

*Queen Sofia of Spain as the embodiment of traditionalist womanhood.
Analysis of the gossip press coverage on the Queen from 2011 to 2014*

ABSTRACT:

The article analyses framing of Queen Sofia by the Spanish gossip press as an embodiment of the traditionalist model of womanhood existing in Spain. The paper presents results from the content analysis of extensive press coverage on the Consort (173 articles published between May 2011 and May 2014) from the leading gossip magazine *iHola!* Through the use of gender stereotypes' categorization, it displays coherence between the content of the Queen's discourse in the magazine and the conservative vision of womanhood developed within the Spanish patriarchal model. Final results show that despite a superficial modernization of the Queen's image obtained thanks to the fact of focusing the discourse on her public activity,

iHola! frame on Queen Sofia corresponds to the portrayal of the ideal of traditionalist Spanish woman. She is thus presented in roles of a mother, grandmother and wife rather than an independent and professionally accomplished woman. Moreover, she is described as a strongly emotional woman, worshipping her family, whose public actions are motivated more by a feeling of obligation toward her family and the country than by a will of having a professional career.

KEYWORDS:

Gender stereotypes; Spain; Queen Sofia; womanhood; *iHola!*; gossip press

But firstly: what is a woman?

'Tota mulier in utero', said one, 'woman is a womb'

Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex.

1. Introduction

In democratic countries the role of the chief of state is commonly the most exposed function on the national stage. As the head of state is over all vested with the representative function, his¹⁷ public image as well as his capacity of dealing with the media and the public opinion are critical for the office. This ability has become even of bigger importance since the development of the media era and the switch of public attention from political ideals to political personalities, which has led to an over exposition of politicians' private lives. Consequently, spouses of many politicians, and especially those of heads of state, have become a subject of interest of the media, some of them even earning a status of political celebrity.

The fact of earning public visibility thanks to the social status had a significant impact on the media framing of the first ladies, as they have been presented exclusively in their roles of wives, mother and housekeepers. This strongly gendered vision resulted in a particular situation in which those who hold this semi-official office have been seen as embodiment of a particular model of womanhood, generally corresponding to cultural standards of a country.

In the Spanish political system, which since 1978 is a constitutional monarchy, the King fulfills duties of the Head of State. The fact that the Chief of State is also the head of the royalist institution clearly enrooted in ancient regimes allows to presume that his wife embodies as well a traditional system of values. Indeed, a

¹⁷ Despite the fact that the number of women being Heads of State is growing, this position is still mainly a matter of men. For that reason, this article speaks solely of female spouses of Heads of State.

preliminary analysis of the press coverage on Queen Sofia, wife of King Juan Carlos I who ruled in Spain from 1975 to 2014, confirms that hypothesis. During her office, Queen Sofia enjoyed strong interest of the media specialized in hard news, which focused on her public actions (Widlak, 2014). Nevertheless, Queen Sofia was a real star of gossip magazines, more interested in her role of the royal spouse and mother than the one of a public stakeholder. The content of this particularly gendered media coverage awakened the interest of the authors who decided to investigate about the validity of the hypothesis following which the Queen's framing in the gossip press is not only strongly gendered-stereotyped, but also convey an image of the traditionalist model of Spanish womanhood.

2. Background

2.1. Situation of women in Spain

Despite many positive changes in the field of gender equality, gender stereotypes still persist in all parts of the world (Grossmann & Lugovsky, 2011). In Spain, a country which enjoys a high level of economic and political development¹⁸, the traditionalist model of culture still remains embedded in the societal structure (Moreno Mínguez, 2009). Consequently, this impacts strongly social imaginary of womanhood and the distribution of roles within the family. Despite a certain evolution of perceptions, above all among young generations of Spaniards who claim an acceptance of gender equality's postulates, some attitudes and behaviors

¹⁸ On the economical level, Spain's growth domestic product in 2013 represented 1,358,263 million dollars which situated the country on the 13th position worldwide (World Bank's data). Moreover, Human Development Index created by the United Nations classifies Spain as a country with a very high human development (23rd place worldwide in 2012). On the political level, the Democracy Index by The Economist Intelligence Unit in 2012 categorized Spain as a full democracy (25th place worldwide) and following the World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders in 2014 Spain represents a satisfactory situation in terms of press freedom (35th position worldwide).

