



Twitter vs. Facebook: youth identities and (online) social networks

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Abstract:	<p>This interdisciplinary article aims to analyze the role of Twitter and its use by young people. It focus on one particular event: a so-called meet at Vasco da Gama Lisbon's shopping center, in August 2014, which had an impressive media coverage. We analyzed the content of 1976 tweets on the topic, automatically filtered by a method called Fuzzy Fingerprints using hashtags and relevant keywords .</p> <p>This empirical analysis shows Twitter as a platform for mobilization and commentary, enabler of online/offline interactions and used by young people as a source of social distinction. We will particularly focus on the rivalry between Twitter and Facebook that is reinforced during this event.</p>

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3 **1. Twitter and the “meet” of Vasco da Gama**
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6 On 20 August 2014, a massive gathering of young people in Lisbon achieves remarkable
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8 repercussions on the media and public opinion. It was a “meet”, a meeting convened through
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10 online social networks, and it became notorious due to the alleged civic disorder caused in a
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12 shopping center close to the meeting point. The police intervened and detained some young
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14 people and barred entry to the shopping center to the others. In the days after the event, the
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16 media enthusiastically followed the phenomenon of “meets”, discussing its potential violence.
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18 At the same time, other critical views contested the presence of racism and social
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20 discrimination in the police action. Suddenly “meets” become a focus of public, media and
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22 political attention. Part of this discussion took place on online social networks as Facebook or
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24 Twitter. A circular path between the 'real', urban space and the 'virtual' space of online social
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26 networks was met.
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30 The “meet” called on online social networks aimed to join face-to-face several young people
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32 who had only met online. The successive events of the 20 August at the shopping center in
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34 Lisbon were then discussed and commented, in real time, on the same virtual networks where
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36 the plans for gathering had emerged. This article aims at discussing this issue from the
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38 perspective of online social networks and particularly Twitter, following an on-going
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40 interdisciplinary research project. The purpose of this project was, on the one hand, the
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42 development and implementation of an intelligent platform that would allow the collection
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44 and storage of a high percentage of the tweets produced in the Portuguese geographic space
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46 and, on the other hand, the content analysis of these tweets from a sociological perspective.
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50 Tweets arise here as a mirror of social reality and, at the same time, as part of that reality. The
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52 sociological potential of the analysis of tweets is huge. It allows us to understand, in a
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54 particularly interesting way, a succession of events, from its preparation to its repercussions,
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56 gathering factual data on the practices and representations of the actors involved.
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We will start the analysis by discussing the role of Twitter in today's society and as a focal point for a sociological analysis, paying particular attention to the role of young people as users of this platform. The literature review is completed by a discussion of the "meets" as a new – but not necessarily innovative – phenomenon. After a brief methodological discussion, necessary to understand the work that has been done and its potential strengths and limitations, the data analysis takes place. On the one hand, the timeline of tweets related to the "meet" will be presented. On the other hand, we will analyze the content of the tweets around some of the key dimensions considered, in order to illustrate how people use Twitter and what are the perceptions and representations build around the "meet". For the purpose of this article we will particularly focus on the opposition between Facebook and Twitter, and how the "meets" became particularly exemplificative of this rivalry.

1. Uses of Twitter

"In this system, as information producers, people post tweets for a variety of purposes, including daily chatter, conversations, sharing information/URL's and reporting news, defining a continuous real-time status stream about every argument"

(Cataldi, Di Caro & Schifanella, 2010: 1)

The popular online microblogging platform Twitter, launched in 2006, allows users to send and read short messages of no more than 140 characters, known as tweets. The platform had a quick growth since its launch and, at the beginning of 2015, it had 284 million new users monthly and 200 million new tweets per day, according to data released by Twitter. In

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Portugal, according to an OberCom study, only 9% of Internet users had created a profile on Twitter in 2013.

Although often being categorized as a social network, Twitter do not have the characteristics of a social network, mainly for the low reciprocity between "followers". (Rogers, 2013: 15). There are, however, three possible interpersonal interaction between users: to "follow" other users, in other to see their tweets in the personal timeline; share tweets posted by other users (also known as retweet); and respond to or comment on tweets of other users (also known as "mentioning"). (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto & Gummadi, 2010: 12).

