Moe, 2012).

Ausserhofer and Maireder (2013) identified speed as a differentiator element of Twitter, along with its public nature of communication and its multiple possibilities of interaction through mentions, replies, hyperlinks, hashtags etc. Earl et al (2013) argue that Twitter's comparative advantage over other applications on the Web, is the ability to use it 'on the go' during events (p.461), e.g. protests, revolutions, natural disasters etc. In the same vein, Zhao & Rosson (2009) characterized Twitter posts as more valuable than in other media, because the communication is happening in real time, during the period that surrounds different events. Consequently, Twitter differs from other social networking sites, as it has great potentials in sociopolitical communication due to its immediacy and speed of spreading important information.

Moreover, there is also the differentiation concerning the reciprocity between users' relationships of following and being followed. According to Kwak et al (2010), 67.6 % of users are not being followed by any of their followings on Twitter while only 22.1% of the users have reciprocal relationship between them. In their paper, they explain that a Twitter user is not obligated to follow the ones that follow him/her back. In a similar vein, Larsson (2012) compares Twitter to other social networking services, identifying the act of following as a discrete element.

Furthermore, Wright and Street (2007) emphasized the significance of the design of different social media platforms, by showing that the structure of a social media platform can affect the development of online political discussions and their content. They stress the importance of the interface's nature and the way that different social platforms are designed and constructed, as those factors define the quality of the platform. Similarly, Velasquez (2012) based his research on questioning how specific characteristics of social media influence political discussion, concluding that the features of a platform along with the individual's behavior shape the nature of participation in online discussions.

*2.2.2. Twitter's functions and tools*

So how does the structure of Twitter influence the generation of arguments and the progress of conversations? Research shows that there are four functions that need to be addressed: a) Twitter's word limit, b) the 'following' function, c) the retweet option and d) # hashtags.

As far as it concerns the word's limitation, Himelboim et al., 2013 mentioned that this length restriction of only 140 characters in Twitter serves a fast production, distribution and consumption of a message. Hence news can be published and consumed in a matter of seconds in contrast to traditional media or other new media channels. However, they also expressed their concerns about how this speed could affect the content of the message. For example, Yardi and Boyd (2010) paper mentions that "Twitter conversations differ from blogs because the 140 character constraint and the speed with which topics ebb and flow on Twitter makes meaningful discussion difficult" (p.317). Similarly, Bruns and Highfield (2013) considered Twitter's technical limit of messaging problematic, as it hinders the share of considered, detailed and nuanced thoughts on an issue. In this paper, I consider the length restriction of tweets beneficial, as it allows a more spontaneous and sincere self-expression.

Another part of Twitter's functions that is important to discuss is the re-tweet mechanism. The power of Twitter as a medium for disseminating information and messages, especially by stressing the importance of the re-tweet option, was the main focus of Tinati et al. (2012). A more representative example of the retweet power is demonstrated in a research conducted by Kwak et al. (2010), in which the entire Twittersphere[10] was explored and analyzed. The study showed that people on Twitter do not always acquire information and news from the users who follow, but it is more common to be informed via retweets. They support their claim by presenting findings revealing that any retweeted tweet is to reach an average of 1.000 users no matter what the number of followers is of the original tweet. Finally, Small (2011) in her paper expresses her belief that retweets illustrate the interactive

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[10] They obtained 41.7 million user profiles;1.47 billion social relations;4.262 trending topics and 106 million tweets (Kwak et al., 2010, p.600)

capabilities of Twitter. She also discusses the argument of boyd et al. (2010, p.1), who consider retweets as another type of having a conversation.

After illustrating the power of retweeting, it is really important to describe the role of #hashtags, as important tools for the following and the discussion of current public events. According to Bruns and Burgess (2011) the Twitter hashtag is "a short keyword, prefixed with the hash symbol '#', as a means of coordinating a distributed discussion between more or less large groups of users, who do not need to be connected through existing 'follower' networks" (p.1). They also discuss the beneficial elements of hashtags, such as the ability to respond at once to emerging issues or events and the flexibility to create a new hashtag thread as and when needed, without any restrictions. I will also elaborate on hashtags' utilities in Chapter 3.

Summing up, Himelboin et al. (2013) found that political talk on Twitter's clusters- groups of users that are connected through reciprocal bonds- is highly homogeneous and partisan. However, Dahlberg (Dahlberg, 2001, as cited in Witschge, 2007, p.22) wisely stated that cyberspace "is a place where difference is not hard to find". Therefore, I argue that for dissidents or people who want to spread hate, Twitter provides ways to search and find people they dislike or share contrasting opinions. Moreover, there is also a great possibility for ordinary or 'innocent' Twitter users to interact with people from different political backgrounds and experience circumstances of hate speech and intolerance.

## 2.3 Hate Speech

### 2.3.1. Definitions

In order to proceed in examining the relationship between hate speech and Twitter I believe it is wise to present some definitions and implications of hate speech as cited on different academic papers- the majority of those from legal literature- and thereinafter undertake existing literature with regards to online hate speech in general.

Nielsen (2002) refers to a lack of consensus with regards to the content of hate speech. He mentions that hate speech has many incarnations and can be

motivated by all kinds of perceived differences. Hate speech might derive from repressed hostility or ignorance (Leets, 2002). Ignorance holds its roots to lack of proper education, which "is the original source that makes people susceptible to nationalism, to the authoritarian mentality and therefore to hate speech" (Lenkova, 1998, p.10). But which speech is considered as hate speech?

Brink (2010) mentions that hate speech include discriminatory epithets or attitudes that come from an ugly or violent past and aim to insult and stigmatize others. Moreover, Lenkova defines hate speech as "the use of very precise discriminatory and selective vocabulary which tries to legitimize negative thinking about all those who are not «us», those who are the 'others'" (Lenkova, 1998:p.10). Finally, Simpson (2013) refers to identity-based contempt, irrespective of how someone uses it or how it affects its targets. According to Simpson (2013):

> Hate speech is a term of art in legal and political theory that is used to refer to verbal conduct – and other symbolic, communicative action – which willfully expresses intense antipathy towards some group or towards an individual on the basis of membership in some group […] Hate speech thus includes things like identity-prejudicial abuse and harassment, certain uses of slurs and epithets, some extremist political and religious speech (e.g. statements to the effect that all Muslims are terrorists, or that gay people are second-class human beings), and certain displays of hate symbols (e.g. swastikas or burning crosses). (p. 1-2)

The aforementioned definitions are just a small sample from a wide range of hate speech definitions existing within the academic community (Leets & Giles, 1999; Leets, 2001; Brink, 2001; Nemes, 2002; Nielsen, 2002; Parekh, 2006 Reed, 2009; Harris et al., 2009; Yong, 2011). In this study, hate speech is viewed as an expression of enmity and intolerance with the use of offensive language, by people who distance themselves from the 'others', who are perceived as unworthy and blamable - beyond differences of race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation etc.

*2.3.2. Implications*

Despite the ambiguous status of hate speech in the academic world, its negative implications for society are clear to everyone. According to Leets (2002), hate speech violates the individual's dignity, resulting to humiliation, distress and psychological or emotional pain. Likewise, Downs and Cowan (2012) mentioned in their study that hate speech has been a strong weapon in the past that could harm individuals by degrading, terrorizing, wounding and humiliating them.

Nemes (2002) goes further by mentioning the harm of hate speech on individuals, groups and society as a whole. As far as it concerns the individuals, he mentions that hate speech can provoke pain, distress, fear, embarrassment, isolation etc. Hate speech towards groups of people can bring inequality problems and lead the members of that group in isolation. It creates feelings of fear and discourages them from participating in their community or expressing their opinions. Moreover, this degradation and humiliation can silence the 'victims' and therefore reinforce existing hierarchies in society (Nielsen, 2002), while it can also lead hate speech victims to become aggressive and dangerous (Parekh, 2006).

Given the facts above that concern the harmful nature of hate speech, there is no doubt that discriminatory and offensive expression is an undesirable and negative phenomenon in a democratic society. However, it should also be taken into account, that any attempt to restrict hate speech contradicts the democratic principles of freedom of speech and the right to free expression. Cornwell and Orbe (1999) mentioned that attempting to limit hate speech would result to censorship. Similarly, Brink (2001) presented this great dilemma in his work by mentioning that regulating hate speech might bring equality but it would affect liberty. In a similar vein, Downs & Cowan (2012) mention that "if speech is restricted, it silences those who may benefit largely from its expression" (p.1354).

## 2.4 Hate Speech Online

In the preceding chapter, I presented different definitions of hate speech and I discussed the concerns with regards to the hate speech phenomenon within public communication in society. As discussed earlier, Twitter plays a significant role in the

way people communicate current political issues and discuss about them, adding to and altering the practices of our everyday communication. To my best knowledge, there is only one paper[11] that addresses the problem of hate speech on Twitter. I will therefore proceed in introducing the reasons why Web 2.0 in general and Twitter as a by-product enable the generation of hate speech and the dissemination of hatred messages.

Hate speech online has been a topic that draw a lot of academic attention during the past few years (Spiegel, 1999; Eichhon, 2001; Leets, 2001; Nemes, 2002; Duffy, 2003; Brenner, 2007; Reed, 2009; Perry & Olsson,2009; Harris et al., 2009; Commaerts, 2009; Erjavec & Kovavic, 2012; Eltis, 2012; Simpson, 2013). From the early days of Web 2.0, even before the emergence of social media Spiegel (1999) predicted that Internet will be another communication tool for racists and "hate-mongers" to spread their messages. Similarly, Nemes (2002) considered the Internet a very important channel for those who want to spread messages of hatred while Duffy (2003) expressed her extreme view of the Web being a contributor in a culture of hate and violence.

Brenner's (2007) 'problematic speech' was not possible during the domination of mainstream media and Perry & Olsson's (2009) "cyberhate" exists in web pages which are uncontrolled. This web 'anarchy' in the hands of extremist groups could lead to practices that can reinforce hostility and verbal violence. Commaerts (2009) in his study demonstrated how Internet functions as a space where racial hatred and discrimination talk are hosted, by focusing on extreme right discourses on blogs and forums.  He mentions that, the Web provides fascists, fundamentalists and other 'repressive movements' with the same opportunities as activists, allowing them both to link up and interact through their online communities.

Apparently, there is a consensus throughout the presented literature, that Internet facilitates the expansion of hate speech in the digital world. At this point, research shows that there are four main reasons to ascribe responsibility for this fact.

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[11] Haque,J. (2014). *Hate Speech: A study of Pakistan's Cyberspace.* This study is an attempt to understand and quantify hate speech online in a Pakistan context by examining the actual content produced in Pakistan's cyberspace in high impact, high reach areas, and build a first quantitative snapshot of the extent to which hate speech occurs online, who is being targeted and what forms of hate speech are being created by whom. I will elaborate on his findings later in this Chapter.

Firstly, given the fact that Internet allows absolute freedom of expression (Harris et Al., 2009) the phenomenon of hate expression in online platforms becomes continuous. This applies on Twitter as well. Twitter users are allowed to express themselves any way they want, as there is no restriction with regards to hate speech and use of offensive language. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, as long as users do not directly post specific threats of violence against others, they are allowed to verbally attack other users.

Secondly, it is the breadth of the message's reach (Henry, 2009; Mahoney, 2013) between one or more networks and consequently the circulation, adoption and repetition of the message (Butler, 1997 as cited in Eichhorn, 2001, p.301). Given the options of re-tweeting, using a specific hashtagged and linking content to other platforms, there is no doubt that Twitter contributes to the spreading of a message to a broader audience within and outside the platform. This fact means that there are more opportunities for people to see a hate message, adopt it and re-publish it, as there are more possibilities for the target to come across that message.

Thirdly, there is the possibility to keep a relative anonymity in the virtual world. In the case of Twitter, it is rather easy to cloak your identity and present a different one as your own.  In her study, Eichhorn (2001) expresses her concerns about the indeterminable identities that exist in cyberspace and then mentions that this can make speech more unpredictable online that in the real world. Moreover, Nemes (2002) states that due to anonymity online, the Internet not only helps offenders to disseminate their message and harm people, but also protects them. Twitter allows users to conceal their real names, use pseudonyms or even fake names and build their account as they desire.

Lastly, the social Web is mainly uncontrolled and unregulated (Perry & Olsson, 2009). Eltis (2012) blames the lack of editorial oversight online and the absence of gate keeping, for the ability that some people gained to reach and corrupt from the most educated to the most innocent minds. Even though most of the SNS have terms of use and regulations that prohibit discriminatory content, Twitter protects its users from threats of violence but not from specific forms of hate speech or discriminatory messages. This fact might sound reasonable if we take into consideration that it is very difficult to identify and regulate hate speech on its global

level. There is no universal consensus on what is harmful or unsuitable (Nemes, 2002), 'harm' can be variously understood. Shaw (2012) mentioned that the importance of words varies by culture which makes it hard to put regulations on the Internet. Thus, it is even harder for Twitter where "the majority of Twitter users participate in geographically local networks" (Quercia et al. 2012 as cited in Ausserhofer and Maireder, 2013, p.294). According to his evaluations (Shaw, 2012), what is really important in attempting to define hate speech and harmful words, is to take into account the social and historical context in which a speech like that is taking place. He continues saying that speech in general and the importance of words are also defined by the norms of the each community and society (ibid).

Erjavec and Kovavic (2012) underline the accountability of Internet's interactivity, anonymity and credibility in facilitating messages with positive content but also messages that encompass words of hatred (p.900). They also point out the potential of producing hate speech in the comments section, a fact that could also be used in the case of replies on Twitter. In their research they identify four different types of hate speech producers - soldiers, believers, watchdogs and players- who share different characteristics; different motives in producing hate speech and also receive different gratification from engaging with hate speech commentary.

The first two groups – soldiers and believers- share authoritarian characteristics in the sense that they are loyal to their political and ideological beliefs and they oppose those who share different ones. In their hate speech messages they usually employ militant expressions while their 'mission' is to spread their truth to everyone. Watchdogs and players share characteristics of a libertarian personality, as they do not believe in one truth but in many and they are tolerant with the circulation of different opinions. They want equality and their messages usually include irony and sarcasm.

Even though most of previous researches focused on hate groups and their activities online, Erjavec and Kovavic (2012) research drove the attention away from hate groups blogs and forums and examined hate speech on comments and the different attributes of commentators. Another research that addressed the problem of hate speech in cyberspace, beyond hate speech websites and forums, was the one conducted by Haque (2014). In his research, he aimed to better understand as well

as to quantify hate speech online within the Pakistani cyberspace by examining the actual content produced on Facebook and Twitter. He attempts to present a first quantitative image of the extent to which hate speech occurs online, who is being targeted and what forms of hate speech are being created by whom.

