Political construction of Nayib Bukele
on Twitter in the context of COVID-19

Construcción política de Nayib Bukele
en Twitter en el contexto del COVID-19

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the use of Twitter as a communication channel by the president of El Salvador, Nayib Bukele (@nayibbukele), an outsider, who is also considered the 'millennial' president of that nation and who strongly employs this digital platform for the dissemination of its government policies. The present analysis is landed and justified in the context of COVID-19, characterized by the taking of restrictive confinement measures at the regional and local level, with a strong struggle between the executive and the Salvadoran legislative apparatus, as well as the impact of the virus on all corners of the globe. As a temporality, the April-June quarter of 2020 is taken, for a total corpus of 766 messages. Through content analysis, the role of the political actor in a health crisis, the presence of struggles with the political class, the construction of the category of people applied to the Central American nationality, the polarization present in their agenda and others are analyzed. Elements of interest within the construction of the 'us-them' dichotomy in a digital environment. As the main finding, it is obtained that Bukele is framed within two characterizations; the first coupled with confronting political and social actors (mainly the legislative apparatus), an environment strongly marked by polarization; and the second, where he connects with citizens through charisma and the use of a close and positive language, in which polarization becomes an absent element, and integration is called for.

Keywords
COVID-19 pandemic, political agenda, populism, Twitter, Nayib Bukele, polarization.

Resumen

Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar el uso de Twitter como canal de comunicación por parte del presidente de El Salvador, Nayib Bukele (@nayibbukele), *outsider*, a su vez considerado el presidente 'millennial' de dicha nación y quien emplea fuertemente esta plataforma digital para la difusión de sus políticas de gobierno. El presente análisis se fundamenta y justifica en el contexto del COVID-19, caracterizado por la toma de medidas restrictivas de confinamiento a nivel regional y local, con una fuerte pugna entre el ejecutivo y el aparato legislativo salvadoreño, así como la afectación del virus a todos los rincones del planeta. Como temporalidad se toma el trimestre abril-junio de 2020, para un corpus total de 766 mensajes. Por medio del análisis de contenido se analiza el rol del actor político en una crisis sanitaria, la presencia de pugnas con la clase política, la construcción de la categoría de pueblo de forma aplicada a la nacionalidad centroamericana, la polarización presente en su agenda y otros elementos de interés dentro en la construcción de la dicotomía 'nosotros-ellos' en un entorno digital. El principal hallazgo es que Bukele se enmarca dentro de dos caracterizaciones; la primera aunada a confrontar actores políticos y sociales (principalmente el aparato legislativo), entorno fuertemente marcado por la polarización; y la segunda, donde conecta con la ciudadanía a través del carisma y del uso de un lenguaje cercano y positivo, en cuyos casos la polarización se torna un elemento ausente y se apela a la integración.

Palabras clave
Pandemia de COVID-19, agenda política, populismo, Twitter, Nayib Bukele, polarización.

Introduction and situational context

El Salvador in 2020 was marked by the political conflict between the powers of the State, even in the context of the pandemic. In February 2021, armed soldiers entered a session of the Legislative Assembly. According to International Amnesty (2021), this problem was an attempt to intimidate legislators into approving a loan to the country's security forces. In March, the Executive decreed mandatory confinement measures and ordered the security forces to arrest people who failed to comply with the measures. According to Human Rights Watch (2021), more than 16 000 people were arrested. These people were held in containment centers; according to Deutsche Welle (2020a), these facilities were in precarious and unhealthy conditions.

During the implementation of the containment measures, the Office of the Attorney for the Defense of Human Rights reported more than 1600 complaints of human rights violations, including more than 620 abuses related to the right to freedom of movement. In addition to political conflict with the legislature, the government disobeyed three sentences issued by the Supreme Court's Constitutional Chamber that prohibited the detention of people for breaching the confinement and quarantine rules (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Since May, classes were online and in August, the Ministry of Education announced that schools and universities would be closed until December 31. Education continued through the Internet, radio and television. Regarding social protection measures managed by the Salvadoran government to address the health emergency and its consequences, according to ECLAC (2020), monetary transfers and subsidies for basic services occurred. In relation to transfers, they were only executed once in April with a US$300 bonus.