The uses of the platform changed over the years, as well as the perception of its social relevance and the focus of the studies undertaken on Twitter uses. These changes are due to a complex process influenced by several factors. Among them are technical and content adjustments that were made by Twitter creators (eg. lists, changing of status question), and the "domestication" (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley, 1999) of the technology that was made by users on their everyday usage (eg. replies, retweets, hashtags and shortened url's).

For Rogers (2013) the studies on Twitter can be systematized in three periods: a first phase where it is seen as a machine of "ambient intimacy," a second approach which sees the platform as a news source and a third phase, that would be now emerging in which Twitter is seen as an anticipatory machine.

According to this analysis, during the first phase of Twitter, the studies were based on the content of tweets and focused on its banality. "As became the norm in Twitter research, they conceived of a series of tweet types, beginning with the senseless" (Rogers, 2013: 12).The types of tweets focused on the following categories: "I'm eating a sandwich" type; "Conversional"; "Pass-along value"; "Self-promotional"; "Spam" (Rogers, 2013: 13).

Also during this period, the relevance of Twitter came to be analyzed in addition to the interest or lack of interest of the contents. For Miller (2008: 388), communication via Twitter (and

other digital media) is not dialogic or informational. Along this lines, Miller (2008) stresses the significance of Twitter as enhancer of the "pathic culture" where "the maintenance of a network itself has become the primary focus." (Miller, 2008, p. 398). Thus, the most relevant is not the content, "content is not king, but 'keeping in touch' is" (Miller, 2008: 395). In the same vein, the concepts of "digital intimacy" and "connected presence" show Twitter as a tool to stay digitally connected with pre-existing friends and maintain a constant digital presence and availability. According to Rogers, these idea is amongst the original purpose for the platform: "Twitter in that sense was conceived to and used also as an ambient, friend-following tool" (Rogers, 2013: 11). "Such users imagined their audience as people they already knew, conceptualizing Twitter as a social space where they could communicate with pre-existing friends. This follows the argument that Twitter's strength is in its encouragement of "digital intimacy" (Thompson, 2008). Many tweets are phatic in nature (Miller, 2008) and serve a social function, reinforcing connections and maintaining social bonds (Crawford, 2009)" (Marwick & boyd, 2011: 5).

In December 2009, Twitter changes the question posed to the users, which until then had been "What are you doing?" To "What's happening?", showing the intention of Twitter to establish itself as a kind of news source, a platform to find out what is happening at the moment. This mark the second period of Twitter, it is then seen mainly as a news source to follow events.

"Dorsey [co-founder of Twitter], whose vision for Twitter usage always appeared to be more in the area of ambient intimacy, did aver that the service did "well at: natural disasters, man-made disasters, events, conferences, presidential elections" or what he calls "massive shared experiences" (Sarno, 2009 apud Rogers, 2013: 16).

At this stage, studies on Twitter focused where Twitter went well: Events, disasters and elections, giving new focus to the research on types of tweets and its goals.

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The success of Twitter in these events leads, on the one hand, to an enthusiasm with the new possibility of citizen-reporter and, on the other hand, raises several questions about the quality of amateur follow-up of the news that can be done through Twitter. Particularly in view of the concomitant weakening of professional journalism, consequence of low resources that result of a failure of the traditional media business model, triggered by the new Internet paradigm. In this regard, Andrew Keen (2007) argues that Internet encourages the "cult of the amateur" and it is responsible for the decline of quality in journalism (Keen extends the arguments to other various sectors of society).

"Twitter increasingly has come to be studied as an emergency communication channel in times of disasters and other major events, as well as an event-following and aid machine for revolution and uprising in the Middle East and beyond" (Rogers, 2013: 21).

In fact, the role of Twitter in the revolutions that became known as "Arab Spring" has been widely studied and its greater or lesser relevance on the revolution extensively discussed. "It was Sullivan [American political blogger] who famously proclaimed "The Revolution Will Be Twittered" and called Twitter "the critical tool for organizing the resistance in Iran." (Morozov, 2009: 10). Other voices, such as from Morozov, believe the role of Twitter in these revolutions is not so significant, noting that "Twitter revolution is only possible in a regime where the state apparatus is completely ignorant of the Internet and has no virtual presence of its own." (2009: 12).