Haque (2014) examined 30 Twitter accounts that included 15.000 tweets, replies and mentions. His analysis revealed that only 2.3 % (350 tweets) of the updates included hate speech, unlike Facebook where hate speech registered higher. It should be mentioned that Haque's results showed that, the majority of hate speech tweets recorded was personal attacks and abuse and it was mainly targeting state actors. According to Haque (2014), unchecked hate speech creates an environment where actual violence against politicians or journalists is not only condoned, but also celebrated, giving those carrying out such attacks greater space and encouragement to act. Indeed, hate speech threatens community's functionality and can also lead to the political disengagement of the citizens. Therefore, even though Haque's research revealed a small amount of hate speech expressions in the Pakistani Twittersphere, researching the phenomenon in a different social, cultural and political context is essential and important.

## 3. Methodology and research Design

### 3.1 <u>Research Design</u>

The main concern of this thesis is to examine if and how twitter has the capacity to accommodate and spread discourses of hate speech and intolerance. Therefore, I formulated my research question as such:

R.Q.: How is Twitter facilitating discourses of hate speech?

To answer this question, I will examine tweets related to the murder of Pavlos Fyssas –a leftist and antifascist hip hop singer- by a member of the extreme right party Golden Dawn (G.D., Χρυσή Αυγή, X.A.). The answer to the question will proceed from the following three sub-questions.

S.Q a: In what forms were messages of Pavlos Fyssas's death circulated on Twitter?

In this first sub-question I am looking at the forms of communications that tweet producers used to disseminate their messages and their content. By doing so, I get a better insight of which forms of communication available on Twitter did tweet producers use (for example: original commentary tweet, commentary tweet on news links etc.). This sub-question is quite basic, but these categorizations are of great importance for the foundations for the research.

S.Q b: Do messages of Pavlos Fyssas's death on Twitter include hate speech?

Here I am taking a closer look on the messages, in an attempt to identify tweets that include elements and indicators of hate speech. This part of the research allows me to distinguish the hatred messages from other messages and therefore provides me with the unit of analysis in which I will be basing my third sub-question.

S.Q c: What are the attributes of hate speech messages on Twitter?

This sub- question focuses on the attributes of the tweets that include hate speech. Previous research focused on hate and extremist groups who used Internet to disseminate their messages to a wider audience (Siegel, 1999; Perry & Olsson,

2009). However, the study of Erjavec and Kovacic (2012) showed that every hate speech producer has different views, motives and values for producing a message of hatred. As elaborated in the theory chapter, they distinguish four different groups of commentators on Slovenian news websites –soldiers, believers, players and watchdogs. I will attempt to identify elements of their findings in my case.

In order to answer these three research questions of this study, I am planning on combining qualitative content analysis along with descriptive statistics.

### 3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

Neuendorf (2002) mentions that in the field of mass communication research, content analysis has been the fastest-growing technique over the past 20 years or so, especially after the emergence of digital databases. She cites Berger (1991) and his definition of content analysis, which he defines as "a research technique that is based on measuring the amount of something (violence, negative portrayals of women, or whatever) in a representative sampling of some mass-mediated popular art form" (p.25). Furthermore, Small (2011), discusses Anderson and Kanuka's (2003) opinion that content analysis is an appropriate method for e-research, though it is "often associated with the analysis of text documents and in e-research documents are often e-mail, chats or computer conferencing transcripts"(p.174). Finally Elo and Kynga (2008) mention the ability of content analysis to test theoretical issues in order to enhance the understanding of the data, while making possible the distilling of words into fewer content related categories.  It is assumed that when classified into the same categories, words, phrases and the like, share the same meaning (Cavanagh 1997 as cited in Elo and Kynga, 2008). All the theories above demonstrate the ideal role of content analysis in the wider field of communication and particularly in this case of communication online, by researching and measuring an amount of a fact such as the presence of hate speech, in a representative textual sample. Furthermore, once the content analysis is implemented and the content based categories are developed, the phenomenon explored can easily be described by the researcher and understood by readers.

According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) qualitative content analysis is defined as: "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (p.1278). In a similar vein, Mayring (2000) mentions that qualitative content analysis is "an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification" (p.2). Therefore, qualitative content analysis requires a systematic and gradual process of examination of textual data in order to result in identification and the formation of the categories.

Silverman (2011) states in his paper, that content analysis involves establishing categories and then counting the number of instances when those categories are used in a particular item of text. However, there are two approaches in developing categories in the context of the implementation of qualitative content analysis, the inductive and the deductive approaches. The latter follows a rational way of coding, basically based on previous theoretical findings and previous literature. The inductive process of classification includes open coding and abstraction, which means that the categorization of the textual content is occurring while reading the data. According to Mayring (2000):

> The main idea of the inductive procedure is, to formulate a criterion of definition, derived from theoretical background and research question, which determines the aspects of the textual material taken into account. Following this criterion the material is worked through and categories are tentative and step by step deduced. Within a feedback loop those categories are revised, eventually reduced to main categories and checked in respect to their reliability. ( p.4) (see also Appendix A)

Furthermore, Elo and Kynga (2008), stress the importance of reducing the number of categories by eliminating those that are interrelated or dissimilar and finally concluding in the development of broader main categories, named by a content-characteristic word.

In this research, I employ qualitative content analysis by following a combination of deductive and inductive classification process. Inspired by theory, I initially created a small coding list which I then modified and formed according to the findings. I followed a three step procedure for each sub-question. The first step was to look throughout the data, identifying potential main and sub-categories and create a temporary coding scheme.  The next step was to locate messages in those categories and see if there are any incidents of similar or dissimilar content. The last step was to merge categories with each other in order to create broader inclusive categories. Finally, both Mayring (2000 and Silverman, 2011), stress the importance of developing the categories as precise and close possible to the body of material to ensure the research's reliability.

## 3.3 Descriptive Statistics

In order to describe the findings inside and between the categories, I will also employ descriptive analysis. According to Thompson (2009), descriptive statistics are numbers that summarize the data with the purpose of describing what occurred in the sample. Even though, statistics incorporate mathematics and logic, the concept of descriptive statistics are reasonably simple and require only an understanding of a few key rules and assumptions (Fisher & Marshall, 2009). Indeed, descriptive statistics are likely the most simple of statistical analysis to perform and to interpret. In my research, for instance, I used the rule of three to find the percentage of the different categories inside the dataset, in order to understand each phenomenon and proceed to its interpretation by describing and comparing the results. Fisher and Marshall (2009), mention that descriptive statistics are simply the numerical procedures used to organize and describe the characteristics or factors of a given sample.

## 3.4 Operationalization

### 3.4.1. Data Collection

I decided to focus my research on tweets that included hashtags and keywords relevant to the death of Pavlos Fyssas from the early informational tweets

and tweets published during the day of the incident on the 18th of September 2013. Scholars that previously conducted research on Twitter either used the free open source tool yourTwapperkeeper (Bruns & Burgess, 2012), which is not useful anymore since Twitter licensed its data stream to resellers or other automated data extraction commercial businesses (e.g. Gnip) and most of them are very expensive options (Kim et al., 2013). Moreover, due to its limitations Twitter API was not useful for my research.

The methodology I use employs a less refined technological apparatus in order to bring to light the answers I am looking for. For that reason, I collected my data manually, through Twitter's Search Engine and its Advanced Research tool which allows you to access past tweets that match my criteria. As far as it concerns my sampling strategy, since there are no prior methodologies for sampling tweets (Bruns& Burgess, 2011), therefore I decided to choose my sample size based on feasibility.

In order to more properly define the unit of my analysis I created *two databases* which were formed by filtering tweets that a) included at least one hashtag relevant to the event and b) included at least one keyword that I considered related to the event. According to Weber (1990), defining the coding unit is one of the most fundamental and important decisions.

Firstly, I decided to look on hashtags because they are used in Twitter to classify messages and to compile ideas and opinions. It is an important and practical tool that is being adopted from various platforms across SNS world, while it allows you to find and follow specific topics and events. Loader and Mercea (2011) underlined the importance of the "political" hashtag # as a form of participation in democratic politics and its ability to "aggregate, distil and direct" political information (p.764). Likewise, Small (2011) stated that hashtags are very important to comprehend the political aspects of Twitter, as they organize and collect the information around particular political topics and events.

My research built on a dataset of tweets that include at least one of the following hashtags: **#killap** (which stands for Pavlos Fyssas's nickname), **#18sgr** (which stands for 18 September Greece). Those hashtags were the main two that covered the event on Twitter and contained the majority of the messages related to

the event. Any re-posted or English tweets were excluded. Spammers with no original content were removed too. This selection process left me with 354 tweets.

Secondly, I also searched for some relevant keywords because, according to Julian Ausserhofer & Axel Maireder (2013), there are problems that may arise by only focusing on hashtags. For instance, there are a lot of people who do not include hashtags in their tweets and secondly there are a lot of topics that cannot be presented by looking only on hashtags (Maireder 2010 cited in Ausserhofer & Axel Maireder, 2013). It is true that most tweets relevant to the event, did not contain hashtags or could not be represented by single hashtags or even their producers chose not to make their messages visible and easily accessible by using a hashtag (Maireder 2010).

This second dataset of keywords contain tweets that include at least one of the following four keywords: **Παύλος** (Pavlos), **Φύσσας** (Fyssas), **Χρυσή αυγή** (Golden Dawn), **Χ.Α.** (GD) and **Χρυσαυγίτης-ες** (member-s of GD). This selection left me with 1267 tweets.

### 3.4.2. Coding Procedure

After defining the units of my analysis I proceeded to the development of the different categories and the formation of my coding scheme. According to Mayring (2000) categories and a coding scheme can be derived from three sources: the data, previous related studies, and theories. I followed both an inductively and deductively procedure in developing the coding scheme. At first, I generated an initial list of coding categories according to the theory and thereinafter I modified the coding scheme as new categories and information emerged. Overall 2052 tweets were read and coded.

In order to answer the first sub-question, – In what forms were messages of Pavlos Fyssas' death circulated on Twitter?- I looked closely on the different forms of communication that message producers used on Twitter. I examined all the messages from both the datasets that I developed –as elaborated above, one including relative hashtags and one including relative keywords- and 7 forms of communication emerged from the analysis.

During the initial phase of the coding procedure I decided to base my categorizing strategy on Small's (2011) example[12]. However, as the coding procedure proceeded some new categories emerged while others were proven not relevant for my research. Finally I established seven different main categories whose characteristics do not coincide with each other: 1) Comment-Original Tweet, 2) Comment on News, 3) comment on Tweet, 4) Conversation, 5) News, 6) Photos/Pictures (with or without comment), and 7) Videos (with or without comment).

For the first category I coded all tweets that were original (1) and did not include a URL, a photo/picture or a video as well as no RT or @username prefix. For the second category, I coded all the tweets that included comments on news stories (2) linked to a news website. In this category I included all comments produced by individuals or the news website itself. The third category includes messages that contain comments about another tweet. To code a message as a "comment on a tweet" (3) presupposes the tweet to include a retweet (RT) or a re-communication of a tweet produced by another user accompanied with a comment. The fourth category refers to conversational tweets (4). Those tweets include a public message that was sent from a one person to another and contain the @username prefix, which distinguish it from other updates. However, messages that included a @username prefix but did not include a message directly addressed to the user mentioned – thus those messages cannot be referred to as conversational- were coded as original tweets (1). The fifth category (5) includes tweets that contain a headline or a small part of a news story along with the link.  The last two categories include all tweets that contain photos/pictures (6) or videos (7). Comments on these last categories are not necessary. Moreover, messages that leaded to a news webpage containing a video and not including a journalistic text were coded as videos (7). Messages that leaded to a news webpage containing a journalistic text and video/pictures were coded as news (5) (see also Appendices A and B).

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[12]  In his example he distinguishes nine different and mutually exclusive categories of tweets: 1) Comment, 2)Comments on News, 3) Comments on Online Information, 4)Comment on Tweet, 5) Conversations, 6)News , 7) Online Information , 8)Retweets and 9) Not relevant.

For the second sub-question, - Do messages of Pavlos Fyssas's death on Twitter include hate speech? - I attempted to monitor the appearance of hate speech messages on Twitter and then I proceeded in identifying the different characteristics in the content of the hate speech messages, as well as the target of the message. Starting with a preliminary coding list for the first part of the analysis, I defined reoccurring categories that derived from the content of all the collected messages. As the initial list of categories was getting bigger, I decided to incorporate sub-categories to an inclusive broader category. Consequently, four categories emerged: 1) sharing news and information, 2) hate speech comments, 3) sharing opinion and 4) sharing information about the protests.  The first category included every message that intended to share any kind of news and information as news and information. I coded tweets as hate speech messages if there was any hostile and offensive remarks included in their content.  I estimated as hate speech, tweets that even though the included news or news links, they also enclosed hateful comments. As far as it concerns the second category, there were original tweets that included comments or thoughts on the issue, but did not contain news, links or hate speech indicators. Finally, the fourth category includes tweets regarding the protests in process and tweets that attempted to convene users to participate in the demonstrations all over the country.

At this part of the analysis, I looked closer into the content of the hate speech messages to discern different aspects of hate expression. Drawing from Leets (2002) work, I started the coding procedure based on his findings concerning racist and harmful speech. She mentioned four main types of verbal aggression, each consisting of cursing, threat of attack, hostile criticism and stereotypic derogation. With those categories in mind, I initiated the coding procedure of the hate speech tweets.

During the analysis, it was clear that a lot of hate speech tweets included irony or sarcasm. Thus, I decided to include a 'sarcasm' category to the framework. In addition, I proceeded on eliminating the category that included word choices of 'stereotypic derogation', as there were only six tweets out of the 561 that suited the category. Alternatively, I merged the examples of 'stereotypic derogation' with the 'sarcasm' category since most of the expressions of stereotypical discourses included

sarcastic elements.  Finally, the coding scheme I developed consisted of four specific and inclusive categories of hate speech tweets: a) cursing, b) threat of attack, c) hostile criticism and d) sarcasm (see also Table 3 and Appendix B).

