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Insights Into Canada's Digital Media, Branding and Political Image Management

Owing to the different architectures of social media platforms as well as information revolution and globalization, digital media, branding and political image management prove to have become of significant value in changing the landscape and essence of traditional political campaigning into one of the most proficient and sophisticated marketing tactics. The study delves into the academic underpinnings of digital (virtual) or e-diplomacy that significantly contributes to the embracing of a nation branding and its manifold implications for any statehood. In the 21st Century, a new institution is emerging with some characteristics similar to the Fourth Estate, but with sufficiently distinctive and important features to warrant its recognition as a new Fifth Estate. Such 'networks of networks' enable the networked individuals to move across, undermine and go beyond the boundaries of existing institutions, thereby opening new ways of increasing the accountability of politicians, press, experts and other loci of power and influence.

When theorizing on the topics of digital media, branding and political image management, the conclusive arguments indicate that social media indeed pose campaign environments distinct from mass communication arenas. Demonstrating beneficial personality traits and improving name recognition is a campaign to internalize a whole set of platform-specific affordances on social media in order to demonstrate that it represents the 'state of the art'. This is a valuable insight and it is an important step forward in our understanding of a political image. A concluding remark is a political leader's or a country's image making is a very multidimensional process, which involves different political, economic, social, cultural and communication aspects of a country's development.

Keywords: political image, digiplomacy, Canada, networks, digital media, branding, social media, politics, image making.

Роль цифрових медіа Канади у створенні національного брендингу та формуванні іміджу політика

Варто наголосити, що розмаїта мережна архітектоніка глобального соціального простору стала потужним підґрунтям для інформаційної революції, разом з тим, цифрові медіа, брендинг та проблема політичного іміджу як мистецтва цілеспрямованого управління зіграли життєво важливу роль у зміні ландшафту та контенту з класичної політичної кампанії в одну з найбільш вишуканих та найскладніших конструктів політичного маркетингу. Стаття висвітлює проблему цифрової (віртуальної) або електронної дипломатії, що суттєво сприяє визнанню національного бренду та різноманітним шляхам пошуку національної ідеї та консолідації держави. У ХХІ столітті виникає новий феномен з яскраво вираженими характеристиками, на кшталт четвертої неформальної гілки публічної влади, але з достатньо відмітними та важливими рисами, що дозволяють визнати його новою п'ятою неформальною гілкою публічної влади. Так-звані «мережі мереж» дають можливість мережевим користувачам впливати на розуміння сутності та призначення політики, політичних інститутів та процесів, які відбуваються а також моніторити діяльність політиків, преси, експертів та інших локусів влади та впливу. Безпосередньо впливаючи на змістовну спрямованість мереживних комунікацій, інформаційна влада впливає на поведінку політиків.

¹ PhD in Political Science, Associate Professor, Deputy Head of Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Translation Studies, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Ukraine. E-mail: v.bohatyrets@chnu.edu.ua, <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6291-5180>.

Досліджуючи проблеми цифрових медіа, брендингу та політичного іміджу як мистецтва цілеспрямованого управління, ми дійшли висновку, що переконливі аргументи вказують на те, що соціальні медіа створюють найсприятливіше середовище для розгортання передвиборчої кампанії, яке суттєво відрізняється від арени масової комунікації. «Мережі мереж» виокремлюють позитивні риси особистості політичного лідера, покращуючи розпізнавання імен та брендів, така мереживна кампанія спрямована на інтеграцію цілого набору різних платформ у соціальних мережах, щоб продемонструвати, що власне, вони репрезентують «сучасний рівень» просування політичного лідера чи національного брендингу, що сприяє розумінню становлення позитивного чи негативного політичного іміджу. Загалом, виходячи із вищенаведеного, варто наголосити, створення іміджу країни чи політичного лідера є дуже багатограним процесом, який враховує різні політичні, соціальні, культурні та комунікативні аспекти країни.

Ключові слова: політичний імідж, цифрова дипломатія, Канада, мережі, цифрові медіа, брендинг, соціальні медіа, політика, створення іміджу.

“Technology can improve or undermine democracy depending on how it is used and who controls it. Right now, it is controlled by too few”.
(Kevin Gross)

Introduction

In recent years in Canada as well on the global level, digital media, including social media, have become a topic of pivotal importance for politicians throughout their political communication, digital campaigns and elections. Political parties try to rebrand themselves aiming at improving their public image, reputation, competitive positioning and positive emotional associations with the voters' candidates (Marland and Flanagan, 2013)².