Today, Twitter is subject of several types of analysis, anchored in a range of components of its characteristics: Analysis of relevant tweets use retweets (rt); for categorizing important issues the hashtags (#) are analyzed; for network analysis replies are used and also the relationship between the followers and the users a profile is following; for references analysis, shortened url's are used (Rogers, 2013: 21).

Among the innovations created by users listed above, we underline the hashtags which are probably the most recent and the use of which is less linear. The hastags are key words preceded by the symbol '#'. They are generally used in order to mark a tweet as especially relevant to a particular topic, making it possible to communicate with a "community of interests" (Bruns & Burgess, 2014: 1) without the follower- followed ration. "In fact, it is even possible to follow the stream of messages containing a given hashtag without becoming a registered Twitter user." (Bruns & Burgess, 2014: 1).

Hashtags are created by anyone, as necessary and without any kind of supervision, these characteristics means that different hashtags arise for the same topic in different regions of Twitter environment "or that the same hashtag may be used for vastly different events taking place simultaneously" (Bruns & Burgess, 2014: 3). Hashtags are also often used to gain broader visibility to a tweet, in such cases, several hashtags are placed in a tweet which may not be fully associated with the topic referred to in the hashtag. Another common case is the use of hashtags to express sarcasm, emotions or express a comment aside the tweet (Halavais, 2014: 37; Bruns & Burgess, 2014: 5). This function, completely different from its original purpose, set up a new appropriation of this tool. "[Hashtags] are used to convey extratextual meaning, in a Twitter-specific style" (Bruns & Burgess, 2014: 5). Rogers (2013) describes a third stage of Twitter, which highlights two new uses and functions for the platform: Twitter analyzed as a set of data, which in the United States, the Library of Congress will archive; and as an anticipatory machine. Therefore, Twitter is currently seen as a fruitful source of data for different range of social issues, founded on different methodologies, remaining itself subject of studies.

1.1 Teenagers and young people on Twitter

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In Portugal, 94.1% of people between 15 and 24 use the Internet, while in the age group 25-24, there are 85.8% of users (Obercom, 2014). In 2010, 50% of Portuguese who said they used Twitter had between 15 and 24 years (Taborda, Cardoso & Spain, 2010). A Pew Research Center study, from 2012, found that while the use of Twitter by the majority of the population has not changed significantly compared to previous years, young people between 18 and 24 are an exception to the trend: “nearly one third of internet users in this age group now use Twitter, up from 18% in May of 2011 and 16% in late 2010”. Another Pew Research Center (PRC) study, published in 2013, says that, as a rule, the profiles of teenagers on Twitter are public “64% of teens with Twitter accounts say that there are public”. In view of the data from a 2013 study, the PRC concluded that, while Facebook is an online social network used by different demographic groups, other social networks and platforms, such as Twitter, tend to be particularly used by certain demographic groups: “Twitter and Instagram have particular appeal to younger adults, urban dwellers, and non-whites”. The PRC most recent study (2015) highlights the popularity of online social networks among American teenagers, showing that more than 71% of teenagers use more than one social network. Twitter is the fourth online social networked used by these teenagers, after Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.

Online social networks and platforms such Twitter are now part of the everyday life of many people. Particularly of the everyday lives of teenagers and young people who are the age group in which there are more Internet and social network users. Internet use by young people, and social networks in particular, always raised major concerns and fears, for on hand, and high expectations, on the other hand and, probably for these reason, it was subject of numerous studies. “Media culture exaggerates this dynamic [of concerns about the teenagers and young people], magnifying anxieties and reinforcing fears.” (Boyd, 2014: 16).