For the 'cursing' category, I coded tweets that contained a) profanities (e.g. fuck, assholes, bastards, bitch etc.), b) insulting/offensive epithets and slurs (e.g. hypocrites, murderers etc.) and c) hatred words/degradations (fascist, mocking characterizations for rightists, leftists, anarchists etc.). The 'threat of attack' category includes tweets that contain expressions of intention to inflict evil, injury, or damage (e.g. kill, murder, hit, exterminate, remove, clean up etc). Furthermore, the 'hostile criticism' category includes tweets that contain expressions of disapproval and of noting the problems or fault of a person. This category is referring to tweets that express criticism and put the blame on different individuals or groups of people. In order to avoid any mistakes or between the categories, I decided to exclude any tweets that consisted of cursing, threat of attack or irony even if they infused criticism.

Finally, the 'sarcasm' category includes sarcastic comments and words that mean the opposite of what they are usually used for, in order to insult someone, to show irritation or to be funny. Sarcasm is the negative form of irony, the "bitter and derisive statements that employ verbal irony as a device" (Kreuz et al., 1996 as cited in Burgers & Beukeboom, 2014, p.5). The Oxford Dictionary defines sarcasm as "the use of irony to mock or convey contempt"[13]. According to Burgers and Beukeboom (2014), verbal irony has often been associated with expectancy violations, while ironic comments typically allude to failed expectations.  Irony can be identified by some irony markers, such as metaphors, hyperbole, understatements and rhetorical questions (Burgers et al., 2012).

As I mentioned earlier, I decided to include in this category tweets in which the word choices consisted of 'stereotypic derogations'. Burgers and Beukeboom (2014), conclude that verbal irony contributes to the communication and maintenance of stereotypes. Stereotypic derogations refer to expressions of

discriminatory epithets and offensive words, as well as expressions of lessening, or detraction especially of power, reputation and value based on stereotypical beliefs.

Stereotypical beliefs that accompany Golden Dawn members are the perceptions of them being evolved in criminal activities, being uneducated and uncivilized. Tweets that include phrases or words that indicate the aforementioned stereotypical characteristics were coded as sarcastic tweets. The results in this category were based on totally subjective evaluations. For this reason, I thought that the evaluation of the tweets from another person would assure the validity of the analysis.

For the third sub-question I examine hate speech messages in an attempt to identify elements that indicate the presence of the four hate speech commentators, as described in the Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) study. As elaborated on the theory chapter, Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) research focused on the motivations of producers of hate speech comments on web sites. They developed four categories of hate speech producers: a) soldiers, b) believers, b) players and lastly c) watchdogs. The soldiers tend to use military language (e.g. mission, war, enemy etc.), are usually members of political parties and they use hate speech according to the orders of their superiors while their life mission is to defend the interests of the group by attacking the 'enemy'. Erjavec and Kovavic in their expansion of the soldier's description mention that their targets are usually those who are indirectly or directly treated in online news, journalists and producers of comments they disapprove of. They also face the world as it was divided between 'us' and 'them'. As far as it concerns the second category of the authoritarian commentators, the authors mention that believers are defined by their faith in following their political and ideological role models and in defending their values. They write on their own initiative and the majority of them use pseudonyms.

The third category of the players refers to comments produced by libertarian personalities. Players mostly treat hate speech discourses as a game in the online community. Their aim is to be funny and humiliate other. They represent the so-called 'trolls' of the digital world, while thrill and fun are their main motives for using derogatory language. Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) mention that they "just want to have fun by humiliating others" (p.912).

Finally, the last category represented by the watchdogs is motivated by social injustice. Watchdogs express openness and tolerance which classify them to the 'libertarian personality' as the category of above. However, they take online expression more seriously and they try to restore order by drawing attention to social problems and defending the rights of conflicting groups.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Communication forms on Twitter

After examining overall 2052 tweets, divided in two datasets (625 messages including relative hashtags and 1428 messages including relative keywords) it appeared that the most prominent category with a percent of 36.6 (753 tweets) was the one that included news stories and information about happenings and outcomes concerning Pavlos Fyssas' death (see table 1). Those tweets did not contain any comment or remarks related to the news linked to the message. However, they might contain a sentence from the article or one introducing the article. For instance:  "Conflicts outside the Nazi offices in Patra and Chania http://wp.me/p2h0fW 4S0 #Killahp" and "Golden Dawn: 'We have no relation to the killing in Keratsini' http://bit.ly/18wIkwr" (see Appendix D for the original and the translated version).

The second more prominent category was the one that contained original tweets and comments with 35.6 percent (733 tweets) of all the messages expressing views and opinions about the events (see Table 1).  For example: "Don't make #KillahP a trending topic on Twitter, turn it into rage in the streets". A lot of tweets in this category first included a statement with regards to the death of Pavlos Fyssas and then an expression of an opinion. For instance: "Pavlos Fyssas was murdered by fascists tonight. Abettors are Venizelos, Samaras, Alafouzos, Pretenderis [14]and the like" and "Pavlos Fyssas (Killah P) was murdered by a Golden Dawn member. By tomorrow, no Golden Dawn member should be able to walk down the streets."

Other frequently coded categories were tweets that included photos and comments on news. Each of those two categories constitutes 8.6 of the tweets (see Table 1). Photos often included pictures of antifascist messages  "Fascism first comes for the others, then for all of us#18sgr #killahp @ Tsaldari http://instagram.com/p/eaQgqtIJMa/ "or, antinazi and threatening slogans "Revenge….you know what this means….#ACAB #ANTINAZI #ANTIFA #KillahP

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[14] Venizelos is the presiden of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) which is also the second unit of the coalition. Samaras is the Prime Minister of Greece and president of the right- wing political party- New Democracy (ND). Alafouzos is the founder and president of the television station Skai TV and Pretenderis is a controversial journalist and reporter for the television station Mega Channel. Both channels are considered to be under the state control and manipulation.

pic.twitter.com/zUXdTNRZFT". Other tweets contained pictures from the demonstrations: "It happens Now…!!!!#KillahP #keratsini #amfiali pic.twitter.com/uZLQWGCRT0." Finally, there were also tweets that published previous photos that aimed to share a meaningful message with regards to the event or prove a point. For instance: "We should not forget the abettors -> Dora Bakoyianni: "Golden Dawn treats me just fine" pic.twitter.com/9iX48GWCAz" (For the photos, see Appendix E).

Videos within the tweets were fewer in comparison to photos. Not even 5 % percent of the tweets shared a video (see table 1). Hashtags played a more important role in disseminating videos, as 57 tweets out of the 624 included a video or a video link, while on the contrary only 3.8 % (38 out of 1428) of the tweets with a keyword spread audiovisual content to their followers. Pavlos Fyssas; video clips were usually a dominant choice among the Twitter users, mostly because his lyrics expressed antifascist beliefs. Moreover, other users shared videos that presented a small fragment from the news broadcast, or previous videos relevant to the event or videos. Finally, there was a small amount of amateur videos, recorded and shared by protesters during the demonstrations.

Finally, the less frequent categories were those two that included the straightest forms of interactive communication on Twitter. Conversational tweets constituted a little higher than 3% of the all the tweets, while comments on other tweets/manual retweets were the least frequent constituting just 2.4 % of all the coded messages, which amount to 49 tweets out of the 2052 (see table 1).

Conversational tweets were messages that included the @mention symbol. Those tweets mostly addressed to journalists e.g., "#killap @ArisPortosalte Continue with your propaganda, we will continue with journalism", political actors e.g., "There is no doubt that society has the tools to crush Golden Dawn. The reason why that is not happening is for @NikosDendias[15] to answer", and finally to other users e.g., "@CorinaVasilopoulouDo not fall into the trap of the two extremes' theory. If GD is the one edge, we should stay on the other."

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[15] Nikos Dendias was the Minister of Public Order and Citizen Protection at that period.

Lastly, a very small amount of tweets (49 out of 2052) included a comment on another's user's tweet. This tweet had to include another message along with the RT mark and a comment on that message. Some examples are the following tweets: "Defending them RT @MiaThalassa: What in the hell does police do at the GD's offices?" , "Continue equalizing, you moron! RT @KostasVaxevanis GD is killing because Samaras and Venizelos don't like blood", and "Did he ever write anything different than that? RT @tsougdw: What is this populist and dangerous bullshit that Vaxevanis publishes?"

**Table 1**

| Categories | Hashtags | | Keywords | | Both | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tweets | % | Tweets | % | Tweets | % |
| Comment/Original Tweet | 209 | 33.5% | 524 | 36.7% | 733 | 35.6% |
| Comment on news | 25 | 4% | 152 | 10.8% | 177 | 8.6% |
| Comment on a tweet/ Manual retweet | 1 | 0.2% | 48 | 3.3% | 49 | 2.4% |
| Conversational | 6 | 1% | 62 | 4.3% | 68 | 3.3% |
| News | 185 | 29.6% | 568 | 39.7% | 753 | 36.6% |
| Photos/Pictures | 141 | 22.6% | 36 | 2.5% | 177 | 8.6% |
| Videos | 57 | 9.1% | 38 | 2.7% | 95 | 4.6% |
| Overall | 624 | 100% | 1428 | 100% | 2052 | 100% |

As shown in Table 1, the dataset that included only hashtagged messages reveals that 22.6 percent of the tweets included a photo, while the on the 'keyword's dataset' only 2.5 percent of the tweets were coded as photo containing. In the case of the 'keywords' dataset', apart from the two most prominent categories – original tweets and news tweets- , there is a high percentage of 10.8 of tweets containing comments and remarks on news links. This result is contradicting the 4% of the similar category on the 'hashtags' dataset'.

## 4.2 Hate Speech on Twitter

Continuing with the analysis, the focus is directed to the main point of the research: hate speech. In order to detect the existence and the features of hate speech, I conducted three stages of analysis, aiming to come closer to an answer for the second sub-question of the research; Do messages of Pavlos Fyssas' death on Twitter include hate speech?

### 4.2.1 First Stage: Classification according to the purpose of the tweet

On this first stage of the analysis, I focused my attention on the content of the tweets to discern the purpose of each message. This classification of the tweets based on its objective seems suitable for distinguishing hate speech messages from the others. Moreover, this part of the analysis offers an interesting insight on different utilities of Twitter during the evolution of a significant socio-political event.

**Table 2**

| Categories | Hashtags | | Keywords | | Both | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tweets | % | Tweets | % | Tweets | % |
| News and Information | 143 | 22.9% | 613 | 42.9% | 756 | 36.6% |
| Hate Speech | 121 | 19.4% | 441 | 30.9% | 562 | 27.5% |
| Opinion | 124 | 19.9% | 364 | 25.5% | 488 | 23.8% |
| Activism | 236 | 37.8% | 12 | 0.7% | 248 | 12.1% |
| Overall | 624 | 100% | 1428 | 100% | 2052 | 100% |

As shown on the table above, there is a dominance of tweets that include news and information (36.6 %). This, of course, was to be expected judging from the previous analysis on the forms of communication.

Almost a fourth of the tweets included neutral self- expression. That amounts to a percentage of 23.8 % and to 488 tweets out of the 2052 (See Table 2). Tweets of

neutral self- expression included tweets that contained statements or points of view. They might have contained a link, but the amount of tweets that combined statements and links to other sources, was very small. Some examples of opinion sharing are the following two examples: "The growth and embolden of the Nazi gang is a symptom of a catalyzed democracy, not the cause. #KillahP" and "Do not be fooled. The elderly GD voters, were and still are well-known supporters of the junta…They know very well what they are voting for."

The results presented in Table 2 support the finding that expression of hate speech is the second most prominent category as hate speech indicators were found in 27.5 % of the tweets examined, which amounts to 562 tweets out of the total. Even though I will address hate speech tweets more explicitly in the following section, I will also present two interesting examples here. The first one attacks both Golden Dawn members and police, indicating the presence of collaboration between those two factors: "No alibi for the GD rangers. EVERY cop deserves the same treatment as every fascist." The second example comments on the stance of the Golden Dawn representatives to refuse any relation to the murderer and harshly criticizes them: "Golden Dawn members you cowards, you lead your supporters into violence and then you reject them. You FASCIST CHICKENS!"

Moving on with the analysis, results revealed that a 12.1 percent of the tweets examined, included discussions and statements on the developments of the protests. The vast majority of them only included information about the demonstration, such as time, place and possible access to the place of protesting. For instance: "Antifascist demonstration in Amfiali (buses 824-824 from Piraeus) #KillahP http://fb.me/1SfR6i3iq". Other mobilizing tweets included information for the content and the developments of the protests in order to inform stakeholders or other protesters eg., "Good! RT iliopgi There is an attack against GD offices at Chania since 2.30. There are also conflicts with the cops. https://athens.indymedia.org/front.php3?"

4.2.2. *Stage Two: Classification based on the content of hate speech tweets*

As it is shown in Table 3 below, sarcastic remarks constituted the 40.2 percent of the hate speech tweets. A percent of 32.4 of the hate speech tweets

included unsympathetic and aggressive comments concerning the event. In contrary, cursing and hostile threats both constituted the 27.4 percent of the hate speech tweets.

**Table 3**

| Categories | Hashtags | | Keywords | | Both | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tweets | % | Tweets | % | Tweets | % |
| Cursing | 12 | 9.9% | 97 | 22.1% | 109 | 19.4% |
| Threat of Attack | 20 | 16.5% | 25 | 5.7% | 45 | 8% |
| Hostile Criticism | 49 | 40.5% | 133 | 30.2% | 182 | 32.4% |
| Sarcasm | 40 | 33.1% | 185 | 42% | 225 | 40.2% |
| Overall | 121 | 100% | 440 | 100% | 561 | 100% |

A great percent of the hate speech tweets contained hostile criticism   and hateful comments (182 out of 561 tweets, See Table 3). For instance there is this tweet that equalizes Nazis with the voters of the Golden Dawn party: "The alibi of the indignant or the granny that they helped to cross the street or the person who hoped that "they are going to beat everyone in the Parliament", ends now. You vote for them, you are a Nazi!" Most of the tweets in this category mainly equalized the voters of Golden Dawn with the murderer, implying that they were the ones that allowed this murder to happen. Some examples given: "You! who voted for Golden Dawn, that red thing in your hands is blood. You asked for it", "You who voted for GD, you should always remember that you were holding the knife when the 34 year old Pavlos Fyssas was murdered", "500.000 Greeks. Voters of Golden Dawn. Abettors in the murder of Pavlos Fyssas. Needless to say more."