It should be articulated that Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat have become indispensable building blocks of politicians' digital communication, since present-day policymakers and political leaders have increased their everyday activities on visual-based platforms to be supported by digital natives – their prospective voters.

To put the topic of Canada's digital media, branding and political image management into the context of digital diplomacy, I should emphasize that *“Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snap chat, YouTube are some of the hotter social media platforms for now. In order to stand out from the crowd, your business need to have a solid social media strategy”* (Shashikant, 2019)³.

A country's image making is a very multidimensional process, which involves different political, economic, social, cultural and communication aspects of a country's development. Furthermore, the recent spread of digital initiatives in foreign ministries is considered a revolution in the practice of diplomacy (digiplomacy). Drastic technological, political, economic, cultural and linguistic changes enhanced the turbulence of the modern world order, and with all human endeavours, transformed the whole system of international relations, and consequently, traditional forms of diplomacy (Bohatyrets, 2016)⁴.

Noteworthy, a series of recent studies has indicated that several attempts have been made to highlight the problem of a political leader or a country's image making as a turning point in peoples' perception of politics, digital media, elections tellies, and shaping public opinion.

The topicality of the study stemmed from a number of political, social, economic, psychological, and media-related factors. The survey and careful selection of arguments and information available in books, articles, online sources, and networking platforms allowed us to gather a set of theoretical framework and identify important concepts of understanding the impact of digital media on branding

² Marland, A. and Flanagan, T. (2013). “Brand New Party: Political Branding and the Conservative Party of Canada”. *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, 46(4), 951-972. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43298397> (accessed 5 January 2021).

³ Shashikant, K. (2019). “What Should Be The Right Strategies For Your Business On Social Media?” *Connect to India*. Available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ConnecttoIndia.in/photos/facebook-instagram-pinterest-linkedin-twitter-snap-chat-youtube-are-some-of-the-/1048790335327544> (accessed 17 August 2019).

⁴ Bohatyrets, V. (2016). “Digital Diplomacy as a Core Vector of a Country's Image Making/ Communication Practices in Modern Political Discourse”: *Mediaforum: Analytics, Prognosis, Media Management*, Chernivtsi National University, Chernivtsi, 3/4, 67-76.

and political image management in both Canada and the globe. We consider it appropriate to disclose a detailed analysis of the researchers' assessments and conclusions on the main problems of our study.

Theoretical Perspective

When theorizing on the topics of digital media, branding and political image management three arguments indicate that social media indeed pose campaign environments distinct from mass communication arenas. Demonstrating beneficial personality traits and improving name recognition is a campaign to internalize a whole set of platform-specific affordances on social media in order to demonstrate that it represents the 'state of the art'. Politicians understand the significance of visuals and work equally hard to construct effective image bites as they do powerful sound bites. In other words, visual images play a central role in constructing political images (Schill, 2012)⁵. The 'Fourth Estate' has an invaluable position as both a press officer and watchdog of political elite because it constantly relays and records every action and policy undertaken by central public and political figures, which become a sizeable topic in the press and news media. The presidency has evolved and shifted with presidents of different personalities and policy positions, and it has changed based on different political contexts in the country and the world, but the fundamental relationship between the press and the presidency is the same (Mannerberg, 2017)⁶.

Political marketing tends to de-emphasize the significance of communication, popular culture and personality in politics, and argues that the brand as a concept can bring together the economic and the aesthetic, rational choice and cultural resonance. It proposes a model of brand distinctiveness and argues that this may be useful both in the analysis of party communication and in the normative evaluation of that communication. This is a valuable insight and it is an important step forward in our understanding of political image. However, it is best thought of as an addition, rather than replacement, of economic models of political marketing. Personality or celebrity politics is indeed a phenomenon of our age, but it remains empirically under-explored and it is far from clear that personal appeal has displaced party identity and issue evaluation in assessments of voters' choices (Scammel, 2015)⁷.

Owing to the different architectures of social media platforms as well as information revolution and globalization, digital media, branding and political image management prove to have become of significant value in changing the landscape and essence of traditional political campaigning into one of the most proficient and sophisticated marketing tactics. As stated by Lees-Marshment (2006), it is argued that "if a political party implements the marketing philosophy, it will seek to meet voters needs and wants, thus producing voter satisfaction, and in doing so gain electoral support to meet its own goals"⁸.