related to the job market and the private sphere have not genuinely evolved and still remain gravely embedded into the patriarchal system (Moreno Mínguez, 2009). They are common especially among elderly people (Lopez-Zafra & Garcia-Retamero, 2012; Morales & López-Sáez, 1996) and people living in small towns and villages (Morales & López-Sáez, 1996). Moreover, Spanish men seem to be reluctant to changes in the traditional gender role division (Moreno Mínguez, 2009; Pink, 2003).

The persistence of those stereotypes in modern Spain can be explained by a centuries-old tradition of patriarchy in which women's unique role was to be a mother and a wife (Garrido, 1997). Although the country benefited from major advances in the nineteenth century, such as establishment of educational rights for women in 1814 or appearance of first feminist movements (Scalon, 1976); and subsequently during the II Republic (1931–1939) which brought to Spanish women voting rights, the march toward gender equality was stopped in 1939 with the arrival in power of Franco. Women lost then the most of the rights they had gained before and became legally unequal and dependent on men. Following Radcliff (2002), 'in the Civil Code, the status of a married woman equaled that of the mentally incapacitated.' Meanwhile, Spanish women found themselves in a contradictory situation as they were heavily excluded from the public scene and in the same time they were put in the core of the francoist cultural propaganda, presented as heart and soul of Spain (Enders & Radcliff, 1998; Manrique Arribas, 2003; Mohammad, 2005; Morcillo, 2008). The rightist regime, devastated after the Civil War and struggling with high unemployment and important loss of population, emphasized the role of mother, as women were both biological and social reproducers (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Morcillo, 2008). Obliging women to stay at home and to concentrate on the role of mother allowed thus to ensure work for men and encouraged childbearing. However, progressively the rightist authorities shifted their focus to the social aspect and tended to use women's influence on their families to spread the propaganda (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas,

2003). This conquest of minds passed through education and the regime entrusted to the catholic Church and the Sección Femenina, a female branch of the Falange (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas, 2003; Morcillo, 2008).

Nevertheless, the 1960s brought a wind of change to male-dominated Spain. The economic opening to the world, a quick growth, and thus massive entrance of women on the job market¹⁹, modified social structures and values (Garrido, 1997; Jones, 1998). Although strongly censored, cinema and TV started to convey new ideas and the arrival of the pill gave to women the control over their reproductive health (Jones, 1998). Moreover, feminist movements emerged as a part of anti-francoist opposition (Garrido, 1997; Jones, 1998; Romeu Alfaro, 1994).

1975, the year of Franco's death and the beginning of the slow agony of his regime, represented a crucial moment in the shift toward political and cultural values of industrialized societies. It represented also a wind of freedom for women who were granted an access to the public scene. Nevertheless, the traditionalist model of the society did not disappear, but started to coexist to the new one (Royo-Vela, Aldás-Mazano, Küster-Boluda & Vila-López, 2007), displaying existing sociological and cultural gaps within the Spanish society. The transition to democracy (1975-1978), as every change of regimes, represented a great opportunity to include women into the public life. However the project resulted in a partial defeat, as primarily in a very rare debate about women's place in the new system the question of their public presence was presented as a problem rather than as a natural situation (Radcliff, 2002). The stereotypical vision of women was also maintained by both democratic and pro-regime media. While the democratic press used to stereotype women as conservative and unwilling to act on the public stage householders, diaries close to the rightist regime, nostalgic of the past time, framed women as an

¹⁹ In the 1960s laws related to women's freedom were modified and allowed them to integrate, yet in a limited way, the labor market. Nevertheless, persisting discrimination of women did not permit to women to become significant stakeholders of the public life.

embodiment of the regime's values and as a connector with the old times. For instance, the right diary ABC used to write about Queen Sofia and frame her as an ideal of womanhood: she was always behind her husband, playing her role of mother and not interested at all in politics (Radcliff, 2002).