In general, the context of El Salvador during 2020 showed a setback in relation to the respect for democratic institutions. The intervention of the security forces at the seat of parliament, as well as the arbitrary detention of people for non-compliance with quarantine measures are harmful precedents. A positive aspect in this context, however, was the reduction in the homicide rate. According to the UNDP (2021) there was a decrease of 1068 fewer victims compared to 2019, the rate was 19.5 homicides per 100 thousand inhabitants.

Under these parameters, this article aims to analyze the political construction of President Nayib Bukele, President of El Salvador, in his Twit-

ter account (@nayibbukele) in the framework of COVID-19, based on the main characteristics of populism as a political idea. Likewise, the target is also to analyze the justification of containment measures at the regional level, as well as the positioning — to some extent from the controversy — of the Salvadoran representative ulism and the thematic current situation of COVID-19.

Theoretical framework

Twitter as a channel for political and health communication

In a context of cultural transformation and globalization, the creation of a virtual world is present, where social networks (e.g. Twitter) are important as channels of effective communication between politicians and their followers. Through their use, leaders build their images more effectively and help establish collective imaginary in interactions with their audiences (Congosto *et al.*, 2011).

According to Congosto *et al*. (2011), "Twitter is a source of information that allows to segment users, discover how citizens participate in political debate and see how they are grouped by ideological affinity" (p. 12), with the possibility of mobilizing audiences with shared interests through 208 characters, together with images, multimedia material or external links. In this way, Twitter has the possibility to be personalized and to disseminate a short message on large scales and to establish influence and a call toward spaces of social mobilization around opinions shared by many internet users on a digital space that changes the limitation schemes by the geographical location of the internet users for their feedback.

To emphasize on the size of the study, a political candidate can build a solid image of himself and his ideas in this digital platform by using formal or informal language according to the characteristics of the audience, becoming an important mobilizing leader and establishing a customization of his role in politics, where the user can share the information and thus generate unimaginable scopes (Carrasco *et al*., 2018).

As mentioned by Álvarez (2018), Twitter is part of a novel (and still developing) concept of digital democracy, as a political and legal superstruc-

ture that allows leaders to bring together large groups of individuals who are part of a country in their communicative processes. The political user of this social network adds themes from the public agenda to political agendas, establishes accountability mechanisms, and convinces undecided audiences in contexts of electoral campaigns and other forms of militancy. Social networks are becoming an increasingly powerful communicative dimension, hence "today, citizenship use Facebook or Twitter to be informed, but also services such as WhatsApp, Instagram or platforms such as YouTube" (López-López & Vázquez-González, 2018, p. 1206), and politicians serve as spokespersons in such processes.

In practical scenarios, Twitter has been part of building the political image of major leaders like Marine Le Pen and Donald Trump (Álvarez, 2018. Trump's campaign played a key role because of the struggle with some media conglomerates and their bias to favor Hillary Clinton's campaign and discredit Trump's (Mila-Maldonado *et al.,* 2021).

Twitter has become part of the political identity of Nayib Bukele, who is one of the youngest person to be president of a country (37 years at the time of starting office) (Libretilla.com, 2019), thus becoming a person belonging to a digital native generation, allowing him to interact with audiences with different types of information consumption (Grassetti, 2020). This underpins the interest of studying how the current president of El Salvador uses Twitter to create his political profile in a context of global health crisis. But, above all, to look at the discursive uses employed on Twitter, and how these influence the emotion of their messages, since, in terms of Vizer (2009): "telematics (computing and distance communication) allow to operate not only on information, but also on strategic manipulation and control of physical, social and mental processes" (p. 2).

Theoretical Premises of Populism

The article addresses the theoretical current of populism with the aim of deepening on its components and characteristics during COVID-19 pandemic in El Salvador, taking as the object of analysis the political messages of Nayib Bukele. Populism is based on the fact that it often manifests itself in discursive, mobilizing constructions within contexts of social and political crises (Laclau, 2005). It turns out to be a political process that accumulates

popular equivalences manifested through emotional speeches regarding un-met needs on the part of the State, which are articulated by political subjects in a scenario of uncertainty and distrust of the great majorities.

