Collaboration potentials in micro and macro politics of audience creativity

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In our stakeholder consultation following up on trends concerning the micro and macro politics of audience action, we explore the potential impact of audiences' micro-participation and connection to macro-actions. We address this issue taking into consideration intrinsic continuities and discontinuities between academia and the stakeholders' perspectives. Our findings continue to emphasise the

- (dis)connections between micro and macro actions
- A technological appeal for action
- Collaboration potentials between academia and other stakeholders.

(Dis)connections between micro and macro actions

Contemplating definitions and (dis)connections between micro and macro actions, the stakeholders who were interviewed work on promoting audiences' media competencies, in fields where audience micro-actions could potentially link to political macro-actions. We connect this to understandings of participation as a process that occurs in minimalist and maximalist forms.[65] While minimalist democratic participation is focused on representation and delegation of power, maximalist democratic participation also balances the concerns of representation. Nico Carpentier argues that '*while macro- participation relates to participation in the entire polis, country or political imagined community, micro-participation refers to the spheres of school, family, workplace, church and community*'.[66] There are gaps but also bridges between micro and macro politics and various conceptualizations of these differences.[67 68 69 70]

Meanwhile, micro-forms of participation are often strategically understood as springboards for macro-participation. This argument is articulated by media educators and social movement organizations: The School Library Network aims to '*to educate to promote an educated public opinion*' through activities on the micro level of participation, and micro-forms of citizen participation also form the basis for the collective actions of the

social movement Que Se Lixe a Troika. Other micro-organizations articulate civic action as 'fun activism', which values short-term emotional investment. Despite clear differences with macro-institutions' views on media education, who display a different understanding of literacy as needing to be internalized by citizens, their work is also fuelled by emotional engagement.

Technological appeal for action

All interviewees pointed to a technological appeal for action. This emerges as intrinsic to many of the discourses the interviewees draw on: in the digital age, online platforms and other technologies act as seemingly innocuous tools that citizens can make use of to participate. For instance, in the case of the social movement Que Se Lixe a Troika, the interviewee stresses that '*although social networks are a good indicator of the popularity of an action, they often still need the credibility of traditional media*'. This idea is also connected to the argument of 'individualized collective action'[71][72] in a sense that both are interconnected, revealing intersections between micro and macro politics potentiated by technology. Techno-euphoric and celebratory understandings prevail strongly. However, some interviewees also point to a decrease in the quality of user participation and creativity, which could in the longer run undermine the relationship between stakeholders and audiences. Several stakeholders point out that the use of technology and even 'produsage' is not necessarily synonymous with participation.

Collaboration potentials

Collaboration potential between academia and other stakeholders is articulated as essential in the interviews with public service broadcasters, regulatory institutions and media educators such as the School Libraries Network or the media pedagogical unit of the Freiwillige Selbstkontrolle Fernsehen, though it is not always as well organized as hoped for. Fragile relationships could be due to lack of insight into one another's work practices and interests. This is different for those regulators who are closely connected to academia. For instance, the head of the Danish Media Council and also other board members, are academics. Here the intensification of academic and non-academic engagements is emphasized in order to push for policy change in terms of legislative updates that reflect current media convergence trends.

In interviews with less formalized bodies, meanwhile, collaboration with academia does not appear that relevant anymore. Instead, collaboration is partly sought with other gov-

ernmental and non-governmental stakeholders, seeking to promote political and emotional investments in media education and literacy for funding purposes. In the case of micro-organizations and communities that have a more outspoken activist profile (such as the movement of Que Se Lixe a Troika and the political blog of Jugular), interviewees identify that current media convergence trends have had an impact on their emotionally mediated engagement, however they neither explicitly work formally in terms of citizens' media literacy, nor does collaboration with academia appear relevant to them.

Our primary conclusions are as follows –

- There is a tendency to associate participation with technological mediation, while neglecting offline possibilities.
- There is a push towards academic collaboration, especially among organized stakeholders, which is critical, and renegotiates underlying promises on online micro-engagements.
- We can identify a tendency towards moving from prescriptive regulatory approaches to preventive media pedagogical work.
- Emotional engagement is a main factor for political action and should not be ignored in future work on the area.
- The quality of attention that people pay to media is ephemeral and discontinuous.
- In-depth knowledge of the processes involved in reception, interpretation and 'listening' are missing in our stakeholder's interviews.