According to the authoritative sources, Canada, being ranked number one in the world alongside the United-Kingdom in the 2018 Open Data Barometer (a global measure), has manifested its government's efficacy in publishing and using open data. Open Government partnership includes *three* leadership priorities:

Inclusion (enabling citizens, civil society and business to participate in government decision-making; and, consequently, leading to trustfulness in government and better outcomes);

Participation (empowering under-represented citizens regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation, to engage actively with governments; respectively testifying to more equitable governments) and *Impact* (contributing to citizens' embrace how open government affects their day-to-day lives and, thus, making government accountable for results that make a difference). In a coercive digital age,

⁵ Schill, D. (2012). "The Visual Image and the Political Image: A Review of Visual Communication Research in the Field of Political Communication." *Review of Communication*, 12:2, 118-142. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15358593.2011.653504> (accessed 24 June 2019).

⁶ Mannerberg, L. (2017). *The Presidency and the Media: An Analysis of the Fundamental Role of the Traditional Press for American Democracy*. Available at: <https://www.albany.edu/honorscollege/files/LaurenMannerberg.pdf> (accessed 17 December 2019).

⁷ Scammel, M. (2015). "Politics and Image: the Conceptual Value of Branding". *Journal of Political Marketing* Forthcoming DOI: 10.13140/2.1.4447.6165 Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/266565152_ (accessed 23 March 2019).

⁸ Lees-Marshment, J. (2006). "Political Marketing Theory and Practice: A Reply to Ormrod's Critique of the Lees-Marshment Market-Oriented Party Model". *Politics*. 26(2), 119-125. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9256.2006.00258.x.

open government is a critical resource to make democracies more accountable and transparent to their citizens. Simultaneously, digital technology is everywhere in today's society, and regulating it is a crucial mission that requires the creation of a new independent body with legislative reach (Jean-Hugues, 2019)⁹. Since worldwide competitiveness of the 21st century has made every country strive for its paragon branding and for its being favorably perceived and recognized all over the world, Canada hosted the 2019 global Open Government Partnership Summit in Ottawa in May, it was an opportunity for Canada to share its progress on digital policy initiatives (Government of Canada, 2018)¹⁰.

In another study of visual marketing strategy and effectiveness, Edward Elder and Justin Phillips analyse “the effectiveness of Facebook autoplay videos in targeting potential voters, specifically the coveted Hispanic demographic by the Clinton campaign.Social media like Facebook and Twitter place *the focus on the individual politician rather than the political party*, thereby expanding the political arena for increased for personalized campaigning”. The authors claim that using social media has become the top priority and prerequisite for politicians, public figures and heads of states to communicate their personal image and to convey their messages have become the most efficient toolkit for a political image management. “Within this framework, the personalized and dialogical aspects of digital media may be contradicted by the political parties' structural communication strategies. The research findings show that ‘politicians’ report both marketing and dialogue with voters as motives for their social media use and their practices varied, too. Politicians reported motive to use social media for marketing purposes was reflected in their actual use. The preferred social media platform for marketing purposes was Facebook. Twitter was more used for continuous dialogue compared to Facebook. Social media marketing was personalized and involved private exposure and individual initiatives” (Gunn and Skogerbø, 2013)¹¹.

M.Scammell (2015) argues that the brand concept is a powerful tool for understanding political images. It challenges typical economic versions of political marketing that tend to deemphasize the significance of communication, popular culture, and personality in politics and argues that the brand as a concept can bring together the economic and the aesthetic, rational choice and cultural resonance. It proposes a model of brand distinctiveness and argues that this may be useful both in the analysis of party communication and in the normative evaluation of that communication¹².

C.Muñoz and Terri L.Towner (2017) explored the role that images played in framing political character development and identified which images received higher levels of engagement; content analyses were performed on the top seven primary candidates' Instagram accounts. “Results indicate that candidates most frequently employ the ideal candidate frame in their images, which also garnered the highest number of user likes and comments. Results also reveal that among Instagram image attributes, candidates frequently and successfully used text within their images, but filters were inconsistently applied across the candidates”¹³.