Interestingly, hate speech messages of this category also included manifestations of the so-called 'theory of the two extremes' ,like the following tweet, where the user severely criticizes both SYRIZA - the front opposition leftist

party - and Golden Dawn: "There is no doubt that SYRIZA is worst that GD. SYRIZA massively poisons consciousness. Golden Dawn is beating up and murdering people." Another example is the following, where a user negatively comments on the message of another user who reproduces the theory: "You are miserable RT @GKesarios: According to SYRIZA, the government is responsible the GD phenomenon. Who is responsible for the SYRIZA phenomenon"? As it was elaborated in the Introduction, this theory constitutes a creation of the government's communication strategy, in an attempt to strengthen its electorate profits by portraying Golden Dawn and SYRIZA as extremities and equally dangerous for the democracy and stability (See Appendix D for the original and translated tweets).

Caustic comments and mocking remarks prevailed over the three other types of hate speech, as they registered highest (40.2 %) within the categories of hate speech tweets (See Table 3). Throughout the analysis of hate speech tweets, different forms of sarcasm appeared, enclosed in the messages. For instance: 'In Thessaloniki, antifascists are breaking down a Vodafone store, a Cyta store and a women's clothing store and suddenly… there is no GD', a tweet demonstrating sarcasm by deriding the practices of the antifascists. A similar example of sarcasm is the following: 'The fact that the government commanded police to investigate GD offices is like my mom having one of my friends investigating my room for weed', this time targeting on the police forces and accusing them for association with the GD party.

Another type inside the 'sarcasm' category would be the case of 'expectancy violation' as Burgers and Beukeboom (2014) have described it, for instance: 'Kasimatis: All of us who believe in a democracy should thank GD", "Petros Gaetanos: I really enjoy Golden Dawn's bullying". Among the 225 tweets of this category, the following comment was typical: "Is Golden Dawn serious enough for you Babis or more blood should be spilled?" as an answer to the journalist Babis Papadimitriou who in the past stated that a more serious Golden Dawn would be ideal for a conservative alliance. Those last cases are just a sample of the messages where Twitter users went back in time and searched for statements that came into opposition with the event or the evolution of the issue. Most of the statements

derived from public figures, such as politicians, journalists, artists etc. Those kinds of tweets circulated on Twitter the first day of the incident, bringing in the surface unfortunate and miscalculated remarks. People who spoke for GD in the past, especially politicians and governmental representatives had to deal with the woes of this new form of visibility. Their comments and statements were easily traced and reproduced by Twitter users, who accused them of being abettors in the murder (See Appendix D).

Stereotypic derogations were also part of the hate speech producers' tactics in attacking their targets through Twitter. One exemplar would be the following tweet: "The killer with the knife just happened to be a GD member. That doesn't mean that all members of GD have knifes. Others have crowbars, others have guns and others have dynamites". This user accuses Golden Dawn members of being killers and having illegal possession of dangerous weapons and guns. Other users accused them of being uneducated and wrote their messages by misspelling the words in order to mock them and degrade them e.g. "Hey you little fascists who have the God syndrome, I have some news for you and I am using your language YOU COUNT AS FLYSHIT" (incorrect spelling of the "you count as flyshit").
(See also Appendix D)

The less prominent categories were those who included cursing and threats. The analysis shows that hate speech tweets' producers chose to criticize and deride their targets instead of cursing and terrorizing them. Cursing was most common than threatening, while almost 20 percent of the tweets (109 out of 561 tweets) were allowed to use profanities and swearing in their messages (See Table 3). There are examples where hate speech producers are aiming for the Golden Dawn members: "You who voted for the GD, first of all you are an accomplice to the murder and secondly go f*** yourself", and there are also examples where there is a quarrel directly between Twitter users: "SHUT THE FUCK UP YOU FUCKING BITCH @diva Those people who shout DIE when you disagree with them, I assume they also joined these vestigial antifascist concentrations. GD and just take it!"

Finally, there were also messages that encompassed threatening comments or encouragement calls for attacks. Those tweets were found in the 8 percent of the hate speech messages (See Table 3 above), while most of them described Golden

Dawn members as fascists and Nazis. Some exemplifies would be: "The protests will not end if not all the offices of GD are burned down to earth", "From Perama to Keratsini, no fascist will be left alive", "Fascists you hollows, here come the gallows". As it is clear from the exemplars above, Twitter users spread their messages of malice and their threats towards Golden Dawn. They were also tweets that called for revenge and asked people to join in the attacks. One comment, for example, stated this: "Today at six o'clock close your laptops and PCs. Go and bash the fascists in every neighborhood."

4.2.3. Third Stage: Hate speech targets

Searching for the targets of hate speech tweets, I detected nine distinct categories of hate speech messages based on the object of comments.

As we can see on the Table 4 below, almost 27 percent of the hate speech messages aimed towards Golden Dawn. Politicians, members and voters were all on the target of hate speech producers. Some examples are: "The worst thing is that, among the GD supporters you will not only find fucking old people and fake nationalists, you will also find 18-year old kids" and "No excuse for the 'apolitique' and the ostensibly indignant GD voters. They are all Fascists and Neo-Nazi" (See Appendix D for more examples).

Surprisingly, 73 percent of the hate speech messages aimed towards different people or groups of people and not Golden Dawn which proved to be behind the murder of Pavlos Fyssas. Twitter users fired their hateful comments mostly against other political figures (20.1%) – not Golden Dawn members- and political parties (6.8%). As a whole, political factors other than GD, constituted an overall 27% - same percent as hate speech tweets targeting GD – which amounts to 151 tweets out of the total 561 (See Table 4). Some examples of tweets attacking political figures are the following: "Chrysanthe (Lazarides) [16]you are a bastard. So simple. Oh yes, you became a moron too. Because you were attacking SYRIZA the night of the murder by GD. You are finished" and "Papadimoulis[17]: The tolerance

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[16] The so-called president's man, he is an important advisor– if not the most important- for Mr. Samaras- the Prime Minister of Greece.
[17] A Greek MP for the left wing coalition.

towards GD led to the first death??? THE FIRST? What about all the others?? Oh sorry, they weren't Greeks."

Hate speech messages also attacked journalists, reporters and media outlets (10.5%), especially blaming them and accusing them of being abettors in the murder of Pavlos Fyssas and the rise of Golden Dawn. However, the amount was far fewer in comparison to the preceding categories. 59 tweets included hate speech that targeted journalists (See also Table 4), with some representative examples being the following: "@ArisPortosalte you continuetalking for propaganda even after the murder confesses his relation to GD. Are you stupid or a provocateur?" and "@skaigr (TV Channel) today is mourning. It is still the same channel that showed GD's alleged action of 'social solidarity'."

Police and the government were among the following more dominant categories of targets. There were in total 30 messages attacking the police forces, accusing them for collaboration with the members and the party of the Golden Dawn e.g., "Cops and Nazis murder together #killahp #thessaloniki #rbnews #keratsini http://instagram.com/p/eaiVa_B9XU." Moreover, a slightly larger amount of tweets contained hate speech toward the government and the state factors (6.2 %, 35 tweets out of 561, See Table 4). One interesting examples is this one, which as explained before comments on the government's strategy to impose the "theory of the extremes": "Mouroutis, Lazarides, Faelos and Kethikoglou, the initiators of the 'theory of the edges', help GD to grow and allowed the beast to act as such. #KillahP." Another example is again criticizing the government's tactics: "We help GD. We increase its voters to 20%. WE consider GD illegal. We take that 20% of the voters and we obtain the self-reliance. The ND way."

Furthermore, other users as well as the emphatic and blamable 'you' were also the target of hate speech tweets. As far as it concerns the 'You' category, 6.5 % included a statement which portrayed and blamed 'You' (See table 4).For instance, "You didn't act because you thought that GD only kills bad immigrants. You are what we call: DANGEROUSLY STUPID". This was one, example targeting an undefined subject, but possibly presenting some attributes that some people can identify with. So the word 'you' serves as a "passé- partout". A last example is for this category is:

"If you haven't managed so far to convince just one person of what GD is and what it is not, it seems you are not convinced yet. You deserve yourself."

Finally, while in the 12.8 percent of the hate speech tweets (See also Table 4) there were multiple targets on a tweet or they could not be defined. For example: "Fight a little bit more over who "gave birth" to GD… Ridiculous people….", or "I hate you Greece. I hate you! Especially these last two years with GD, not because I have no money to buy food to eat, but because you are full with morons…"

**Table 4**

| Targets | Hashtags | | Keywords | | Both | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tweets | % | Tweets | % | Tweets | % |
| Golden Dawn | 31 | 25.2% | 120 | 27.3% | 151 | 26.9% |
| Government | 2 | 1.7% | 33 | 7.5% | 35 | 6.2% |
| Political parties/ideologies | 8 | 6.7% | 30 | 6.8% | 38 | 6.8% |
| Political figures | 15 | 12.5% | 98 | 22.3% | 113 | 20.1% |
| Journalists/Reporters | 20 | 16.6% | 39 | 8.9% | 59 | 10.5% |
| Police | 10 | 8.3% | 20 | 4.6% | 30 | 5.4% |
| 'You' | 11 | 9.1% | 25 | 5.7% | 36 | 6.5% |
| Another user | 10 | 8.3% | 17 | 3.9% | 27 | 4.8% |
| Cannot be defined | 14 | 11.6% | 58 | 13.2% | 72 | 12.8% |
| Overall | 121 | 100% | 440 | 100% | 561 | 100% |

## 4.3 Attributes of hate speech producers

In this part of the analysis I will attempt to identify common characteristics between hate speech producers, as described by Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) and hate speech tweets found in my research. Given the fact that the aforementioned scholars' analysis was based on interviews with hate speech producers, I will only try to trace similar points of the different personalities within the tweets.

Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) describe soldiers and believers as authoritarian personalities in the sense that they are loyal to their political and ideological beliefs and they oppose those who share different ones.

Soldiers

A significant amount of messages seemed to be products of the soldiers or aftereffects of their motivations. Even though there was a negligible amount of messages that included military vocabulary, I distinguished incidents where tweets producer's attacked political actors and journalists or other users that they considered as 'others'. Firstly, there are examples of harshly criticizing journalists: "@tsapanidou The fact that you refer to a 'political space', without naming GD so that you avoid the association with the crime is COMPLICITY." and "@skaigr @NikosEvagelatos @Yalafouzos Indignant citizens? DIE YOU ANIMALS! FUCK YOU NAZIS, FUCK YOU TOO! #killahp" In general, the way that media presented the murder of Pavlos and the aftermath of the event, was highly and severely criticized by users. For instance, "The media refer to the murder as a tragic event but when a simple incident is taking place at a politician's office then it is terrorism!"

Moreover, there were examples were hate speech producers directly attacked politicians e.g. "You and your corrupted immunity generated all this @EVenizelos Golden Dawn should be treated as a criminal organization" , as well as other users that shared different beliefs: "@antaxania What do you mean GD fights against Germans, you stupid moron? They voted every single memorandum and they are jerking off for swastikas. Go die."

Believers

As elaborated on the previous chapters, believers defend their beliefs and they often use pseudonyms. Some tweets in this research seemed to indicate the existence of 'believers', for instance this next tweet under the pseudonym of antifaproject "They are presenting this mother fucker from Golden Dawn who says that 'Some fear the rising of the nationalists because we are Greek', Pavlos was Greek you bastard." Another example would be the following one that criticizes the beliefs of the neoliberals: "If you want to break Golden Dawn's offices you are

treated as a fascist because you bolster violence. So democrats tolerate the presence of Nazis, right? #neoliberalbullshit".

According to the study of Ervajec and Kovavic (2012), the last two categories of interviewees can be treated as "libertarian personalities who stress values that extol independence and self-determination, equality, self-assertive participation in online activities, whereas they emphasize pleasure seeking and are open to and tolerant of a plurality of different groups, ideas, and lifestyles, believing that all truth is relative." (p.914)

Players

Some of the tweets that included sarcasm and irony matched the description of players. For example, this following commentator derides the physical appearance of a politician: "Tumble Venizelos and you will crush them @EVenizelos Golden Dawn should be treated as a criminal organization". Another typical example is when hate speech producers gibe over the lurking association between the police and the Golden Dawn party, for instance: "Having police going towards the offices of GD, is like Mickey Mouse is going to Disneyland". In this research, tweets by players were easily detected, once you familiarize with the irony in their writing: "I believe more in an uprising of the normies against hipsters, than an uprising of the people against Golden Dawn and the rest".

Watchdogs

Within the data there was also a limited amount of tweets that expressed tolerance and openness, using 'we' instead of 'us' and 'them'. For instance an interesting example is: "Let's admit it that for the phenomenon of Golden Dawn we should blame our stupidity and nothing else. People, who do not take responsibilities, cannot complain of treating them as sheep" .Another example of a watchdog's messages is also: "Who is racist now? We put up with Golden Dawn by we only fight when a Greek person dies".

In this chapter, I presented the results of the analysis. In the proceeding chapters, I will first provide a conclusion, where I will summarize the findings of the

research and then I will continue to the discussion of the findings. In the last chapter, I will attempt to reflect on the findings and interpret them according to both the theory reviewed earlier and my perceptions. Lastly, I will raise the issue of this study's limitations and I will also introduce research suggestions for future studies.

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to examine the role of Twitter in facilitating hate speech messages. The research was based on tweets that were produced the day of Pavlos Fyssas' death, a leftist rapper, by a Golden Dawn member, the far-right party in Greece. The event was chosen based on the significance of the incident and the reactions that it stimulated in the Greek society.

In order to answer the main research question of how Twitter is contributing to the producing of hateful expressions, sub-questions inquired into what forms of communication were employed to communicate the death of Pavlos Fyssas (SQ1), what was the amount of hate speech messages among those tweets (SQ2) and finally, what were the attributes of hate speech producers – based on Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) study on website's hate commentators (SQ3). The methodology employed for this research was a combination of qualitative content analysis and descriptive statistics, in an attempt to present as illustrative as possible the phenomenon of hate speech within the context of the political Greek Twitter.

The findings demonstrated that messages related to the event and the subsequent developments, for the most part included news items and information links, proving once more Twitter's important role in disseminating and exchanging information. Other communication forms included comments on news items or other tweets, sharing pictures or videos and finally, less prominent were instances of conversational tweets.

The identified categories that emerged after the analysis of the tweets based on the purpose of tweeting were four. As expected from the results of the first part of the analysis, the majority of tweets shared news and information while the next most prominent category was the expression of hateful comments. In addition, some Twitter users chose the platform to express their opinions and points of view concerning the event – without using any derogatory language- . Finally, activists employed the utilities of Twitter to organize their actions and instantly share news and pictures from the protests, which took place the day the murder was announced. As far as it concerns the content of hate speech tweets, they predominantly included sarcasm and irony, often taunting the members and voters

of Golden Dawn and deriding the actions and sayings of politicians or journalists. Hate speech expressions also include hostile criticism, which was the second most marked category. Finally, a lot of tweets included derogatory language and cursing, while a smaller amount of tweets contained threats of attack. As far as it concerns the victims of hate speech, attacks towards Golden Dawn in general registered highest in the results (27%), while politicians, political parties, media/journalists and police were also among the most common targets of hate speech tweets.