People are the central concept for populist definition, absorbing ideo-logical impulses and discursive emotional attachments. The designation of people catalyzes collective mobilization: "The people exist as long as they are designated as such, and the non-people exist in opposition to the first" (Casullo, 2019, p. 49). For this reason it is seen as corporatism, in which the politician adheres to social sectors through statements of social change (Howard, 2004). The accumulation of popular hopes and demands makes it a shared political identity, where its adherents connect with ideological ten-dencies of political, economic and social transformation.

Exacerbating populism requires moments of political and social fractio-ning, i.e., populism has polarizing characteristics in a divided society. Such a concept is not confined to an absolutist and unitary definition, but rather it contains analytical aspects present in dichotomous conjunctures of the so-cial space: people versus corrupt elite as the general will of people (Mudde, 2015). For this reason, Laclau (2005) states that populism is composed of three dimensions: "The equivalence between unmet demands, their crystalli-zation around certain common symbols, and the emergence of a leader whose word embodies this process of popular identification" (p. 58). All these in an agonist public space, in dispute of meanings and political identities, immersed in a polarization of political adversaries through identifications of a we / them.

Regarding the latter, Mouffe (2005) argues that the construction of an 'us' always calls for exclusion of those who will be left out of the politi-cal project. In other words, the constitution of an "us" as a popular identity that brings together heterogeneous needs, translated into equivalencies, will create a "them", an adversary. For Mouffe (2005), analyzing we/them is key to categorizing whether it is a populism of the left or the right, depending on the affective components as a collective will to build the people.

In this sense, populism does not follow a narrow view that is endorsed only by a left-wing ideology; on the contrary, it also acquires mechanisms established as popular sovereignty rooted in extreme-right neo-liberal logic. This is based on the reconstitution of the political area and its constant trans-formation into the struggle of parties. For this reason, Mouffe (2005) speci-fies that right-wing populism is formed by false premises and mechanisms

of exclusion expressed in xenophobia, racism and classism, as a political project of collective and people construction.

De la Torre (2018) says that a populist actor establishes a kind of metaphor by building —from democracy as a discursive support— people as a 'we, meanwhile, for the politician "We are all (I am —with lowercase letters) his/her mirror" (p.186), as a way to connect with his/her followers. Similarly, this typology of politicians redefines the concept of citizens, transforming them "into children who need guardianship and who, if they do not obey the wise and caring father, can even be punished" (p.187).

One of the key elements of populism is the figure of the leader built on emotional and hopeful statements, which are essential for connecting with adherents: "One of the constants of populist movements is their lack of a heavily structured apparatus; the only solid nexus is the leader. There are, or almost, no intermediary levels" (Dorna, 2003, p. 122). The acceptance of populist speeches will be effective as long as the leader's figure is built from a linguistic flow, but, above all, by being mystified by gathering the vision of the past to become the hero of the future (Casullo, 2019). Charisma is an innate aspect of leaders, so it facilitates their role of authority by allowing them to show their awareness and empathy with the public. "The charismatic leader shows a contagious dynamism and offers an irresistible attraction" (Dorna, 2003, p.77).

In this sense, Nayib Bukele, as an outsider, proposes new forms of public administration. Advocating the use of social networks as a political instrument in its mandate, he supports a renewal of the political and social aspects in the light of popular sovereignty (Navas, 2020). Hence, it is interesting to analyze him on the theoretical basis of populism, since he violates the discursive forms and norms of traditional political activity, through the construction of a collective actor based on the category people, as evidenced by other famous politicians like Donald Trump (Mila-Maldonado *et al*., 2021).

Thus, this study is based on theoretical variants of populism, such as vectors that allow to analyze and interpret the construction of the political figure and the discursive uses in Bukele's mandate, because he promotes the construction of the identity of the Salvadoran people through his leadership, due to complex processes — discursive and emotional — that consolidate political projects rooted in popular sovereignty (Errejón & Mouffe, 2015).