Public stakeholders' change of heart and modification of legislation finally allowed women to become equal in rights Spanish citizens. They massively entered to the job market (their employment rate is of 51.7% according to OECD's 2014 data) and to the public life (female deputies hold today 36% of seats in the Spanish parliament). Nevertheless, they still encounter serious problems blocking their way to a full equality. A lack of efficient family policies condemns a part of women to remain at home (despite the massive entrance to the job market, the female employment rate of Spain is below the OECD's 57% average) or to work in less valued part-time jobs and reproduce thus the traditionalist model (Moreno Mínguez, 2009). Moreover, inequalities in distribution of domestic duties still persist: according to poll's results published in 2010 by the Institute of the Woman²⁰, in 2010, 91.9% of women performed domestic tasks on a daily basis and they spent in average 4 h 29 min doing so. At the same time, only 74.7% of men did domestic works and they dedicated to those actions 2 h 32 min. This particular situation can explain why in Spain, despite the decrease of work-related gender stereotypes, family-related stereotypes are still persisting (López-Sáez, Morales, & Lisbona, 2008).

2.2. The gossip press in Spain as a vector of gender stereotypes

For almost one century gossip magazines have had a significant position on the Spanish press market. Although the date of their appearance in Spain has not

²⁰ The Institute of the woman is an independent institute attached to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality investigating on gender inequalities in Spain.

reached the consensus among researchers²¹, it can be confirmed that they renewed in the 1940s under the influence of the French phenomenon on the reading market, *la presse du coeur* (the heart's press). At that particular period appeared several magazines which were addressed to women and tackled themes such as love and feelings. They formed a new sector on the Spanish market and adopted a name influenced by its French counterpart, *la prensa del corazón* (the heart's press) or *la prensa rosa* (the pink press) (De Fontcuberta, 1990).

This shelf of the press became very close to women's magazines with which it shared the readers' target (De Fontcuberta, 1990; Hermes, 1995). The main difference laid however in the choice of protagonists. Both sectors concentrated on women, yet women's magazines preferred to cover anonymous women, while *la prensa del corazón* put a spotlight on women (yet not exclusively) with power and public influence (Hermes, 1995; Sanchez Díaz, 2000). Moreover, both press segments differentiated in framing. Whilst women's magazines concentrated on the story, gossip magazines focused their attention on protagonists of a story and on the story itself (Bueno et al., 2007; De Fontcuberta, 1990).

The (re)birth of the gossip press coincides with the beginning of the rightist dictatorship of General Franco (1939–1975). Several authors (Bueno et al., 2007; De Fontcuberta, 1990; Gallego, 1990) underline that the development of *la prensa rosa* was possible thanks to its particularly privileged position in a strongly censored environment. Indeed, the period of the francoist regime was a particularly fertile time for gossip magazines as they were seen by the authorities as a medium useful to promote national ideology.

The rightist regime started to fade away with the death of General Franco 1975. Nevertheless, the popularity of gossip magazines did not decrease. On the contrary,

²¹ Following Bueno, Cárdenas, and Esquivias (2007) the gossip magazines were born in Spain in the seventeenth century, while Seoane and Saiz (2007) claim that they appeared in the nineteenth century.

a massive entrance of foreign media groups in the 1980s and a creation of gossip-turned programs in television reinforced the position of la *prensa rosa* in Spain (Bueno et al., 2007; Gallego, 1990). Nowadays, according to data about the media in Spain in 2013 supplied by AIMC²², eight out of ten most read weeklies are gossip magazines which represents a total number of 20.9 million readers.

Gossip press in Spain has been an important vector of a gender stereotypes' proliferation since its very beginning (Angeletti & Oliva, 2002; Gallego, 1990; Roca, 2006). The propagation of the traditionalist vision on womanhood is naturally a fruit of the francoist heritage (Peñafiel, 1995; Roca, 2006). Nevertheless, gossip magazines have never seized the opportunity to truly modernize the image of women they conveyed. Despite a superficial face-lifting, the discourse of la *prensa rosa* on women still concentrates on beauty, love and housekeeping (Roca, 2006). Moreover, this traditionalist discourse of the written media was echoed by TV gossip-press programs and a creation of the celebrity culture, both spreading a vision of the society based on naturalization of social division and maintaining of the traditionalist order (Oliva, 2014).