All four of the hate speech producers were identified in the data – the analysis was based on the descriptions of Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) in their study on web sites' comments. Attributes of both authoritarian and libertarian personalities could relatively be identified as the producers of this study's hate speech tweets. However, the results demonstrated the dominant role of libertarian personalities among the hate speech producers, who used sarcasm and irony as a verbal weapon towards sociopolitical actors and potential abettors of the event.

There is no doubt that along with Twitter came new developments regarding political self-expression and social conflict. This thesis, suggests five main reasons that make Twitter, an appealing place for the producing and dissemination of hate speech messages. Firstly there is the unregulated, inexpensive and instant nature of Twitter that facilitates all kinds of political self-expression without constrains. Secondly, there is the role of Twitter in disseminating breaking news and other information in real time, giving hate-mongers plenty of news material that stimulate their comments of hatred. The third reason derives from the various possibilities of interactions between users, which facilitates the message expansion to a larger audience. There is also the accumulation of mobilization messages and messages made by activists and protesters, under a certain hashtag, which makes the tracing of those messages very easy for malicious commentators. Finally, this research showed that Twitter constitutes a rather ideologically heterogeneous communication space–I will further elaborate on this claim in the following Chapter-therefore it is possible for hate speech producers to come across messages of contradicting ideology and proceed to the creation of hateful comments.

## 6. Discussion

In this last chapter, I will discuss the findings of the research in the light of the theories discussed in Chapter 2 with regards to Twitter on the one hand and hate speech on the other. I will also interpret the results in order to obtain a better understanding over the presence and proliferation of hate speech discourses on a popular platform such as Twitter and the potential implications of such a phenomenon on individuals and society as a whole. Last, I will refer to the problems and limitations that I faced during the conduct of the research and finally I will present my suggestion for feature researches in the field of hate speech on Twitter.

Twitter allows political self- expression to stay unaffected by any social or physical constrains regardless of time and place (Boyd et al., 2010). In addition, it provides users with a relatively autonomous and anonymous self-expression. Therefore, it creates a digital environment where all kinds and levels of expression are allowed. Previous studies mentioned that virtual spaces facilitate the appearance of hate speech discourses. Twitter is no exception. Findings of this research demonstrated that expression of hatred appeared on 27.5 percent of the tweets during the first day of the event of Pavlos Fyssas' death. I suggest that the overall design of the platform in combination with its popularity make Twitter the ideal place for the dissemination of hate speech comments and critical remarks, within the context of political communication. I proceed in the interpretation of this research's findings to support my argument and to illustrate how Twitter facilitates discourses of hate speech.

*Forms of communication and purpose of tweeting*

Twitter incorporates many forms of communication in its platform. Data showed earlier that users choose to communicate through all different tweeting styles. Indeed, users took advantage of the opportunity to share videos and photos related to the event as an extra and alternative way of spreading news and points of view.  As elaborated earlier on the Theory Chapter, Loader and Mercea (2011) mentioned that the different forms of communication that social media provide to users, gives them the opportunity for a widely experienced political self- expression.

This opportunity of having the ability to use textual and visual content along with links to other media content is a significant advantage of social media in general and Twitter in particular when it comes to political self- expression and interaction. Consequently, Twitter allows users to fully experience political self-expression and political communication in an inexpensive, instant and fast way.

As it was shown in the Results chapter above, informing was the top priority of Twitter users, as tweets that included news reports and news items registered highest in the results. Both users and news websites' accounts used Twitter as a tool to disseminate information immediately after the incident. In addition, as more developments were adding up to the main event, users and news websites exploited Twitter's tools to spread the news and keep people updated. Twitter was described by a lot of scholars as central on breaking-news and real time updates (Small, 2011). Even though Twitter research is still in an embryonic stage, there is no doubt that it has changed the patterns of political communication as well as the way that citizens and journalists spread and receive information. Hermida (2010), referred to 'the understood reality' (p.304), where through the collaboration of citizens and journalists in the informing experience a reality, a truth about an event is being created.

Furthermore, the high percentage of informative tweets is of great significance, if we also take into consideration the fact that in this research retweets were not counted. As discussed in theory, both studies of Kwak et al. (2010) and Tinati et al. (2012) stressed the importance of the re-tweet option in disseminating news and information. Therefore, I assume that Twitter, in the case of Pavlos Fyssas' death Twitter, served as a railway for the dissemination of news as well as the proliferation of the messages' recipients, also through the ability of retweeting.

Twitter is interactive by nature. That does not necessarily mean that users will directly connect and interact with each other. The findings on this research showed that only a small amount of people started or participated in a discussion concerning the event, while tweets that were directly addressed to other users amounted to just 5.7% of the tweets. Alternatively, the vast majority of Twitter users decided to express themselves through their arguments and statements. Even though those statements might not have been directly addressed to another Twitter

user, they were referring to other people (public figures, group of people etc),- usually users mentioned the name or a pseudonym, without employing any of the interactive tools provided from Twitter, such as @-replies, @-mentions and manual retweets. However, the facts extracted from the data, do not nullify the interactive character of Twitter in this particular case. I suggest that searching for news threads through hashtags and keywords, retweeting or just scrolling down on the timeline are also considered forms of interaction.

Interestingly, most of the hashtagged tweets' purpose in the research, was to inform and comment on the ongoing protests that sparked right after the event, resulting to one more proof of the correlation between activism and Twitter. Protesters chose to interact and share their activities and mobilizing messages through twitter. Moreover, on the day of the event, a significant amount of the hashtagged messages included pictures. Those were mainly photos sent by activists who participated on the protests against fascism to communicate scenes from the demonstrations. These evidences coincides with the beliefs of Earl et al. (2013) study, that Twitter influences the dynamics between protesters and police interaction, towards a symmetry of information sharing. However, we can only identify this evidence on the hashtags' database, while only 12 out of 1428 tweets that included a keyword mentioned or discussed anything related to the protests. This striking difference between the two datasets, on the level of protest discussion, clearly demonstrates the power of the hashtag when it comes to issues of mobilization and activism during the evolution of important events.

According to Ausserhofer and Maireder (2013), activists use the services of Twitter not only to discuss but also to facilitate their activities, such as coordinating their actions and keeping other updated of new developments. However, the use of hashtags to accumulate information relative to the protests and future actions can make activist's messages easily traceable, therefore an easy target for hate-mongers.

Summing up, the analysis on the tweet's purpose revealed that, users did not use Twitter as a space for political discussion or debate but rather as a news channel and a place for negative or positive statements. Twitter served as a space where users could effortlessly and instantly express their sociopolitical concerns as well as spread important news to the public.

*Hate Speech characteristics*

As Spiegel (1999) has predicted hate speech does not only occur on blogs and web pages, but its presence also expands on social media. Twitter proved to be a web platform that hosts messages of hatred. While most of the studies focused on offensive and insulting comments and messages, less attention was given to the power of sarcasm in communicating hate or intolerance. It is clear from the analysis that hate speech producers chose to use a bitter and contemptuous language instead of an extreme and coarse vocabulary. This assertion is also validated by the fact, that the second most prominent category of hate speech was the one that included tweets with hostile criticism. The evidence suggests that message producers often chose a mildest way of expressing feelings of disapproval by mocking and doubting the practices of the target. However, there was also a high percentage of expressions that included harsh derogatory comments and statements (cursing) against supporters of different ideologies.

Greenberg (1997) in her paper about threats, harassment and hate o-line mentions that a lot of internet advocates, advice people to take threatening messages less seriously than similar messages occurring in a different medium. However, she argues that even if the threats are not substantial and even if they occur over a computer, the victims still feel frightened that such hostile behavior can consequently lead to violence (p.685) and it will probably will.

An interesting example was the case of the government's populist communication strategy –theory of the two extremes- expression through messages of Twitter users. As elaborated in the Chapters above, this theory considers both the front opposition -the left-wing party –and Golden Dawn equally dangerous for democracy and political stability.  For citizens such equalization can become confusing and destructive, which consequently can lead to serious implications for deliberation and democracy. The death of Pavlos Fyssas triggered the resurgence of this theory, which was also communicated and circulated through hate speech messages on Twitter.

*Hate Speech producers and their attributes*

Proceeding to the discussion of the hate speech producer's attributes, the findings demonstrated the dominant role of libertarian personalities among the hate speech producers, who used sarcasm and irony as a verbal weapon towards sociopolitical actors and potential abettors of the event. However, the presence of authoritarian personalities among the hate producers should not be overlooked. Ervajec and Kovavic (2012) mentioned that both authoritarian categories (soldiers and believers) have some things in common, with the two most prominent being their engagement to their beliefs and their fanaticism. There is no doubt that every example of authoritarian tweets presented in the analysis, demonstrates a strong engagement to their ideas and dedication.

Twitter serves as a platform that hosts opposing and critical opinions, which in the eyes of some people might look like challenges for altercation while for others might look distracting and overwhelming, driving them to political disengagement. As it was discussed in theory, Nemes (2002) mentioned that hate speech can be harmful not only to individuals but to society as a whole. This degradation and humiliation spreading through hate speech messages can affect victims in a psychological and a behavioral level. Hate speech can provoke frustration and anger to individuals and consequently result in them taking a reactive stance and acting dangerously and with aggression. However, in this research data explicitly show that the target is not only one group of people or a minority that is connected through a common feature.

*Hate speech targets*

What is very interesting about this research is the fact that this case represents an unusual version of the hate speech online phenomenon. It is mostly usual to come across studies where hate speech producers share discriminatory and racist beliefs, often coming from far-right organizations that attack a certain minority of people. However, this research shows that hate speech messages derive from people sharing different ideologies and backgrounds and the victims represent a wide range of societal and political characteristics.

[63]

According to the findings, attacks towards the party and members of Golden Dawn prevailed within the content of hate speech messages. However, the most common phenomenon of targeting was the expression of belligerence aimed towards journalists (10.5%) on the one hand and politicians (20.1%) on the other. Twitter gave citizens the opportunity to express their opposition and disapproval of certain actions and statements made by public figures. In addition, they had the opportunity to share and republish previous information or statements where politicians and journalists underestimated the importance of Golden Dawn's rising. People who spoke for GD in the past, especially politicians and governmental representatives had to deal with the woes of this new form of 'digital visibility'. Their comments and statements were easily traced and reproduced by Twitter users, who accused them of being abettors in the murder. Users also used Twitter in order to criticize the communication of the event by traditional media as well as the stances of politicians and governmental advocators towards the event. Twitter served as a weapon in the hands of the citizens, giving them the power to publicly judge and openly express their points of view. Moreover, the openness of the platform made it easy for everyone to come across with this kind of 'aggressive' verbal behavior and read a great amount of conflicting messages (also through the retweet option and the hashtag option).

Cammaerts (2009) in his paper supported that "debates on the Internet tend to take place between like-minded participants situated in homogenized ideological frameworks" (p.557). In a similar vein, Himelboim et al. (2013) found in their study that, Twitter users in particular are unlikely to be exposed to cross- ideological content when they belong to a cluster of users that share similar political beliefs. However, findings of this research show that Twitter allowed different voices to be expressed in the same platform. This is proven by taking into account all the hate speech tweets that derived from a wide range of different ideologies and were 'fired' towards multiple directions. This fact, in combination with the ability of republishing information and statements, the power of the retweet option[18] and the

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[18] The retweet mechanism empowers users to spread information of their choice beyond the reach of the original tweet's followers (Kwak et al. 2010)

inclusiveness of the hashtag's timeline[19], proves that it is possible for *ideologically heterogeneous* users to come across an ideologically opposite opinion or information. Moreover, Cammaerts (2009) mentioned that the openness of an ideologically heterogeneous space can lead to 'flame-wars' and intense confrontation between disagreeing user. I believe that this is one reason explaining why Twitter seems so appealing to hate speech producers.

*How Twitter facilitates hate speech*

All the above findings contribute to the illustration of the overall consideration of Twitter as a platform that not only facilitates the production of Twitter but also serves as a railway where hate speech comments travel to multiple directions. I suggest that these main five Twitter qualities: 1) unregulated, inexpensive and instant self-expression, 2) dissemination of breaking news and information, 3) various possibilities of interaction between users, 4) hosting of mobilization messages and instant information from the protesters and 5) ideologically heterogeneous communication space, constitute the reasons why Twitter provokes expression of hostility and attracts hate speech producers. Twitter is a virtual space where news, information and opinions are openly circulated, that is why it is easy for hate-mongers to find a motive to express their malice.

*Limitations and Future Research*

One of the problems that I faced during the conduct of the research was the collection of the data from Twitter. The process towards finding a tool to help me extract the data I am looking for was not easy. Scholars that previously conducted research on Twitter either used the free open source tool yourTwapperkeeper (Bruns & Burgess, 2012), which is not useful anymore since Twitter licensed its data stream to resellers or other automated data extraction commercial businesses (e.g. Gnip) and most of them are very expensive options. Twitter application programming interface (API) provides free access to up to 5000 user streams (Bruns

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[19] By using hashtags, tweets can be sent to a larger audience than one's followers (Small, 2011)

& Stieglitz, 2013), allows you to retrieve historical data (with some limitations), provides you with comprehensive data sets of the vast majority of tweets that contain a specific hashtag or keyword with relatively law limitations (Bruns & Stieglitz, 2012). Even though retrieving my data through the API tool seemed ideal, one of the limitations was that it can only capture tweets that were conducted one week earlier and after. Therefore, API was not useful for my research. Finally, as I mentioned on the Methodology chapter, I collected my data manually, through Twitter's Search Engine and its Advanced Research tool which allowed me to access past tweets that matched my criteria. However, according to Axel Bruns & Stefan Stieglitz (2013), there is no guarantee that all tweets matching the tracking criteria will be captured by this process and that "researchers need to accept a (small) margin of error in their data captures, and treat the resulting data-sets as close approximations of the total amount of hashtag and keyword activity, but not as entirely exhaustive representations" (p.93). Consequently, as I could not find available tool that is both affordable and useful, I had to accept this small possibility of error as one of my research's limitations.