Methodology

In this article, Twitter was considered the object of study, specifically the account of the Salvadoran president Nayib Bukele (@nayibbukele), because, it is considered as its political agenda, and it allows characterizing and analyzing the construction of his political profile on the theoretical basis of populism. So Twitter, in the present time, has been set up as a public space that manages the visibility of political life (Jungherr, 2016). Therefore, the aim is to identify the main populist qualities present in Nayib Bukele, based on the use of his Twitter account @nayibbukele, in a context coupled with the taking of measures to alleviate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this way, other elements are identified such as the construction of the variable of people in his speech, the construction of the enemy, and other aspects of interest such as the polarization observed in his messages and elements that are typical of political negativism.

The time of the study includes tuits (776 in total) published by Bukele during April-September 2020, seen as the months in which the first restriction measures were taken in the region. For this, it is important to take into account the crisis component of Laclau (2005), where the emergence of populist leaders can be identified, who seek to bring together popular equivalencies. Therefore, this situation makes it possible to observe the action and configuration of Bukele as a political subject, as well as the discursive components in the face of the health crisis in the country.

The research is quantitative, whose numerical nature allows analyzing big data in order to systematize them effectively, corresponding to phenomena of social reality and statistical results derived from criteria of accuracy (Hernández-Sampieri *et al.*, 2014). This type of research allows testing hypotheses and understanding behaviors of variables and individuals in specific contexts of interest (Del Canto & Silva, 2013). This principle presents in a way applied to understanding the role of the communication management of Nayib Bukele's Twitter account around the health crisis generated by COVID-19 and its ravages at the local and global level. It is based on the premise that the president is one of the main spokespersons for El Salvador regarding management measures to reduce the negative effects of the virus and get a solution on time. Thus, the importance of social media management as political instruments, and the importance of studying message management and dissemination in a digital age, especially on the part of a

considered 'millennial president' and close to the new generations that grow in hybrid environments between presentiality and digital (Grassetti, 2020).

To this end, the corpus (composed of tuits) is examined methodologically under the content analysis procedure, since it is "a research technique designed to formulate, on the basis of certain data, reproducible and valid inferences that can be applied to its context" (Krippendorff, 1990, p. 28). This technique, based on the statistical systematization of data, makes it possible to perform a strictly valid interpretative exercise (Igartua, 2006), based on the preparation of a coding manual (Neuendorf, 2002), which includes variables created according to theoretical categories of populism, in order to make representative and reproducible inferences in subsequent investigations and obtain a generalization of the results.

They are also incorporated into the variable codes aimed at determining whether the profile of the representative is oriented toward charisma or confrontation, as well as to identify values in the messages, their tone and the level of polarization (Islas, 2020), propitiated from his agenda. The choice of categories derives from the need to evaluate the populist characteristics of actors beyond their theoretical definitions, while incorporating qualitative precepts, taking political communication as a cross-cutting element. Then, to have a deeper analysis of the data, we correlate or cross-examine variables, so that they function as vectors that allow deeper interpretations. But, above all, to carry out a comparative study: to compare two or more states that lie on the same common element of the case of analysis (Marradi *et al*., 2007).

Presentation of results

Table 1
Construction of the political profile and polarization

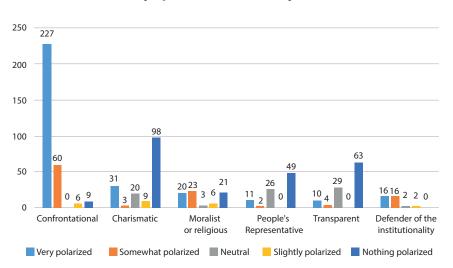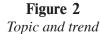| Chi-square tests			
	Value	**gl**	**Sig. asymptotic (bilateral)**
Pearson chi-square	521.679[a]	20	.000
Credibility reason	593.049	20	.000
Linear association by linear	124.771	1	.000
N of valid cases	766		