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3 Social networks are, today, at the heart of contemporary culture and their use by young
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5 people is seen as normative (Boyd, 2014: 7). The influence of the media on the processes of
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7 identity construction have long been recognized: "the media often serve as the very currency
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9 through which identities are constructed, social relations negotiated and peer culture
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11 generated" (Ziehe, 1994, cited by Livingstone & Bovill, 1999: 10).
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14 According to Boyd (2014: 8) the big change brought by online social media is that these
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16 processes of identity construction, the desire for autonomy and social belonging are now
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18 expressed in a space that the author named as "networked publics": "Networked publics are
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20 publics that are restructured by networked technologies. As such, they are simultaneously (1)
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22 the space constructed through networked technologies and (2) the imagined community that
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24 emerges as a result of the intersection of people, technology, and practice." (Boyd, 2014).
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28 Young people use these to "socialize, gossip, share information, and hang out" (Boyd, 2014:
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30 6). The question that often arises is why teenagers and young people chose these technological
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32 platforms being together, instead of face-to-face meetings.
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36 Boyd (2014: 21) explains that teenagers argue that they would prefer to meet in person, but
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38 their loaded schedules, their lack of independent mobility and the fears of their parents
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40 regarding face-to-face interactions, make these meetings impossible. "Facebook, Twitter, and
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42 MySpace are not only new public spaces: they are in many cases the only "public" spaces in
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44 which teens can easily congregate with large groups of their peers." (Boyd, 2014: 21).
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47 48 49 **2. Meets: innovation or reinvention?**

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51 The word "meet" (written in English) in an *emic* term, introduced in the Portuguese to describe
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53 a massive gathering of young people, summoned by social networks. Following the 'Vasco da
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55 Gama' meet, the term, commonly used only by youngsters, received a strong focus from the
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media. The intentions behind these kind of events and its potential to violence and juvenile delinquency has been particularly discussed.

Although the meets have emerged in the public sphere as a new phenomenon, meets share structural features with other social manifestations, whose analysis becomes important to contextualize and reflect on these new social encounters. One of them, more recent, is the phenomenon of "rolezinhos" that took place in Brazil in late 2013, with its epicenter in São Paulo, where a large number of youths from the periphery moved to short trips ("rolezinhos") in shopping centers. These collective trips were received with feelings of insecurity and resulted in police intervention.

Another phenomenon, the oldest, is the flash mob. Whether *rolezinhos*, whether the flash mobs are characterized by the concentration of a large number of people in a public place, called through communication technologies. The flash mobs have been the target of several studies with important contributions to the reflection on the phenomenon of meets. A flash mob is a form of collective action which has been organized mainly through social networks and mobile devices and is defined by the meeting of a group of people that come up in a public place, perform a brief pre-determined public performance and then disperse quickly. (Seo, Houston, Knight, Kennedy & Inglish, 2013: 8). The flash mobs can take various settings and take several forms, since they have no objective besides being entertaining and original, to serve purposes of interaction with the public space, artistic, political or advertising. (Molnar, 2009, quoted by Seo et al, 2013: 8).

The potential for violence was also discussed in relation to flash mobs in the sequence of events of this nature involving episodes of violence. The study by Seo et al (2013: 15) concludes that these episodes of violence do not define the view that adolescents have the flash mobs: Despite the recent episodes of violence in youth gatherings that were sometimes labeled as flash mobs by the media, their study found out that most generally Flash mobs were perceived, by youngsters, as fun and entertaining and as a way to self-expression. Brejzek

(2010: 118) concludes that "intrinsically, the mob has no other message than its sheer physicality and unexpected.

Flash mobs as well as 'meets' are initiatives involving interactions between the virtual and real world. To Brejzek the flash mobs are a way to make the physical "viral culture" Wasik (2009, cited by Brejzek, 201: 117): "the flash mob is seen to operate the physical articulation of the social network. It transgresses the virtual community by moving into the real " (Brejzek, 2010: 117). Its features share a "grammar" of virtual communities, both in its dynamic structure, both in the ability to suddenly appear and then disappear. (ibid: 118). This makes it possible to analyze such phenomena as part of a virtual / real cycle, with an online call for the meeting - which can be done by Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Youtube - which is followed by the meeting in the urban space with consequences that will later be extensively discussed in the same virtual space where the event was planned and summoned.