Furthermore, it is important to take into consideration the fact that this research analyzed only the tweets that were produced the first day of the event. Consequently, it is justifiable to assume that those results might be different on a research that used tweets for more than a day period when the news of the event would have already been spread. I consider this fact as an important limitation of my research, but also as a great opportunity for further studies to apply this research technique to a larger amount of data covering a wider period of time. That would provide readers with a better insight on the ways that users communicate on Twitter, as well as how hate speech is facilitated on this popular platform.

This research showed that Twitter constitutes a rather ideologically heterogeneous communication space. However, it is really important to consider the fact that the small amount of users in the Greek Twittersphere is an important factor that contributes to the creation of the heterogeneous nature of the platform. Therefore, the heterogeneous nature of Twitter, as discussed in this study, might not be valid in more populous countries and in other national Twitterspheres with more active users than Greece. Further research in different countries is needed to unravel

the differences between Twitterspheres and their relationship with the hate speech phenomenon.

Finally, another limitation derives from the absence of the number of retweets. Kwak et al (2010), mention that any retweeted tweet is to reach an average of 1.000 users no matter what the number of followers is of the original tweet. That means that the possibilities of a user to come across a hateful message are multiplying every time this message is being retweeted. The broader the repetition of the hate speech message, the greater the chances for the target/victim to come across an offensive or hateful confrontation. In other words, Twitter does not only serve as a platform for hate-mongers to spread their malice, but also as a digital 'delta' where messages flow into multiple and different directions through the retweet option. Consequently, it will be very interesting for future studies to focus their attention in research on hate speech tweets that were retweeted to a larger audience, as well as examining the links between networks to find the possibilities of a user being exposed to a hate speech tweet about him/her even if those users are not mutually linked. Moreover, I would also suggest for future examination of different or multiple socio-political events, or even a research on particular influential tweet accounts, in order to detect the presence of hate speech on Twitter and provide a better understanding of the relationship between them.

To sum up, this study revealed that Twitter facilitates discourses of hatred and intolerance to some extent. Moreover, it was extensively discussed how hate speech can negatively affect individuals and society as whole in various levels. However, any attempt to restrict it contradicts the democratic principle of free speech. Especially in the digital world, the openness of the Internet makes it impossible to detect, let alone restrict any hate speech incidents. Given the role of Twitter in political communication and public opinion, it is important for future studies to focus on the phenomenon of hate speech and identify its elements, in order to isolate it without affecting the right to free speech and expression.

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# Appendices
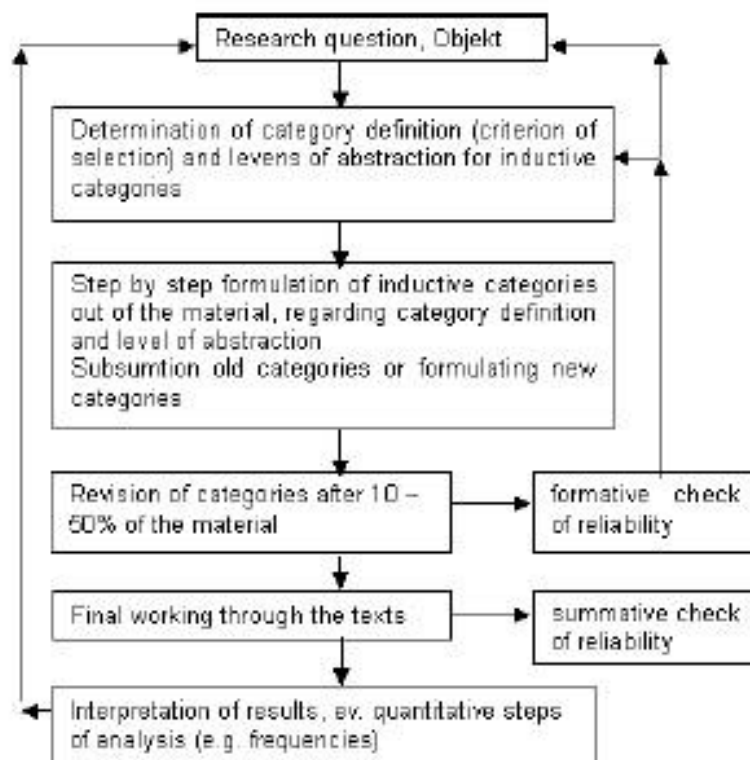
Appendix A



Fig. 1: Step model of inductive category development (MAYRING 2000) [11]

Appendix B

## **Coding Scheme**

Sub-Question 1: <u>Categories of tweets based on the form of communication</u>

1. Comment- original tweet
2. Comment on news
3. Comment on a tweet
4. Conversations
5. News
6. Photos/Pictures (with or without comments)
7. Videos (with or without comments)

Sub-Question 2:

Stage 1: <u>Categories of tweets based on their purpose</u>

1. News and information
2. Hate speech
3. Opinion
4. Activism/Mobilization

Stage 2: <u>Categories of Hate Speech (indicators and characteristics)</u>

1. Cursing
2. Threat of attack
3. Hostile Criticism
4. Irony or Sarcasm

Stage 3: <u>Categories of hate speech targets</u>

1. Against GD (the part, members and supporters)

2. Against the Government

3. Against other political parties

4. Against political figures (other than GD)

5. Against journalists/reporters/news outlets

6. Against police

7. Against 'You'

8. Against another user

9. Cannot be defined

<u>Appendix C</u>

## **Coding Manual**

| Category | Definition | Example |
|---|---|---|
| S.Q. 1 | | |
| **Comment – Original Tweet** | A tweet includes a comment, does not include any links to other information or news | You who voted for the GD, you are an accomplice to the murder and secondly go f*** yourself. |
| **Comment on News** | A tweet that includes a comment about a news story, must include a link to a news website | Is it clear for you know, silly conservative person?" |
| **Comment on tweet** | A tweet that includes a comment about another tweet, must include a retweet | FASCIST ALERT RT @dimokrateskriti Police announcement : We found nothing that links GD with the killer" |
| **Conversation** | A tweet that is a public message sent from one person to another, distinguished from normal updates by the @username prefix | SHUT THE FUCK UP YOU FUCKING BITCH @diva Those people who shout DIE when you disagree with them, I assume they also joined these vestigial antifascist concentrations. GD and just take it! |
| **News** | A tweet that contains a link to news website, not by a journalist or news organization that tweets its own content. Includes the headline or a version of it | left.gr Golden Dawn is killing because Samaras and Venizelos hate blood.#KillahP http://fb.me/6um0G4mB2 |
| **Photos/Pictures** | A tweet that contains a photo/picture link (with-without a comment) | Αλειτρούητος (⌘+☆) People will not forget, people will hung the fascists #KillahP pic.twitter.com/zo0yBM9gbH |
| **Videos** | A tweet that contains a video | Golden Dawn members slaughter before they prefer to |

| | (with-without a comment) | use blood over oil to the "gear http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUcmU6az7vs … #KillahP |
|---|---|---|
| **S.Q 2** | | |
| **Cursing** | Any tweet that includes profanities and insulting or offensive epithets and hatred words | All of you who voted for GD go wash your hands which are filled in blood you bloody ANIMALS. |
| **Threat of Attack** | Any tweet that includes expressions of intention to inflict evil, injury, or damage | Attack them on the GD's offices at Chania. Attack them everywhere! |
| **Hostile Criticism** | Any tweet that includes expression of disapproval and of noting the problems or faults of a person | You who voted for GD, you should remember that you were holding the knife when 34 years old Pavlos Fyssas was murdered |
| **Sarcasm** | Any tweet that includes words that mean the opposite of what you really want to say especially in order to insult someone, to show irritation, or to be funny. | Having police going towards the offices of GD, is like Mickey Mouse is going to Disneyland |
| **S.Q 3** | | |
| **Soldiers** <br><br> **(Authoritarian Personalities)** | Any tweet that includes a)military language b)attack to those who are indirectly or directly treated in the online news c)attack to journalists d)attack to other producers of comments whose convictions they disapprove of d) use "me"- "us" and "you"- "them" | You and your corrupted immunity generated all this @EVenizelos Golden Dawn should be treated as an criminal organization <br><br><br> They are presenting this mother fucker from Golden Dawn who says that "Some fear the rising of the nationalists because we are Greek" . Pavlos was Greek you bastard. |

| Believers | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Player(Libertarian personality)** | Any tweet that includes irony or sarcasm | The killer with the knife just happened to be a GD member. That doesn't mean that all members of GD have knifes. Others have crowbars, others have guns, others have dynamites |
| **Watchdog (Libertarian Personality)** | Any retweet that uses "we" and express openness and tolerance | Who is racist now? We put up with Golden Dawn by we only fight when a Greek person dies |

Appendix D

| Account | Translated tweet | Original Tweet in Greek |
|---|---|---|
| **Examples of tweets based on the forms of communication** | | |
| **News** | | |
| Freequency Project @FreeqProject | Conflicts outside the Nazi offices in Patra and Chania http://wp.me/p2h0fW-4S0 #Killahp | Συγκρούσεις σε Πάτρα και Χάνια έξω από τα γραφεία των ναζί της Χ.Α. http://wp.me/p2h0fW-4S0 #Killahp |
| TA NEA @ta_nea | Golden Dawn: " We have relation to the killing in Keratsini' http://bit.ly/18wIkwr | Χρυσή Αυγή: «Ουδεμία σχέση με το φονικό στο Κερατσίνι» http://bit.ly/18wIkwr |
| **Comments- Original Tweets** | | |
| silentcrossing @silentcrossing | Don't make #KillahP a trending topic on Twitter, turn it into rage in the streets. | Το #KillahP μην το κάνουμε τρεντ στο τουήτερ, να το κάνουμε οργή στους δρόμους. |
| V Lampos @lampos | Pavlos Fyssas was murdered by fascists tonight. Abettors are Venizelos, Samaras, Alafouzos, Pretenderis and the like. | Ο Παύλος Φύσσας δολοφονήθηκε από φασίστες σήμερα το βράδυ. Ηθικοί αυτουργοί ο Βενιζέλος, ο Σαμαράς, οι Αλαφούζοι κι οι Πρετεντέρηδες. |
| Tatiana @tatiana_papan | Pavlos Fyssas (Killah P) was murdered by a Golden Dawn member. By tomorrow, no Golden Dawn member should be able to walk down the streets. | Ο Παύλος Φύσσας (Killah P) δολοφονήθηκε από Χρυσαυγίτη. Από αύριο δεν πρέπει να υπάρχει ΧΑιτης που να μπορεί να κυκλοφορεί στους δρόμους. |
| **Pictures/Photos** | | |
| TheKoulWay @TheKoulWay | Revenge….you know what this means….#ACAB #ANTINAZI #ANTIFA #KillahP pic.twitter.com/zUXdTNRZFT | Εκδίκηση......ξέρεις τι σημαίνει........ #ACAB #ANTINAZI #ANTIFA #KillahP pic.twitter.com/zUXdTNRZFT |
| eisbeeeeehr ❄ □ @eisbaer_ | Fascism first comes for the others, then for all of us#18sgr #killahp @ Tsaldari http://instagram.com/p/eaQgqtIJMa/ | Ο φασισμός πρώτα έρχεται για τους άλλους, μετά για όλους μας #18sgr #killahp @ Τσαλδαρη |

| | | http://instagram.com/p/eaQg qtIJMa/ |
|---|---|---|
| Nα Funky Κότες @cikayno1 | It happens Now…!!!!#KillahP #keratsini #amfiali pic.twitter.com/uZLQWGCRT0 | Συμβαίνει Τωρα..!!!! #KillahP #keratsini #amfiali pic.twitter.com/uZLQWGCRT0 |
| Allu Fun Marx ☭ @allufunmarx | We should not forget the abettors -> Dora Bakoyianni: " Golden Dawn treats me just fine" pic.twitter.com/9iX48GWCAz | Να μη ξεχνάμε τους ηθικούς αυτουργούς-> Ντόρα Μπακογιάννη:«Εμένα η Χρυσή Αυγή μού φέρεται με το σείς και με το σάς» pic.twitter.com/9iX48GWCAz |
| **Videos** | | |
| Ο Μάγειρας® @O_Mageiras | Greek don't speak…You will get a knife in your heart too… Don't speak… http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wwk DvxYZGLg … R.I.P. #KillahP | Έλληνα σώπα μην μιλάς….. θα βρεθείς και εσύ με ένα μαχαίρι στην καρδιά…. Σώπα… http://www.youtube.com/wat ch?v=WwkDvxYZGLg … R.I.P. #KillahP |
| U @kinimatini | Watch the statements of Pavlos Fyssas' father #KillahP https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fo-HTn8XTa8#t=103 … STATE MURDER, collaboration between police and GD #antireport #acab | Δείτε τι λέει ο πατέρας του Πέτρου Φυσσα #KillahP https://www.youtube.com/wa tch?v=fo-HTn8XTa8#t=103 … ΚΡΑΤΙΚΗ ΔΟΛΟΦΟΝΙΑ , συνεργασία αστυνομίας-ΧΑ #antireport #acab |
| dromografos @dromografos | Pavlos Fyssas (Killah P) – I will not cry, I will no fear #antireport https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUV GzyrUmgA … http://fb.me/2odRtq3Or | Παύλος Φύσσας (Killah P) - Σιγά μην κλάψω, σιγά μη φοβηθώ #antireport https://www.youtube.com/wa tch?v=qUVGzyrUmgA … http://fb.me/2odRtq3Or |
| Παραπολιτική.com @Para politiki | ND had Voridis to comment on Golden Dawn and Pappas remind him his past (video) http://bit.ly/1gyagVB | Η ΝΔ έβαλε τον Βορίδη να απαντήσει στη Χρυσή Αυγή και ο Παππάς του θύμισε το παρελθόν του (video) http://bit.ly/1gyagVB |
| VoulaT @VoulaT | Yogurts are to blame for GD. They would have gone bad by 1998 you stupid neoliberal object. But back then you were | Για τη ΧΑ φταίνε τα γιαούρτια λέει.Από το 1998 θα είχαν λήξει ηλίθιε νεοφιλελέρα. |