Figure 1
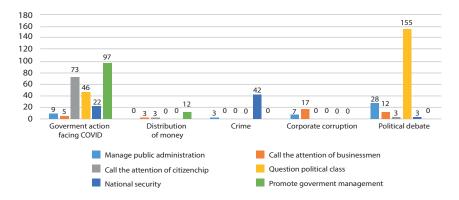*Political profile construction and polarization*

As the first crossing of variables, a significant relationship is obtained between the construction of the political profile of Bukele and polarization (Chi-square of .000), while when looking at the figure, polarization is observed in messages when they are constructed from the confrontation (227 messages with those characteristics). It indicates that Bukele presents an anti-systemic and critical character to his political adversaries, especially messages criticizing his management, reflecting a redemptive and protective discourse of the people against enemies of the old Salvadoran politics. Meanwhile, in cases where there is no polarization, his profile is usually charismatic (98 times) or transparency-oriented (in 63 of his tweets broadcast). As the figure shows, messages do not have a polarization burden when Bukele presents himself as: charismatic, representative of the people and transparent, so that his political image is built on the basis of empathy to connect with his followers.

In this way, the value of charisma is present in the Salvadoran president when giving people part of his political and discursive construction (Dorna, 2003). On the other hand, the polarization that is often boosted by populist leaders is present (Casullo, 2019) by establishing antagonistic relationships with the Legislative Assembly and other institutions that act as obstacles — openly pointed out by Bukele — in making people's will through his political management.

Table 2
Topic and trend

Chi-square tests			
	Value	**gl**	**Sig. asymptotic (bilateral)**
Pearson chi-square	1952.627[a]	90	.000
Credibility reason	1025.317	90	.000
Linear association by linear	100.187	1	.000
N of valid cases	766		

Figure 2
Topic and trend

As a second crossing with a significance of 99% (Chi-square of .000), a significant relationship is obtained between the topic and the trend of the message[1]. The most relevant data is present when Nayib Bukele confronts and questions the opposition political class of El Salvador, leading to a political struggle. In this sense, 155 messages that share both characteristics affirm the assertion that this actor's political agenda is strongly characterized — among other issues by the confrontation of other political actors opposed to their government, especially the Legislative Assembly, described by Bukele as the old and retrograde state bureaucracy that impedes the development of El Sal-

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1   Within the second analysis, some of the items that presented few frequencies to be considered significant in the analysis were omitted.

vador. In this sense, the Salvadoran president calls the collective memory by associating negative meanings of the country's political past with the aim of delegitimizing his political adversaries, classified as the traditional political class, which seeks only its private and party interests in relation to those of the people. This is evidence of the often confrontational attitude of populist leaders (Mudde, 2015). It is also representative that the government's action against COVID-19 was aimed at politically promoting government management, as well as making a call for citizens to be aware of the pandemic.

Table 3

Characterization of people and exaltation of values

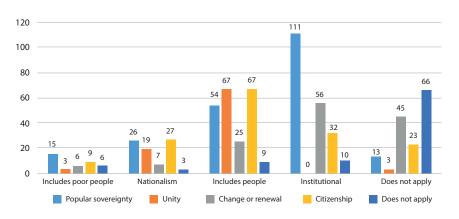| chi-squared test			
	Value	**gl**	**Sig. asymptotic (bilateral)**
Pearson chi-square	410.761[a]	35	.000
Credibility reason	410.776	35	.000
Linear association by linear	161.769	1	.000
N of valid cases	766		

Figure 3

People characterization and value exaltation

This is an equally significant relationship (.000 Chi-square, which results in 99% of significance) between the characterization of the people

and the exaltation of values by Nayib Bukele, where relevant aspects are identified in Salvadorans. While at the previous crossings the charismatic and confrontational qualities with other political actors were highlighted, a strong relationship between the value of 'popular sovereignty' and the institutionalism he uses to address the people are observed in 111 messages in this crossing. Likewise, a speech is made about the inclusive people who work from sovereignty (54 messages) and from unity (67) as values. This reflects the discursive political strategy in Bukele, since it evokes symbols and meanings of popular sovereignty around the political appropriation of the people. It endorses political responsibility as virtue and participation of the people in his institutional mandate. Similarly, Bukele relies heavily on patriotic values such as civility and unity, i.e., for him there is nothing but the country. It allows affirming that Nayib Bukele maintains closeness, articulation and respect towards the people (Arenas, 2010).