3. Methodological note

The analysis of events on Twitter is dependent on the ability to collect, filter and select relevant data. It is estimated that currently 500 million tweets are produced per day. Twitter provides, through various API's, the possibility of random and free collection of up to 1% of tweets. Any search or filter in the universe of tweets, either by geographic area or by #hashtag, is always made within these 1% of the total produced tweets. In this project, we tried to work around these limitations, by developing a platform for the collection and storage of a high percentage of tweets produced in the Portuguese geographic space (it is estimated around 80%) (Brogueira, Carvalho & Batista, 2015; Brogueira , Batista, & Moniz Carvalho, 2014; Brogueira, Batista & Carvalho, 2015).

Assuming it is possible to have access to all the produced tweets, numerous difficulties arise regarding its analysis due to the high volume of information to be processed. So, another of the other objectives of the MISNIS project was the development of tools to deal with all this information, extracting quasi-automatically tweets that are relevant to a particular topic and providing a series of tools that aim to assist their subsequent sociological analysis. In this particular case, after the meet of 20 August, it was found that 18732 673 682 tweets have been extracted by MISNIS platform through the Twitter API (focusing only on users who posted tweets in Portugal between 2014-08- 14 (00:00:00) and 08/24/2014 (23:59:59). For this set of 18732 users, the platform had available at the time the timeline of 6345 users. Through the timeline we obtained additional 593,918 tweets for the period under study. Among the 1.2 million tweets available, only a small percentage have content of interest to the study. Given the difficulty and cost of manually search for relevant tweets within this universe, we created an automatic filtering using a mechanism called Fuzzy Fingerprints, a text-based classification system that identifies topics within large collections of tweets with high precision and low computational cost (Rosa, Batista and Carvalho, 2014; Rosa, Carvalho and Batista, 2014).

It was found that in the universe of 1.2 million tweets, only 38 contained #hashtags indicative of being related to the meet Vasco da Gama: #MEET, # meet2014, #meetvdgcarapodreenoizz, #meetvasco and #meetfacebook.

The "Fuzzy Fingerprint" of the meet was built from these 38 tweets, and additionally, from 4 newspaper articles published on August 21 detailing the event in question. The obtained fingerprint consists of the following key words, sorted in order of importance: 'young', 'meet', 'racism', Vasco, 'range', 'black', 'police', 'meeting' 'commercial', 'Winnydahpooh', 'BusStopMineTV', '# meet21', 'rickpeidete' 'Dragnet' 'meets', 'are', 'center', 'white', 'commercial'

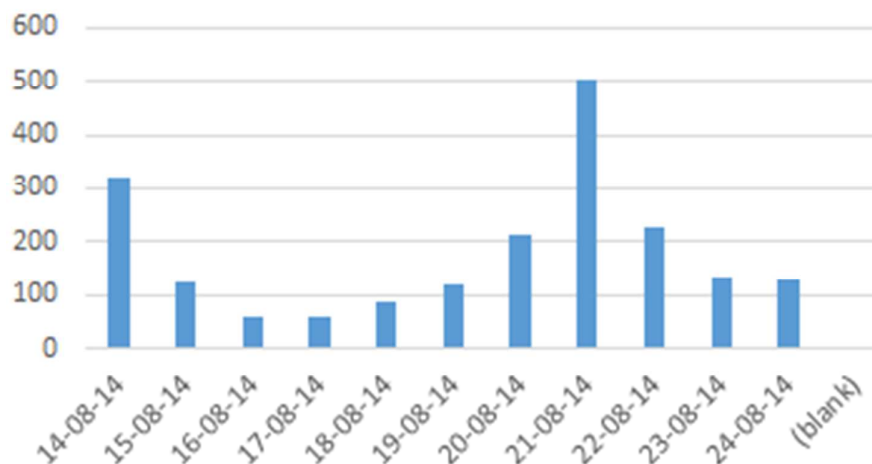
Based on the "fuzzification" of the fingerprint, 1976 tweets were selected, relating to this

specific event. Note that the tweets considered were only the ones written in Portuguese and posted in the geographical area of Portugal. After completion of the collection, a content analysis of these 1976 tweets was performed. This content analysis highlighted some particularly interesting and recurrent points, reconstructing the history of the debate generated by the event in twittosphere. In the pages that follow, we will seek highlight the most relevant conclusions, not before globally analyze the set of tweets related to the subject.