| | living the modernization. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-__UEIWF860 … | Αλλά τότε ζούσες τον εκσυγχρονισμό. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-__UEIWF860 … |
|---|---|---|
| Andreas Kakaris @AndreasKakaris | Demonstration at the GD's offices #skg #killahP #rbnews (VIDEO) http://www.dailymotion.com/video/ | Διαμαρτυρία στα γραφεία της ΧΑ #skg #killahP #rbnews (VIDEO) http://www.dailymotion.com/video/ |
| **Conversations @** | | |
| Γιώργος Ντόπουλος @yX__ | #killap @ArisPortosalte Continue with your propaganda, we will continue with journalism | #killahP @ArisPortosalte Συνεχίζετε εσείς την προπαγάνδα, εμείς τη δημοσιογραφία |
| Stratos Safioleas @stratosathens | There is no doubt that society has the tools to crush Golden Dawn. The reason why that is not happening is for @NikosDendias to answer | Η πολιτεία σαφώς έχει τους μηχανισμούς να τσακίσει την Χρυσή Αυγή. Γιατί δεν το κάνει ας απαντήσει ο @NikosDendias |
| Darth Skola @skolarikis | @CorinaVasilopoulouDo not fall into the trap of the two extremes' theory. If GD is the one edge, we should stay on the other. | @CorinaVasilopoulou Μην ψαρώνετε με τη θεωρία των 2 άκρων. Αν το ένα άκρο είναι η ΧΑ το άλλο πρέπει να είμαστε όλοι εμείς. |
| **Comments on tweet** | | |
| *Γιάννης Εκελδεκερές @Pexlibanis* | Defending them RT @MiaThalassa: What in the hell does police do at the GD's offices? | Περιφρούρηση RT @MiaThalassa: τι σκατά κάνουν τα ματ στα γραφεία της χα? |
| *Elisa Pardalidi @Eliza_P* | Continue equalizing. You moron. RT @KostasVaxevanis GD is killing because Samaras and Venizelos don't like blood | Συνέχισε να εξισώνεις. Γελοίε. RT@KostasVaxevanis Η ΧΑ σκοτώνει,γιατί Σαμαράς και Βενιζέλος σιχαίνονται τα αίματα |
| Apostolos Kasapis@ akasapis | Did he ever write anything different than that? RT @tsougdw: What is this populist dangerous bullshit that Vaxevanis publishes? http://bit.ly/1a398rg | Έχει γράψει ποτέ του τίποτα διαφορετικό; RT @tsougdw:Τι λαϊκίστικες,επικίνδυνες αηδίες γράφει ο Βαξεβάνης; http://bit.ly/1a398rg |
| Φιδάς @Fidi_ass | DIE SLOWLY RT @antaxania: SOME PEOPLE MADE SOMEONE SAY THAT HE IS | ΨΟΦΟΣ ΑΡΓΟΣ RT "@antaxania: ΚΑΠΟΙΟΙ ΒΑΛΑΝ |

| | A GOLDEN DAWN MEMBER IN ORDER TO FIGHT GD. GD.GD IS INNOCENT | ΚΑΠΟΙΟΝ ΝΑ ΤΟ ΠΑΙΞΕΙ ΧΡΥΣΑΥΓΙΤΗΣ ΚΑΝΟΝΤΑΣ ΕΓΡΑΦΗ ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΜΠΟΡΕΣΟΥΝ ΝΑ ΤΗΝ ΠΟΛΕΜΙΣΟΥΝ..Η ΧΑ ΔΕΝ ΦΤΑΙΕΙ" |
|---|---|---|
| Καποτοσταύρος @Antidrasex | You are miserable RT @GKesarios: According to SYRIZA, the government is responsible the GD phenomenon. Who is responsible for the SYRIZA phenomenon? | Είσαι άθλιος RT @GKesarios: Κατά το ΣΥΡΙΖΑ, φταίει η κυβέρνηση για το "φαινόμενο" Χ.Α.. Για το "φαινόμενο" ΣΥΡΙΖΑ ποιος είναι υπεύθυνος;; |
| Ygritte Snow @AthenaDimiDimi | When you were inseparable you did not care right?  @AdonisGeorgiadis From today, anyone who supports GD should take the responsibility of the blood spilled | Οταν ησασταν κωλος&βρακι δεν σε χαλαγε ομως Ε? RT @AdonisGeorgiadi Από σήμερα όποιος υποστηρίζει την ΧΑ αναλαμβάνει και την ευθύνη του αίματος |

## Examples for tweets classified based on their purpose

### News

| Nikos Spyropoulos @N_Spyropoulo | The name of the murder of #KillahP, according to Vima http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=530670 …is Giorgos Roupakias | Το όνομα του δολοφόνου του #KillahP, σύμφωνα με το Βήμα http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=530670 … είναι Γιώργος Ρουπακιάς |
|---|---|---|
| zoomnews.gr @zoomnewsgr | PASOK: GD is a criminal organization who targets citizen's lives http://wp.me/pYqCg-Pk5 | ΠΑΣΟΚ: Εγκληματική οργάνωση η ΧΑ που στρέφεται κατά της ζωής των πολιτών http://wp.me/pYqCg-Pk5 |

### Opinions/Statements

| albist @albist | The growth and embolden of the Nazi gang is a symptom of a catalyzed democracy, not the cause. #KillahP | Η ενίσχυση και η αποθράσυνση της ναζιστικής συμμορίας είναι σύμπτωμα της κατάλυσης της Δημοκρατίας, όχι αίτιο. #KillahP |
|---|---|---|
| Nani @NancyKost | Do not be fooled. The elderly GD voters, were and still are well-known supporters of the junta…They know very well what they are voting for | Μην γελιέστε οι ηλικιωμένοι ψηφοφόροι της Χ.Α. ήταν και είναι γνωστοί υποστηρικτές της χούντας... ξέρουν πολύ καλά τι ψηφίζουν |

### Mobilizing tweets

| left.gr @leftgr | Antifascist demonstration in Amfiali (buses 824-824 from Piraeus) #KillahP http://fb.me/1SfR6i3iq | Αντιφασιστική διαδήλωση στην Αμφιάλη (πρόσβαση με τα λεωφορεία 824 - 826 από Πειραιά) #KillahP http://fb.me/1SfR6i3iq |
|---|---|---|
| Κλέφτρα Ποδηλάτων ✂ @Cut_I_Paste | Good! RTiliopgi There is an attack against GD offices at Chania since 2.30. There are also conflicts with the cops. https://athens.indymedia.org/front.php3? | Ωραίοι! RT@iliopgi Επίθεση στις 2.30 στα γραφεία της ΧΑ στα Χανιά από κόσμο. Υπάρχουν συγκρούσεις με τους μπάτσους https://athens.indymedia.org/front.php3? |
| **Hate speech tweets** | | |
| Ρογήρος @rogampf | If you tolerate this, then your children will be next. Google translate this, you stupid conservative. #KillahP #Lazaridis #XA_killers #skai | If you tolerate this, then your children will be next. Βάλτο στο Google translate, βλάκα νοικοκυραίε. #KillahP #Lazaridis #XA_killers #skai |
| Σκούπα @SkoupaDoo | No alibi for the GD rangers. EVERY cop deserves the same treatment as every fascist. | Κανενα άλλοθι στους μπράβους της ΧΑ. Σε ΚΑΘΕ μπάτσο αξίζει ίδια τύχη με κάθε φασίστα. |
| Δε Στρέηντζερ @The_Stranger_gr | Golden Dawn members you cowards, you lead your supporters into violence and then you reject them. You FASCIST CHICKENS! | Κότες χρυσαυγίτες, ωθείτε τους οπαδούς σας στη βία και μετά τους απαρνείστε. ΦΑΣΙΣΤΙΚΑ ΚΟΤΟΠΟΥΛΑ. |
| **Examples for hate speech tweets classified based on their characteristics** | | |
| **Criticism** | | |
| AKIS K. @Shrek_68 | *The alibi of the indignant or the granny that they helped to cross the street or the person who hoped that "they are going to beat everyone in the Parliament* | Το ποίημα του αγανακτισμένου,της γριούλας που την περνούν απέναντι,του "να τους δείρουν στη Βουλή",να τελειώνει.Ψηφιζεις ΧΑ,είσαι ναζί. |
| George Evgenidis @g_evgenidis | *You! who voted for Golden Dawn, you have blood in your hands. That is why I am tired of justifying you.* | Εσύ που ψήφισες ΧΑ έχεις αίμα στα χέρια σου. Γι' αυτό βαρέθηκα να σε δικαιολογώ- |
| Kwnos the Stormborn @Kw_nos | *You who voted for GD, you should always remember that you were holding the knife when the 34 year old Pavlos Fyssas was* | Εσύ που ψήφισες Χ.Α. να θυμάσαι πάντα ότι κρατούσες κι εσύ το μαχαίρι με το οποίο |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *murdered* | δολοφονήθηκε ο 34χρονος Παύλος Φύσσας. |
| Natalie Rasoulis @NataliaRasouli | *500.000 Greeks. Voters of Golden Dawn. Abettors in the murder of Pavlos Fyssas. Needless to say more* | 500.000 Έλληνες, ψηφοφόροι της ΧΑ, οι ηθικοί αυτουργοί της δολοφονίας του Πέτρου Φύσσα. Δεν χρειάζεται να πούμε τίποτα άλλο. |
| Dimitrov @2oocain | *There is no doubt that SYRIZA is worst that GD. SYRIZA massively poisons consciousness. Golden Dawn is beating up and murdering people* | μα εννοειται οτι ο ΣΥΡΙΖΑ ειναι χειροτερος απο τη ΧΑ. Αυτος δηλητηριαζει μαζικα συνειδησεις. Οι Χρυσαυγιτες δερνουν και δολοφονουν. |
| **Sarcasm** | | |
| Spyros Blatsios @SpyrosBlatsios | *In Thessaloniki, antifascists are breaking down a Vodafone store, a Cyta store and a women's clothing store and suddenly… there is no GD* | Στη Θεσσαλονίκη "αντιφασίστες" σπάσανε ένα κατάστημα Vodafone, ένα Cyta και ένα μαγαζί με γυναικεία ρούχα και ξάφνου κατέρρευσε η ΧΑ.. |
| Τόλης Πιστόλης @Apo_stolis | *The fact that the government commanded police to investigate GD offices is like my mom having one of my friends investigating my room for weed* | Το οτι η Αστυνομια διαταχθηκε να ψαξει τα γραφεια της Χ.Α ειναι σαν να εβαλε η μανα μου ενα φιλο μου να ψαξει το δωματιο μου για τσιγαρλικι |
| Elias J. Kay @ShaolinWuShu | Petros *Gaetanos: I really enjoy Golden Dawn's bullying #KillahP* | Πέτρος Γαϊτάνος: «Μου αρέσει ο τσαμπουκάς της Χρυσής Αυγής» #KillahP |
| Nikos Moraitis @Nikosmoraitis | *Is Golden Dawn serious enough for you Babis, is it ready for a collaboration with ND or more blood should be spilled?* | Μπάμπη, η ΧΑ σοβάρεψε. Είναι έτοιμη για συνεργασία με τη ΝΔ ή χρειάζεται κι άλλο αίμα; |
| **Stereotypic Derogations** | | |
| secret loutsa @SecretLoutsa | *The killer with the knife just happened to be a GD member. That doesn't mean that all members of GD have knifes. Others have crowbars, others have guns and others have dynamites* | Ο φονιάς με το μαχαίρι έτυχε να'ναι ΧΑ.Δε σημαίνει ότι όλοι οι ΧΑ είναι φονιάδες με μαχαίρια.Άλλοι είναι με λοστό,άλλοι με όπλο, με δυναμίτη |
| Andy @trelokatsoulino | *Hey you little fascists who have the God* | ψιτ εσείς φασιστάκια της ΧΑ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *syndrome, I have some news for you and I am using your language YOU COUNT AS FLYSHIT(misspelled)* | που έχετε το σύνδρομο του Θεού, σας έχω νέα και θα μιλήσω στη γλώσσα σας. ΜΑΙΤΡΆΤΑΙ ΌΣΟ ΤΑ ΣΚΑΤΆ ΜΗΑΣ ΜΕΊΓΑΣ. |
| **Cursing** | | |
| Αργεντούλης @KArgentis | *You who voted for the GD, first of all you are an accomplice to the murder and secondly go f\*\*\* yourself* | Εσύ που έδωσες ψήφο στην ΧΑ πρώτον είσαι συνεργός στην δολοφονία και δεύτερον άντε γαμήσου λίγο. |
| love me bender @kanekos69 | *SHUT THE FUCK UP YOU FUCKING BITCH @diva Those people who shout DIE when you disagree with them, I assume they also joined these vestigial antifascist concentrations. GD and just take it!* | ΣΚΑΣΕ ΣΑΜΑΡΙΚΗ ΓΑΜΙΟΛΑ! @e_diva Στις αντιφασιστικές μηχε.. συγκεντρώσεις πήγαν κι αυτοί που φωνάζουν Ψόφος όταν διαφωνούν μαζί σου;χα & όρσε |
| **Threats** | | |
| Antonis Aliakmonas @AntoZaf | *The protests will not end if not all the offices of GD are burned down to earth #antifa #skg #KillahP #Anonymous #AntiNaziGr* | Τα επεισόδια δεν θα σταματήσουν αν δεν καούν οι γιάφκες της Χρυσής Αυγής #antifa #skg #KillahP #Anonymous #AntiNaziGr |
| άγνωστος χ @stavrosix | *From Perama to Keratsini, no fascist will be left alive! #KillahP* | Απο το Περαμα ως το Κερατσινι Κανενας Φασιστας δε θα μεινει! #KillahP |
| Αλειτρούητος (⌘+☆) @soiramk | *Fascists you hollows, here come the gallows. #KillahP* | "Ο λαός δε ξεχνά τους φασίστες τους κρεμά" #KillahP |
| Κιμπάρης @_kimparis_ | *Today at six o'clock close your laptops and PCs. Go and bash the fascists in every neighborhood.* | Στις 6:00 κλείστε για μια ώρα τα πισι και κατεβείτε στο Κερατσίνι, τσακίστε τους φασίστες σε κάθε γειτονιά. #KillahP |
| **Examples for hate speech tweets classified based on their targets** | | |
| **Against GD** | | |
| postscriptme @postscriptme1 | #KillahP #Pavlos_Fyssas @MarxFactor Golden members call for a demonstration tomorrow at #Nikea. Do not even let the killers move. pic.twitter.com/sxSuAJlpE8 | #KillahP #Pavlos_Fyssas"@MarxFactor ΧΑυγίτες καλούν αύριο σ συγκέντρωση #Nikea.Μην αφήσουμε ν κουνηθουν οι φονιάδες pic.twitter.com/sxSuAJlpE8" |