In his seminal work, T.Murse (2019) aims to delve into the problem of the impact of social media in politics including Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube on officials and public's communication. The prevalence of social media in politics has made elected officials and candidates for public office more accountable and accessible to voters. In addition, the capacity of publishing targeted content and broadcasting it to millions of social media users immediately enables campaigns to carefully manage their candidates' images based on analytics. The researcher concludes that social media tools including Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube empowers politicians to influence voters and encourage their final decision-making. “Using those social media allows politicians to circumvent the traditional method of

⁹ Jean-Hugues, R. (2019). *Why should we regulate social media giants? Because it's 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-should-we-regulate-social-media-giants-because-its-2019-prime-minister-trudeau-117889> (accessed 23 September 2019)/

¹⁰ Government of Canada (2018). *Canada begins its year of leading the international Open Government Partnership*. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/news/2018/10/canada-begins-its-year-of-leading-the-international-open-government-partnership.html> (accessed 23 March 2019).

¹¹ Gunn, S. and Skogerbø, E. (2013). “Personalized campaigns in party-centred politics”. *Information, Communication & Society*, 16:5, 757-774, DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.782330.

¹² Scammell, M. (2015). “Politics and Image: The Conceptual Value of Branding”, *Journal of Political Marketing*, 14:1-2, 7-18, DOI: 10.1080/15377857.2014.990829.

¹³ Muñoz, C. and Towner, T. (2017). “The Image is the Message: Instagram Marketing and the 2016 Presidential Primary Season”, *Journal of Political Marketing*, 16:3-4, 290-318, DOI: 10.1080/15377857.2017.1334254.

reaching voters through paid advertising or earned media. Twitter and Facebook have become instrumental in organizing campaigns. They allow like-minded voters and activists to easily share news and information such as campaign events with each other. That's what the 'Share' function on Facebook and 'retweet' feature of Twitter"¹⁴.

Mannerberg (2017:8) discloses the role of the press in American Democracy, "...those few who are typically more interested in political news tend to seek out news that aligns with their political ideologies and beliefs, which is easy to accomplish in today's hyper partisan media landscape. Presidents of the recent past decades have therefore struggled to have a successful relationship with the press, and even if they do manage to have a positive one, the news media in general is often thought to be not as effective or significant as it once was. However, this is not the entire truth. Although the press has gone through enormous changes in technology and a shift towards more partisan media the fundamental relationship between the press and the presidency has been maintained. The press in America has gone through large changes and a significant evolution over time, especially in the last decade with the advent of new technology, like the Internet and social media, and an increase in the partisan nature of American politics. Media has changed but the role of the press has not"¹⁵.

In view of that, the research article presents insights into digital media, branding and political image management aspect of campaign targeting.

Objectives and Tasks

The *objective* of the research is to present the insights into digital media, branding and political image management aspects of campaign targeting.

To achieve the objective, the study, *firstly*, briefly highlights digital media as a tool for shaping national branding and political image making, *secondly*, analyses Canada's digital policy and figures out the most influential social media networks in Canada; *thirdly*, discloses D. Trudeau's positive image making and promoting it in social media.

Methodology

The major and key approaches to the study consist in data collecting and desk research (the secondary research). Desk research involves using synthesis of already existing research rather than primary research, where data were collected through the research subjects or experiments. In particular, case of desk research of digital media, branding and political image management such sources as databases, books, online magazines, different websites, and online-published articles, Canada's statistics were used. Desk research helped to determine the knowledge that is already recognized and what new data has to be collected to fulfil the research design.

Overview of Canada digital policy

In the age of data-as-an-economy, eCommerce, A.I, IoT, and smart cities, the government of Canada focuses its strategy on being "Digital First"¹⁶. Over the last two decades, digital media – including social media – have grown to become integral components of the political communication, mobilization, and organizing landscape in several countries¹⁷.

The growing use of the Internet and related digital technologies is creating a space for networking individuals in ways that enable a new source of accountability in government, politics and other sectors. In the 21st Century, a new institution is emerging with some characteristics similar to the Fourth Estate, but with sufficiently distinctive and important features to warrant its recognition as a new *Fifth Estate*. Such 'networks of networks' enable the networked individuals to move across, undermine and

¹⁴ Murse, T. (2019). *How Social Media Has Changed Politics*. Available at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/how-social-media-has-changed-politics-3367534>, (accessed 23 March 2019).

¹⁵ Mannerberg, L. (2017). *Op. cit.*

¹⁶ The Information and Communications Technology Council (2018). "*Feedback on the Direction for a New Government of Canada Digital Policy*". Available at: https://www.ictc-ctic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ICTC_Feedback_DigitalPolicy_Sep2018.pdf (accessed 10 August 2019).