4. Content Analysis

As already mentioned, we analysed 1976 tweets related with the event. On the following image, we can see how those tweets were distributed through the 11 considered days. August 20, 21 and 22 appear as the main focus:

Figure 1 – Tweets/day



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The tweets we analyzed are generally characterized by a very informal language including slang words, internet typical coded language and several profanities. Most tweets seem to use a language typically attributed to younger age groups. They are also generally published by people who participate or would like to participate in a meet, that is, the discussion is maintained by the target audience of the meets. The users already knew what a meet is, even before meets have become a public issue, following the events of 20 August. On the other hand, there are virtually any tweets from people who were not familiar to the phenomenon of meets.

Starting from these premises, we found that after all, the diversity of tweets is large, suggesting a diversity of uses and appropriations of this tool, as is, moreover, suggested by the literature on the subject. The content of the tweets is quite diverse and the intentions behind each tweet seem really varied (instrumental uses, preparation and anticipation of the event, post-event comments and reflection, etc.). The degree of involvement is also quite different (in some cases we find purely personal and even intimate statements about the relationship of their issuers with meets, in other cases we find less personal feedback from individuals who identify themselves more as reporters or commentators of reality). Finally, the written expression itself is extremely different, with several degrees of codification.

In the following analysis we will start to look at how Twitter emerges as a virtual tool with a particular connection to the offline reality. The first collected tweets prepare and anticipate the meet (for example fixing personal appointments); later on, the events in Vasco da Gama are reflected in an eruption of tweets commenting the violence, the police intervention, and so and so far... This section thus highlights the peculiar online / offline cycle that marks the relationship between Twitter and meets.

Next, we observe Twitter as a tool for social distinction and to the formation of collective identities. This topic that particularly stands out, focus on the rivalry between meets summoned by Twitter as opposed to those that were organized on Facebook.

4.1 The Online/offline cycle

In the first tweets about the meet at Vasco da Gama, we can see how Twitter is used to prepare an upcoming event. Before 20 August, nobody expected anything particular about this meet, so, young people used the twitter to mention who they would like to find in the meet and they speak more generally about their expectations.

'can I say who I'd like to find on the meet?' (14/08)

"I'd never be one of the persons you'd like to find on the meet ☐☐" (14/08)

'I swear I'll try to go to the next meet' (14/08)

This buildup process is consistent with what we know from the literature about the virtual preparation of such an event. "The opportunity for perceived positive experiences and connectedness available through online communication renders social media a popular vehicle for teens to communicate, plan events, and meet new people." (Seo et al, 2013: 3). One of the main objectives of this type of event is thus to socialize and meet other people. In this case, it should be noted that the tweets tend to be purely personal, either with an instrumental goal (identify who is to be known) or reflective (whether or not to go to a meet).

Moreover, it is clear in the content analysis that for these users, socialize and meet new people are the main reasons invoked to participate in these meetings. "The tendency for teens to want to meet-up and hang out in groups is not new, nor is it solely the product of digital technologies. What social and mobile technologies bring to this is the possibility of broader and more effective peer-to-peer coordination among teens, which in turn may result, for

example, in teens from different schools assembling together more often and more quickly than would have occurred in the past.” (Seo et al, 2013: 15).

Both the first tweets planning the meet and the last ones, censoring the events of 20 August, highlight the primary goal of meets: convivial.

‘A meet is a spot for social networks’ people gather, for good and not for bad.’ (24/08)

This online / offline cycle is one of the most interesting components of meets, because, as mentioned by Raposo (2014), during the meets themselves, one of the most common practices is to register the usernames of new friends in order to keep in touch on Twitter or Facebook. This registration is usually done directly on the body, using ordinary pens:

‘say: you like to be with other people, but then you arrive home and you take a 30 minute bath to wash out your written body kkk’ (14/08)

4.2 Twitter vs Facebook- A case for competitive identities

In this case, the usual circuit: ‘online preparation - meet - collection of new contacts - maintenance of virtual relationships’ turned out to be interrupted by the odd events at Vasco da Gama shopping center. On August 20 and the following days, Twitter turned out to be, above all, a mean to review and reflect on unusual events:

‘A meet is for meeting people, not to fight, and much less to fight cops in the shopping’ (21/08)

One of the most interesting aspect of the content analysis aroused on the follow up discussion, as many teens highlight that the alleged violence was easily explained by the fact that this particular meet has been summoned on Facebook and not on Twitter. The main proportion of tweets, after August 20, was written by users who didn't go to this specific meet, and who are, generally, against Facebook meets. A surprising rivalry sets up in the discussion.