The fact that the attitude of Spanish gossip magazines toward the place of women in the society did not evolve can be partially explained on one side by the stability of readers' profile of the *prensa rosa* (Gallego, 1990) and on the other by the importance of the sexist vision of womanhood promoted by the celebrity-smitten popular culture. As during the francoist period, nowadays gossip and women magazines are mainly read by housekeepers, focused on their families and homes (Gallego, 1990). In 2007, Bueno, Cárdenas and Esquivias portrayed the audience of la *prensa rosa* as follows:

²² AIMC (Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación) is a Spanish organization working on the theme of consumers and media audience in Spain. Every year, AIMC releases annual data about the Spanish media audience in its publication called 'Marco general de los medios en España'.

There are over 15 million people who read (or at least have a look at) these types of magazines. According to EGM readers are mainly women (between 60 and 70 per cent) who describe themselves as housewives, are married, have average-to-high purchasing power, living in big or medium-sized cities. It can be thus concluded that this particular profile of readers is more likely to share conservative values.

Moreover, contemporary mass-media and especially those directed to women concentrate their attention on celebrities and in particular on female celebrities (Williamson, 2010), and use them as the embodiment of a new ideal of womanhood, strongly enrooted in gender and class distinctions. The media created what Negra (2009) calls 'the aspirational gap culture', a personalized frame that grounds the popular fantasy of the ideal womanhood in post-feminist codes such as dedication to family, a mitigated attitude toward professional ambitions, over-exposure of the body and excessive consumerism. This trivialized and stereotyped representation overwhelms currently the society and created new forms of pressure made on women to retreat to more traditional roles.

3. Scope and methodology

The theme of the research turns around notions such as public image, press framing and gender representation, therefore it was decided that the investigation design based on the content analysis would suit the best. This widely used qualitative technique allows systemizing the content of communication and coding and measuring transmitted by the text messages. A large diversity of current applications of this method (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) results in different procedures applied in the research. As to respond the best to particular needs of this investigation, it was decided to apply logical-semantic and logical-esthetic methods which form part of the content analysis developed by Mucchielli (2006). The logical-

semantic analysis works on three principal points: themes, frequency and attitude. The themes' analysis allows defining global frames of the discourse. It consists in identifying discourse's themes and thereafter classifying them into pertinent categories. The analysis of frequency determinates which themes or theme's categories appear the most, and subsequently displays which subjects are important in the global discourse. Finally, the attitude analysis permits to see the position of discourse's authors toward the protagonist. Such position is measured by the analysis of the tone of articles (positive, negative, neutral/ambiguous). The logical-esthetic analysis, using the study of the literary style of articles (vocabulary used in the articles, connotations and figures of speech etc.), helps in examining the portrayal of the discourse's protagonist.

The clipping of texts that were analyzed in this research was composed of the press coverage on Queen Sofia published in the most famous Spanish gossip magazine, *iHola!*. Selected articles were published between May 1, 2011 and May 1, 2014. This period of time corresponds to the last three years of Queen Sofia fulfilling her duties as the Queen of Spain and the spouse of the Head of State. Every one of these articles was coded in a data base composed of sections corresponding to Mucchielli's method (2005). At the same time, period indicators allowed to observe possible changes in the discourse.

As for the analyzed materials, the decision of choice *iHola!* as the medium to analyze was based on three critical factors: an outstanding position of the magazine among other gossip press in Spain and worldwide, its royalist character and its francoist origins which influenced the ideal of womanhood through the images presented on its pages. *iHola!* is a Spanish title which since its foundation in 1944 has dominated the market of gossip magazines in Spain. Although today the magazine has lost its leading position to *Pronto*²³, it still enjoys a great brand capital

²³ According to data of OJCD (Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión, organ supervising circulations of newspapers in Spain) in 2013 *iHola!* reached an average

which has allowed its publisher, Hola S.L., to launch various editions worldwide and become thus an international reference.