Regarding the polarization variable, there is a significant relationship with the actor referred to in the message (99% significance expressed in .000 Chi-square). For example, much of Bukele's messages (87 highly polarized and 40 somewhat polarized) revolved around the Legislative Assembly, which has been identified as the main figure of check and balances for the Salvadoran president. There is a lot of polarization in the message when such an actor is present. Now, if this data of interest is intertwined with the previous crosses, the confrontational character of the relationship between the two parties could be reaffirmed. The President often accuses the legislative body of impeding his functions, preventing the approval of resources needed for action to curb the pandemic, and categorizes them —although perhaps not using such terminology— as enemies of the people.

Table 4
Actor and polarization

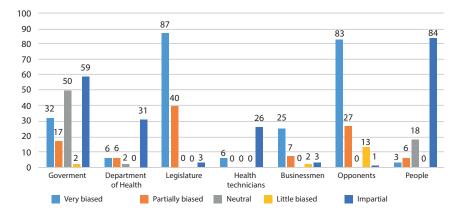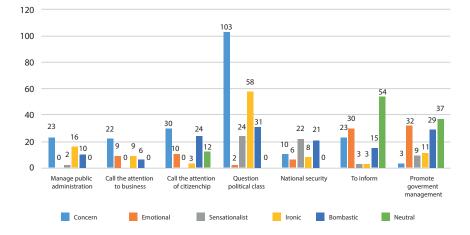| Chi-square test			
	Value	**gl**	**Sig. asymptotic (bilateral)**
Pearson chi-square	610.116[a]	52	.000
Credibility reason	670.827	52	.000
Linear association by linear	.052	1	.819
N of valid cases	766		

Figure 4

Actor and polarization

Thus, the people stand out as a second actor, with 84 references by the Central American leader, from an integrative quality. Bukele has two main customizations in relation to the 'other' he relates to: on the one hand, he is charismatic and integrates the people as part of his political work; and, on the other hand, he is the politician who confronts the political class that opposes – either in a discursive way or through legislation – his presidential functions. President Bukele adapts the use of his Twitter account to the target audience in his messages.

It reaffirms the existence of a profile construction of Nayib Bukele that incorporates typical characteristics of populism, seen as an expression of democracy that emerges "when citizens feel that politicians have appropriated the popular will and have taken power from the Sovereign" (Arenas, 2010, p.171). In this sense, Bukele is seen as an official who owes to the people and was elected to change the way politics is done in El Salvador, to cleanse institutions (so that they regain the people's trust), and to change obsolete— listed by such as corrupt— schemes of the Salvadoran political past.

Table 5

Trend and tone

Chi-square tests			
	Value	**gl**	**Sig. asymptotic (bilateral)**
Pearson chi-square	523.064[a]	54	.000
Credibility reason	577.106	54	.000
Linear association by linear	70.989	1	.000
N of valid cases	766		

Figure 5

Trend and tone

As a last crossing, an equally significant relationship is obtained between the trend and the tone of the message[2]. It is possible (with 99 % of significance observed in a Chi-square of 000) to emphasize that when the president questions the political class he usually does so in a tone of dismay. This relation has occurred 103 times, and Bukele often places the Legisla-

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2   Some of the items that presented few frequencies to be considered significant were also omitted in this analysis

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tive Assembly in a negative position by mentioning that it limits his efforts to safeguard the integrity of the people during the health crisis. There are issues of non-approval of resources and excessive bureaucracy when the president seeks to establish a decree or measure that requires approval of this power. Similarly, the questioning of the political class can arise from irony (58 tweets interweave this relationship). As a third element of interest, the 'information' and 'promotion' trends are often related to a tone of neutrality in 54 and 37 messages, respectively.