¹⁷ Lalancette, M. and Raynauld, V. (2019). "The Power of Political Image: Justin Trudeau, Instagram, and Celebrity Politics", *American Behavioral Scientist*, 63 (7), 888-924. DOI: 10.1177/0002764217744838. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321396251_The_Power_of_Political_Image_Justin_Trudeau_Instagram_and_Celebrity_Politics (accessed July 27 2019).

go beyond the boundaries of existing institutions, thereby opening new ways of increasing the accountability of politicians, press, experts and other loci of power and influence.¹⁸

Recently, the government of Canada is known to have increased its use of paid Facebook commercials, while spending tens of millions of dollars on boosted posts, videos and ad campaigns. It is worth citing the work of Hill, Akin and Cain (2020) where the authors highlight a growing government reliance on Facebook to promote events, and publicize key government messages as well as policy initiatives, “The Liberal Party of Canada was the most prolific spender, buying nearly \$2.3 million in ads covering a wide range of topics, including calls for donations, surveys on political ideas, promoting the government’s assault-style weapons ban and initiatives aimed at the middle class”¹⁹

Consequently, social media continues to play an important role in endearing voters to party leaders, from Twitter engagement to Facebook video posts. The journalists, for whom Twitter has become a very important tool, “risk inflating its importance and distorting what is actually happening online. The people who are politically active on Twitter and other social media sites tend to be the small subset of people who are already very interested in politics. They also like serving up party-approved talking points, but the risk of going off message is so great that meaningful dialogue is a rarity. The promise of connection and accountability that Twitter seems to offer turns out to be more illusion than reality”²⁰.

The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that Canadian marketers keep in control users of social media in Canada, as well as which platform they visit most.

The Most Popular Social Media Networks in Canada

According to pooled data from various sources, McKinnon (2018) outlines a picture of social media use statistics in Canada. Such study sheds the light on how digital natives could be manipulated and guided by various networking platforms:

“Facebook 84%	Twitter 42%	Snapchat 22%
YouTube 59%	Pinterest 38%	Tumblr 11%
LinkedIn 46%	Instagram 37%	Reddit 9%” ²¹

Of particular value for our study was the analytical research on how Trudeau’s Instagram narrative shapes positive Canada’s image, boosting his popularity, and enhancing the leader’s image; furthermore, their extensively explored Trudeau’s and his team great understanding of social media impact. “Trudeau knows the language of social media, knows how to use emojis and icons, and knows how to use photos and videos properly. Recent studies have shown that images can play a critical role when members of the public are evaluating politicians. Specifically, voters are looking for specific qualities in political leaders, including honesty, intelligence, friendliness, sincerity, and trustworthiness, when making electoral decisions. Image management techniques can help create the impression that politicians possess these qualities.”²²

The insights gained from this study may be of assistance to conclude that Justin Trudeau – Prime Minister of Canada, referred to as the “first prime minister of the Instagram age” or the “King of the selfie”²³, and is hypothesized to be one of the forerunners in the field of political image management

18 Dutton, W. (2009). “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks”, *Prometheus*, 27:1, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/08109020802657453 Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46527032_The_Fifth_Estate_Emerging_Through_the_Network_of_Networks (accessed August 10 2019).

19 Hill, B., Akin, D. and Cain, P. (2020). “As Facebook ad boycott intensifies, political parties continue to spend big”. *Global News*, June 30. Available at: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7126534/facebook-ad-boycott-political-parties-government-spending/> (accessed 22 October 2020).

20 Basen, I. (2015). “Social media’s significance oversold amid election hype”. *CBC News*, October 18. Available at: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-election-2015-social-media-1.3277007> (accessed 10 August 2019).

21 McKinnon, M. (2018). “Report: Canadian Social Media Use Statistics”. *Online Business Canada*, March 1, 2018. Available at: <https://canadiansinternet.com/2018-report-canadian-social-media-use-statistics/> (accessed 10 August 2019).

22 Lalancette, M. and Raynauld, V. (2017). “The Power of Political Image: Justin Trudeau, Instagram, and Celebrity Politics”. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 63. 000276421774483. 10.1177/0002764217744838.

23 Lalancette, M. and Raynauld, V. (2017). Op. cit.

on visual-based social media. In an era of permanent campaigning and digital media and branding, it is useful to understand how politicians communicate with the public in a digital media environment where still and moving images are playing a growingly important role.