| | | |
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| ιωάννα-ιωάννα @suicide_blonde_ | The worst thing is that, among the GD supporters you will not only find fucking old people and fake nationalists, you will also find 18-year old kids. | Και το χειρότερο όλων είναι τη χα δεν την υποστηρίζουν μόνο κωλογεροι και μεσήλικες ψευτοεθνιστικιστες. Την υποστηρίζουν και 18χρονα παιδια |
| Hijo @lysasson | No excuse for the 'apolitique' and the ostensibly indignant GD voters. They are all Fascists and Neonazis. | Καμία δικαιολογία για τους «απολιτικ» και δήθεν αγανακτισμένους ψηφοφορους της ΧΑ. Φασίστες Νεοναζί όλοι όσοι τους ψηφίζουν. |
| **Against political figures** | | |
| Yannis Fertakis @ifertakis | *Chrysanthe (Lazarides) you are a bastard. So simple. Oh yes, you became a moron too. Because you were attacking SYRIZA the night of the murder by GD. You are finished.* | Χρύσανθε είσαι κάθαρμα. Τόσο απλά. Α, ναι και έγινες ηλίθιος. Γιατί το βράδυ της δολοφονίας από τη Χ Α., εσύ βρίζεις τον ΣΥΡΙΖΑ. Τελείωσες. |
| Eddie @N0nServ1am | *Konstantopoulou (from SYRIZA) is responsible for GD. Yes, Lazarides said that, Samaras' right testicle.* | Φταίει η Κωνσταντοπούλου για τη ΧΑ. Ναι, το είπε ο Λαζαρίδης, το δεξί @@ του Σαμαρά. |
| Teti @Teti_Q | *Papadimoulis: The tolerance towards GD led to the first death???THE FIRST? What about all the others?? Oh sorry, they weren't Greeks.* | Παπαδημούλης Η ανοχή στη χρυσή αυγή έφερε τον πρώτο νεκρό;;;ΤΟΝ ΠΡΩΤΟ;Οι υπόλοιποι τι ήταν;Α σορρυ,δεν ήταν έλληνες. |
| **Against political parties/ideologies** | | |
| Σκούπα @SkoupaDoo | *You won't even fight for your own kids you stupid conservative. . "@a_barricada: #antireport #KillahP @SkoupaDoo pic.twitter.com/c9ltL6xbaL"* | Ουτε για τα παιδιά σου δεν αγωνίζεσαι νοικοκύρη. "@a_barricada: #antireport #KillahP @SkoupaDoo pic.twitter.com/c9ltL6xbaL" |
| νίκοσρυκορουlos @SpuropoulosNiko | *ND condemns! SYRIZA condemns! The Left condemns! The Independent Greeks condemn! GD condemns. Go to hell you bastards!!!* | η ΝΔ καταδικαζει! ο ΣΥΡΙΖΑ καταδικαζει! η ΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑ καταδικαζει! οι ΑΝΕΞ. ΕΛΛ. καταδικαζουν! ακομα και η ΧΑ ΔΕ ΜΑΣ ΧΕΖΕΤΕ ΡΕ ΞΕΦΤΙΛΙΣΜΕΝΟΙ!!! |
| Gerogriniaris @Gerogriniaris | *The front opposition includes antifascist thugs who destroy every probable serious* | αξιωματική αντιπολίτευση με μαχαιροβγάλτες αντιναζιστές |

| | *conversations for GD* | τινάζοντας στον αέρα κάθε σοβαρή συζήτηση για την ΧΑ |
|---|---|---|
| **Against media/journalists/reporters** | | |
| @Manolis @manolis | *There was no doubt that the @protothema (newspaper) would first try to 'clear' GD in the cover and then talk about the victim.* | προφανώς το @protothema πρώτα έτρεξε στην κεφαλίδα του άρθρου να "αθωώσει" τη ΧΑ και μετά να μιλήσει για τον δολοφονημένο |
| Niemands Rose @niemandsrose | *@ArisPortosalte you continuetalking for propaganda even after the murder confesses his relation to GD. Are you stupid or a provocateur?* | @ArisPortosalte συνεχίζεις να μιλάς για προπαγάνδα ενώ έχει ομολογήσει ο δολοφόνος τη σχέση του με τη Χ.Α. Είσαι ηλίθιος ή προβοκάτορας; |
| Ιωάννης Γ. Μοίρας @IoannisMoiras | *@skaigr (TV Channel) today is mourning. It is still the same channel that showed GD's alleged action of 'social solidarity'* | Ο @skaigr που έχει κατεβάσει σήμερα πλερέζες, είναι το ίδιο κανάλι που προέβαλε την υποτιθέμενη δράση "κοινωνικής αλλελεγγύης" της Χ.Α.; |
| **Against police** | | |
| Nena Kazantzidou @NenaKaz | *Cops and Nazis murder together #killahp #thessaloniki #rbnews #keratsini http://instagram.com/p/eaiVa_B9XU* | "Μπάτσοι και ναζί δολοφονούν μαζί" #killahp #thessaloniki #rbnews #keratsini http://instagram.com/p/eaiVa_B9XU/ |
| Beggar´s Butler @BEGGAR_SBUTLER | *I should remind you first and then I will stop, that 'democracy' was represented by the police, who was watching but not taking action when the guy was stabbed to death. #killahP* | Να θυμίσω, και τελειώνω εδώ, ότι την "δημοκρατία" εκπροσωπούσαν οι ΔΙΑΣ που παρακολουθούσαν αμέτοχοι το ξεκοίλιασμα του παλικαριού.#KillahP |
| **Against the government** | | |
| Ρογήρος @rogampf | *Mouroutis, Lazarides, Faelos and Kethikoglou, the initiators of the 'theory of the edges', help GD to grow and allowed the beast to act as such. #KillahP* | Μουρούτης, Λαζαρίδης, Φαήλος, Κεδίκογλου, οι εμπνευστές της θεωρίας των 2 άκρων, γιγάντωσαν τη Χ.Α. και όπλισαν το χέρι του κτήνους.#KillahP |
| Tazuz @Ta_zGa | *We help GD. We increase its voters to 20%. WE consider GD illegal. We take that* | Ξεπλενουμε ΧΑ. Την ανεβάζουμε στο 20%. Την |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *20% of the voters and we obtain the self-reliance. The ND way.* | κρίνουμε παράνομη. Παίρνουμε το 20% της και ειμαστε κοντα στην αυτοδυναμία. The ΝΔ way. |
| **Against 'You'** | | |
| Πριγκίπισσα Λουιζ @nancysgourou | *You didn't act because you thought that GD only kills bad immigrants. You are what we call: DANGEROUSLY STUPID* | Δεν αντιδρούσες γιατι μέχρι τώρα νόμιζες πως η Χ.Α σκοτώνει μόνο κακούς αλλοδαπούς.Είσαι αυτό που λέμε: ΕΠΙΚΙΝΔΥΝΑ ΗΛΙΘΙΟΣ. |
| Anastasia Kapsali @kapsali | *If you haven't managed so far to convince just one person of what GD is and what it is not, it seems you are not convinced yet. You deserve youself.* | αν δεν έχεις πείσει *έναν* για το τι είναι κ τι δεν είναι η ΧΑ, μάλλον δεν έχεις πείσει αρκετά ούτε τον εαυτό σου.σου αρκεί ο καθρέφτης σου. |
| **Against another user** | | |
| Αμφεταμινούλι @minouli 7 | *And kills Greek citizens. You animals. @Antonis Gregos GD reveals the Turkish agents.* | Και σκοτώνει Έλληνες συμπολίτες.Ζώα " @AntonisGregos Χρυσή Αυγή ξεσκεπάζει τούρκους πράκτορες " |
| RTF Man... OS @manZpan | *@Vampir3la to be honest I believe that an immigrant who supports GD is beyond humanly possible stupid.* | @Vampir3la κ για να είμαι ειλικρινής θεωρώ ότι ο μετανάστης που υποστηρίζει Χ.Α τερματίζει το όριο της ανθρώπινης βλακείας |
| **Cannot be defined** | | |
| Παραπολιτική.com @Para politiki | *Anyway, all you wise people, GD tricked you. It promised you that it will kill immigrants but eventually it kills everyone who disagrees.* | Πάντως σοφέ λαέ, η Χρυσή Αυγή σε ξεγέλασε. Σου υποσχέθηκε να σκοτώνει μετανάστες αλλά τελικά σκοτώνει κι Έλληνες που διαφωνούν μαζί της. |
| El Pistolero @ThanosM6 | *I hate you Greece. I hate you these last two years with GD, not because I have no money to buy food to eat, but because you are full with morons…* | Σε σιχάθηκα ρε Ελλαδα,σε σιχαθηκα τα τελευταια δυο χρονια με την ΧΑ,οχι με το οτι δεν εχω λεφτα να φαω,αλλα επειδη εισαι γεματη ηλιθιους... |
| zvoura @zvoura5 | *Fight a little bit more over who "gave* | Μαλώστε ακόμη λιγάκι να |

| | *birth" to GD... Ridiculous people....* | δούμε ποιος "γέννησε" τη ΧΑ, να δω κάτι.. Γελοίοι... |
|---|---|---|
| **Examples for hate speech tweets classified based on the producer's attributes** | | |
| **Soldiers** | | |
| nikosoulis @nikosoulis | *"@tsapanidou The fact that you refer to a 'political space', without naming GD so that you avoid the association with the crime is COMPLICITY* | ΤΟ να αποκαλεί; Πολιτικό χώρο την ΧΑ αποφεύγοντας να την ονομασεις για να μην την ταυτησεις με το έγκλημα ειναι ΣΥΝΕΝΟΧΗ @tsapanidou |
| vrithas @bromithas | *"@skaigr @NikosEvagelatos @Yalafouzos Indignant citizens? DIE YOU ANIMALS! FUCK YOU NAZIS, FUCK YOU TOO! #killahP* | "@skaigr @NikosEvagelatos @Yalafouzos Αγανακτισμένοι πολίτες; ΣΚΟΤΩΘΕΙΤΕ ΖΩΑ! ΓΑΜΩ ΤΟΥΣ ΝΑΖΙ, ΓΑΜΩ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΑΣ! killahP |
| Eddie @N0nServ1am | *The media refer to the murder as a tragic event but when a simple incident is taking place at a politician's office then it is terrorism!* | τραγικό συμβάν αν η ΧΑ δολοφονεί αντιφασίστες. Αν πέφτει καμιά στρακαστρούκα σε γραφείο πολιτικού, "τρομοκρατική ενέργεια" |
| BT47GR @BT47GR | *YOU AND YOUR CORRUPTED IMMUNITY GENERATED ALL THIS @EVenizelos Golden Dawn should be treated as a criminal organization* | ΕΣΥ ΚΑΙ Η ΔΙΕΦΘΑΡΜΕΝΗ "ΑΣΥΛΙΑ" ΣΟΥ ΤΑ ΓΕΝΝΗΣΕ ΟΛΑ ΑΥΤΑ --> @EVenizelos:Η Χρυσή Αυγή να αντιμετωπιστεί ως εγκληματική οργάνωση |
| Χύμα Κατατεθέν @kaimporei | *"@antaxania What do you mean GD fights against Germans, you stupid moron? They voted every single memorandum and they are jerking off for swastikas. Go die.* | ποιούς γερμανούς πολεμά η ΧΑ μωρή αφαλοκομμένη που έχουν ψηφίσει ΟΛΑ τα μνημόνια κ βαράνε μαλακία με τη σβάστικα,τράβα πέθανε Rt @antaxania |
| **Believers** | | |
| antifa project @dr_tasos | *They are presenting this mother fucker from Golden Dawn who says that 'Some fear the rising of the nationalists because we are Greek', Pavlos was Greek you bastard.* | Βγάζουν και τον καριόλη της ΧΑ και λέει "φοβούνται την άνοδο των εθνικιστών γιατί είμαστε Έλληνες". Ο Παύλος δεν ήταν Έλληνας ρε κάθαρμα; |
| Eddie @N0nServ1am | *If you want to break Golden Dawn's offices you are treated as a fascist because you bolster violence. So democrats tolerate the presence of Nazis, right? #neoliberalbullshit"* | θες να σπάσεις τα γραφεία της ΧΑ; Εισαι φασίστας επειδή υποστηρίζεις τη βία. Οι δημοκράτες ανέχονται την παρουσία των ναζί |

| | | #filele_pipes |
|---|---|---|
| **Players** | | |
| ser.pilios @serpilios | *Tumble Vaggelis and you will crush them @EVenizelos Golden Dawn should be treated as a criminal organization* | Κατρακύλα Βαγγέλη θα τους πλακωσεις RT "@EVenizelos: Η Χρυσή Αυγή να αντιμετωπιστεί ως εγκληματική οργάνωση http://bit.ly/16f5vud " |
| Prime Μηνυστερ @NikosSkl | *Having police going towards the offices of GD, is like Mickey Mouse is going to Disneyland* | Το να πηγαίνουν μπάτσοι στα γραφεία της ΧΑ είναι σαν να πηγαίνει ο Μίκι Μαους στη Ντισνειλαντ |
| Σώγαμπρος @Dhm_Qats | *I believe more in an uprising of the normies against hipsters, than an uprising of the people against Golden Dawn and the rest* | Πιο πολύ πιστεύω σε εξέγερση των Κλαρινογαμπρών εναντιών των Χίπστερ παρά του λαού κατά της ΧΑ και λοιπών.. |
| **Watchdogs** | | |
| Μπαϊπόλαρ Ντισόρντερ @bip__ | *Let's admit it that for the phenomenon of Golden Dawn we should blame our stupidity and nothing else. People, who do not take responsibilities, cannot complain of treating them as sheep"* | Ας παραδεχτούμε πως για ΧΑ φταίει η μλκία μας κ μόνο. Λαός που δεν αναλαμβάνει ευθύνες δε μπορει να παραπονιέται ότι του φέρονται σα πρόβατο |
| Stelios @sbyrakis | *Who is racist now? We put up with Golden Dawn by we only fight when a Greek person dies* | Είμαστε ή δεν είμαστε ρατσιστές; Ενώ ανεχόμαστε την ΧΑ, φόνος του Έλληνα μας πείραξε... http://map.crisis-scape.net/main #Grefault |

Appendix E

1. TheKoulWay @TheKoulWay

 Revenge….you know what this means….#ACAB #ANTINAZI #ANTIFA #KillahP

pic.twitter.com/zUXdTNRZFT



2. Να Funky Κότες @cikayno1

It happens Now…!!!!#KillahP #keratsini #amfiali pic.twitter.com/uZLQWGCRT0



Appendix E

3.Allu Fun Marx ☭ @allufunmarx

We should not forget the abettors -> Dora Bakoyianni: " Golden Dawn treats me just fine" pic.twitter.com/9iX48GWCAz