'It was a FB meet, what were you expecting (???)' (20/08)

'Those tacky¹ facebookers totally destroyed the "meet" concept'

" (22/08)

'of course, twitter's meets are not at all like Facebook meets.' (22/08)

Media have always played an important role on youth identities. "For young people especially, as they are preoccupied with making the transition from their family of origins towards a wider peer culture (and as they are not generally part of the world of work), the media often serve as the very currency through which identities are constructed, social relations negotiated and peer culture generated (Ziehe, 1994)." (Livingstone & Boville, 1999: 10). The transformation of traditional media and the development of the so-called 'new media' results on new ways of identity construction and new peer cultures.

Now-a-days, to share information and to be connected online with virtual and real friends is a important part of daily life, particularly for teenagers. (Boyd, 2014: 7): "Rather than being seen

¹ In the original 'azeiteiros'. In Portugal the term "Azeiteiro", that literally means someone related with olive oil, is used in a sense similar to "tacky" in English, someone lacking style or good taste. The term has been adopted to characterize Facebook users among the youngsters community, and it is common to find free adaptations of this connotation throughout the analyzed tweets. An exemple is the use of the expression "a sea of olive oil" to describe a gathering of "facebookers".

as a subcultural practice, participating in social media became normative.” (Boyd, 2014). In 2008, Livingstone highlights that “creating and networking online content is becoming, for many, an integral means of managing one’s identity, lifestyle and social relations” (p.4). Thus, online social networking becomes an important part of youth identities. And the choice of where to create a profile and where to post specific information appears as an important part of a social and personal identity. As Livingston points out in 2008 (p.8) “in relation to social networking such identity development seemed to be expressed in terms of decisions regarding the style or choice of site. Nina, for example, moved from MySpace to Facebook, describing this somewhat tentatively as the transition from elaborate layouts for younger teenagers to the clean profile favored by older teenagers.” (Livingstone, 2008, p. 8). The opposition between Facebook and Twitter in our sample can be looked through different ways. First of all, Twitter’s meets are exalted as the most funny and interesting ones, reconfirming a social identity that often appears as more legitimate and authentic, as twitters meets are considered the original ones and the organization through other social networks is perceived as a fake and a failed copycat:

‘A Meet is a twiiter thing, not facebook, so stop organizing facebook meets you shitty tacky fbookers’ (22/08)

‘when the facebook swaggers try to copycat twitter, they end up with a Galo [popular olive oil brand] olive oil meet #TeamEnfim’. (22/08)

‘regarding the facebook meet all I can say is that copycatting twitter is like shiiting on a fan, especially when those doing it are tacky fbookers’(22/08)

"why are they speaking about meets at facebook? As far as I know, meets are a twitter thing" (15/08)

'I think I wont go to the September meet. Because tweeter fans cannot be comfortable with all those fb animals' (21/08)

It is also criticized the fact that some youngsters, at the meets ask for Facebook profiles of their new acquaintances or, later on, post pictures of Twitter meets on their Facebook pages, making it appear that there is a Twitter user community that shares a specific idea of "authenticity", involving not using Facebook nor sharing Twitter contents on Facebook. Authenticity is not universal: "the authentic is a localized, temporally situated social construct that varies widely based on community" (Marwick & boyd, 2010: 11). For Grazian the idea of authenticity is built "in contradiction to something else" (2003: 13, quoted by Marwick & Boyd, 2010: 11). In this case, the user's authenticity idea of Twitter is built in contradiction to participation on Facebook, a generic idea that is present on our sample long before the Vasco da Gama shopping center meet:

'I'm at a twitter meet and they asked my net for facebook. OMG OMG OMG How to deal with this?' (14/08)

'They asked for my facebook around 100 times at the meet, laughing' (14/08)

'Why am I seeing the twitter meet photos on Facebook? Oh, help!!!' (15/08)