Justin Trudeau embraces social media to connect with Canadians

“Thank you, Canada, for putting your trust in our team and for having faith in us to move this country in the right direction. Regardless of how you cast your vote, our team will work hard for all Canadians”
(Justin Trudeau, Twitter, 8:54 AM Oct 22, 2019)

Trudeau’s Twitter, Instagram or FB narrative offers an optimistic view of Canada, boosts his popularity, and strengthens the image of his leadership. However, while Canadians are unlikely to notice the effects of the carbon price directly, they will definitely hear about it, through media. In fact, their primary experience of the tax is likely to be mediated through newspapers, television, and social media.

The outcome of the political fight will have little to do with the objective features or merits of the plan and everything to do with who wins the battle for public opinion.

According to a Canadian political analyst Marche (2019), “Trudeau has become an object lesson in the perils of ‘virocracy’: It is in the nature of the social media left to destroy itself. There have been many, many scandals of this magnitude in Canadian political history. A ripple of tension between image and power has run throughout the Liberals’ time in office. The truth is that the self-immolation of the Trudeau government has been a long time coming. It’s rooted in the way it came to power, through virtue optics and social media Trudeau is the master of the kind of celebrity progressivism. He proved that social media skills could win elections, too”²⁴.

Comparing Justin Trudeau with the popularity of the Pope, Obama and Putin as figures of “title, charisma and the command of visual rhetoric to drive/commandeer the visual media worldwide”, Shaw (2015) traces the emergence of first world Prime Minister and a political figure on the international stage. “From brand marketing and ideological marketing value, Trudeau – Canada’s Prime Minister – exposes his image to directly challenge, can take his visual skills and his pictorial mandate beyond the level of the love story, the pop-culture seduction and the illustration of issues and people around the world, he developed a sudden interest in Canadian politics”²⁵.

In a broader perspective, ebbs and flows characterize a political celebrity, if to speak about Justin Trudeau his well-recognized international brand is fluctuating. Furthermore, his flair of political image management has become influential among liberal elites, as well as his illustrious social media selfies boost Trudeau’s celebrity status. “The prime minister rationalizes attention paid to him and wife Sophie Grégoire Trudeau as a good way to generate international exposure of Canada, particularly among those who ordinarily do not pay attention to Canadian politics. Bureaucrats in Global Affairs Canada have discussed framing the country’s foray into United Nations peacekeeping operations as “building on Brand Trudeau”²⁶.

I dare conclude by citing Roy Jean-Hugues (2019), “I have a wish for 2020: that the Trudeau government enters the 21st century; that it stops cowering in front of the big tech companies like Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple, and that it adopts laws that will finally allow Canadians to know and understand what these companies really do with their data”²⁷.

²⁴ Marche, S. (2019). *The self-immolation of the Canadian government is rooted in the way it came to power*. Available at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/04/justin-trudeau-lived-by-social-media-now-hes-dying-by-it> (accessed 10 August 2019).

²⁵ Shaw, M. (2015). *The Visual Promise of Justin Trudeau*. Available at: <https://www.readingthepictures.org/2015/10/the-visual-promise-of-justin-trudeau/> (accessed 22 October 2019).

²⁶ Marland, A. (2018). “The brand image of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in international context” *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*. 1-5. 10.1080/11926422.2018.1461665. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324782802_The_brand_image_of_Canadian_Prime_Minister_Justin_Trudeau_in_international_context (accessed 30 July 2019).

²⁷ Jean-Hugues, R. (2019). “Why should we regulate social media giants? Because it’s 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau”. *The Conversation*, June 12. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/why-should-we-regulate-social-media-giants-because-its-2019-prime-minister-trudeau-117889> (accessed 24 November 2019).

Conclusions

The findings of this research have established a theoretical framework, which demonstrates that various aspects of campaign targeting highlight the need for highly relevant and specific digital media as an effective toolkit for shaping and developing a national brand and managing a political image making.

Considering these findings, we can state that in the Canadian context, visuals and politics in the digital mediascape are extensively investigated and frequently employed. The present study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding the critical role of visuals in public perceiving, recognizing, and gauging politicians, their conveyed messages, as well as their actions. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is disclosing D.Trudeau's positive image making and promoting in social media. The above-mentioned testifies to the concluding proof that political communication on social media platforms have a strong visual focus.

To conclude, the study sheds the light on the effects and implications of social media-based political image making and management in Canada. However, it is crucial to hypotheses, that further study of visual e-politicking would be a fruitful area for further work in terms of permanent campaigning on social media as well as political image management in Canada.

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