Discussion and conclusions

Among the main findings of the research, it is possible to emphasize that Nayib Bukele tends to adapt to the political and social actors who are part of his messages. First, he stands out as a populist politician who articulates and shapes a view of the Salvadoran people often 'mistreated and neglected' by the political class, while incorporating confrontation elements that can characterize populist actors from the identification of adversaries and a strongly polarized discourse composed of patriotic principles and values, thus building a "we" as a country and confronting a "they": bureaucracy and traditional political parties.

However, messages were also identified which stand out a more institutional and neural position of the president, especially when the tweets were aimed at spreading schedules of national chains, informing specific pandemic management measures or retweeting non-polarized messages from other actors or institutions. It should be noted that the construction of his political agenda, in terms of decisions to fight the pandemic, promotes the management of his government, especially with the aim of strengthening the institutional and governmental image, as well as disciplining the behavior of the population during the pandemic.

The relevance of institutions is one of Bukele's main resources for the construction of meanings around public management. In other words, through his messages he seeks to resignify the practices of public institutions in his government, by recalling a past of inefficiency and political proselytism of traditional parties of El Salvador.

However, it should be pointed out that during this analysis, his speech does not categorize him as radical right-wing populist (Casullo, 2019), he

does not exclude foreigners and he is not elitist. He is also not categorized as left-wing populist (Salomon, 2013), since he does not articulate a fully revolutionary discourse so attached to the lower classes or in opposition to the business sector, but he uses a people's unifying discourse on public policy and promotion of a state model. He emphasizes the importance of the productive apparatus and the service sector for post-pandemic economic recovery, noting that it must respect COVID-19 measures and care about the lives of citizens, by elaborating emotional messages with some charisma and empathy, in order to show closeness in relation to the fears and concerns of the citizens in times of pandemic.

Thus, Twitter has been consolidated as a powerful dissemination tool for President Bukele, having a closer role to a digital native audience and not focusing his speech from a political party or mainstream media. Rather from personalization and closeness to the citizens as a perfect outsider (Casullo, 2019), incorporating charisma as one of his main qualities to connect with the people (Deusdad, 2003).

The president emphasizes the importance of citizens' lives by applying restrictive quarantine measures. In addition, the expansion of intensive care units stands out in the framework of his political agenda, serving this information as a generating tool of awareness for the Salvadoran people as to comply with the restrictions to discipline the population.

The context of COVID-19 in El Salvador proved to be an essential moment in characterizing the populist variants deployed in Bukele´s administration, since social fears emerged in the population, and the president used this fear as a political ideology. First, Bukele resorts to moral discipline of capital, i.e., he calls the popular will by focusing on the redistribution of wealth (Errejón & Mouffe, 2015); the most basic needs (food and basic services) of the people predominate in his agenda. Second, he is seen as a disruptor of the status quo, where the main adversaries are the traditional politicians, who, according to him, are the responsible for the containment of the country's development; moreover, another of his main enemies is crime, but through a security discourse, he enacts a cleansing in the name of the popular mandate (Deutsche Welle, 2020b).

In the construction of his political figure, Nayib Bukele presents populist variants such as charisma, a confrontational characteristic, and the defense of popular sovereignty, the latter in terms of a statist political project, observed in the government's promotion of the measures taken by his go-

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vernment in the context of COVID-19. It can be concluded that Bukele uses certain populist political discourse, but he is a populist that is not framed into the left party –he is not a revolutionary— or the right —he does not call to nationalism or racism— but he does adopt and resort to certain features of it, in order to confront the traditional political class, particularly against the Legislative Assembly; thus, seeking to consolidate a statist and innovative model in the face of an obsolete Salvadoran political party.

Finally, the main constraint during the research was the recent and evolving nature of the pandemic, which prevents the existence of mature and sustained references over time, as well as the lack of post-pandemic measures. From this perspective, this type of research leads to the deepening of studies in the area to be part of the subsequent references to know the political-communicative implications of the transmission of information in these contexts of health crises; they demonstrate weaknesses in the communication setting of governments and represent challenges for population integration. The possibility of extending these studies to the qualitative field and even the mixture of the different methods allow the transversal incorporation of other disciplines of exact sciences, starting from the health nature of the phenomenon. This will allow the establishment of the foundations for the management of similar future events.

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