'To those that talk about the tacky FBookers but publish meet photos on fb... stop being ridiculous' (16/08)

Besides praising Twitter as the proper social network for organizing meets, a lot of comments also directly criticises Facebook meets, expressing that violence is expected on this copycat meets. Social identity is reinforced by direct criticism against the perceived other:

‘Facebook meet //olive oil // sea of olive oil //’ (20/08)

‘Olive oil congress – fb meet’ (20/08)

“There were tacky facebookers all over at yesterday’s meet, facebook meets equals mess” (21/08)

‘Twitter meet: singing, playing, joking, joy, mcMeet Facebook: conflict, tacky, knives, swearing, continente [the popular supermarket where some of the disturbance occurred]’ (21/08)

‘I’ve never been to a meet and I have no interest in going to one because it’s more of a facebook slash beef than a twitter meet’ [this one attempts to make a joke between meet/meat and beef] (22/08)

‘fb meet could only end up in beef’ (19/08)

It is interesting to mention that the specific jargon used by teenagers on Twitter appears, on their critics, as highly codified and specific. Language is, of course, another important part of social distinction. In this specific case study, youth language meets internet language, and most of the analysed tweets tend to use a much codified language.. The idea that there is a specific internet language is not new. And several studies approach this issue using terms as “netspeak”, “chatspeak”, “computer mediated communication (CMC)” or “electronically mediated language” highlightg the use of acronyms, special orthographies, use of foreign (mostly English) vocabularies, emoticons, and abbreviations. (Dahström, 2013: 1; Merchant,

2001: 302, Varnhagen et al, 2010: 720). Twitter enhances this fact, by its character limitation.

All these marks are presented in our sample, but it is around the Twitter/Facebook conflict that language appears as particularly coded and some terms and expressions are common to several tweets as the pejorative use of olive oil, swag and beef. Shares language is, thus, another important part of this group of youngsters collective identity.

Some comments also criticize the media for being unaware of the fundamental distinction between Facebook meets and Twitter meets. Others criticize the public opinion, or even their families for being unaware of this important social distinction:

'tvi [a Portuguese television channel] forgot to mention it was a facebook meet, of course there was violence!' (22 /08)

'Really, why are they saying in the news meets are bad? Don't speak in general, one thing is a facebook meet another a twitter meet' (24 /08)

"Unfortunately, my parents don't understand the difference between a Twitter meet and a Facebook ""meet"" (21 /08)

'Because all these Facebook meets shit, my mom forbid me to go to twitter meets' (21/08)

Additionally to the Facebook vs. Twitter conflict, racial references are also an important topic in our sample. The preponderance of black people in this Facebook meets is often referred and directly associated with violence.

"Say what you want, but the violence on the facebook meet was caused because 90% were blacks." (23 /08)

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‘My dad already contacted me regarding the meet news. He totally agrees with me: all those guys are scumbags, niggas that do not go to school’ (21 /08)

Sometimes, even if no specific association to violence is mentioned, but a great relevance is attributed to the fact that there were a lot of black people in the meets, using pejorative words and expressions.

“‘The meet was like a GIANT OREO... think about it” (14 /08)

On the other hand, a smaller set of tweets, following the public discussion on media, showed concern about racism in the police intervention. In the following tweet, criticize over a fake meet (expressed by the hyperbolic use of “””, the police is accused of racism.

‘it’s funny yesterday at the “””meet”””” they were only bothering dark people, it was really racism.’ (21/08)

On conclusion

The meet at Vasco da Gama, and the subsequent uproar created in the media arise as a paradigmatic event, the analysis of which reveals particularly interesting, and quite illustrative of the relationship between users and Twitter. On the one hand, the concept of meet illustrates in an exemplary manner the interactions online / offline marking the daily lives of young people in a deeply connected society. The convening of these meetings over the Internet and the social distinction efforts that come associated with the different social networks makes a most interesting arena for approaching youth identities in the digital era.

This exploratory analysis, limited to an event, also emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration between the authors of the paper / project and the need to combine Twitter analysis through advanced techniques with a qualitative work of content analysis that allow us to understand the representations, emotions and practices behind the set of collected tweets.

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