Since its very beginning the magazine has focused its attention on elites. In the first years, when *iHola!* was published in Barcelona, most of the articles spoke about the Catalan high-class. When the company expanded and moved to Madrid, the magazine switched its focus toward the national scope and became particularly interested in the Madrilenian society mainly represented by Spanish aristocrats (Peñafiel, 1995). In the 1960s *iHola!* got interested in Prince Juan Carlos and his wife, Princess Sofia. Since then the magazine has continuously put a spotlight on the family of those who founded after the Royal Household of Spain. Following a strict policy imposed by its founder, Antonio Sánchez Gomez, the magazine used to cover positively 'its' celebrities and avoid shocking or image-damaging pictures and stories (Angeletti & Oliva, 2002). Consequently, *iHola!*'s predilection for the Spanish monarchy and its approach to create positive image of celebrities prove the royalist character of the magazine since its very beginning. Furthermore, despite the arrival of democracy and appearance of new, more 'egalitarian' celebrities in other gossip reviews, *iHola!* maintained its affection for the monarchy and made of it its hallmark (Peñafiel, 1995). The weekly offers thus the most complete and abundant coverage on all members of the Royal Family and various representative of Spanish aristocracy. However, this royalist predilection of *iHola!* is not limited to the national stage. The magazine covers as well other households, especially those coming from Europe, stressing further its royalist character.

Beside its strong fondness for the royalty, some influences of the rightist ideology can also be recognized in *iHola!* Likewise in the case of other gossip titles created before 1975, the years of the rightist regime were the golden age of the magazine's

circulation of 533,506 copies and its average diffusion as at the level of 399,007 readers per number. Moreover, the total number of *iHola!*'s readers represented 6.2 million people (data of AIMC).

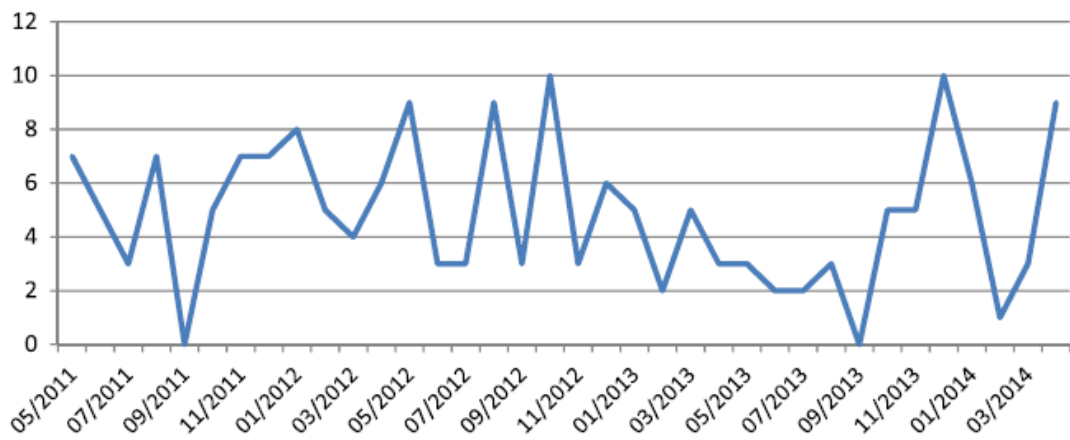
development. *iHola!* was then the flagship title of la *prensa rosa* and a useful tool, next to the Church and the women's branch of the phalange party, la Sección Femenina, for francoist propaganda (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Enders & Radcliff, 1998). Until the death of General Franco the magazine used to produce an extensive and positive discourse on Franco and his family (Peñafiel, 1995), participating in this way in the creation of the leader's myth. After the fall of the dictatorship, the magazine turned moved its support to the new regime. Nevertheless, it maintained its strongly traditional character and attachment to values such as religiousness. Regarding the vision of womanhood promoted by *iHola!*, it closely tied in with the ideal of traditionalist womanhood and the end of the regime did not cause any important modification in *iHola!*'s worldview. Consequently, despite a superficial modernization, the magazine continues to promote conservative values (Peñafiel, 1995).

4. Results and analysis

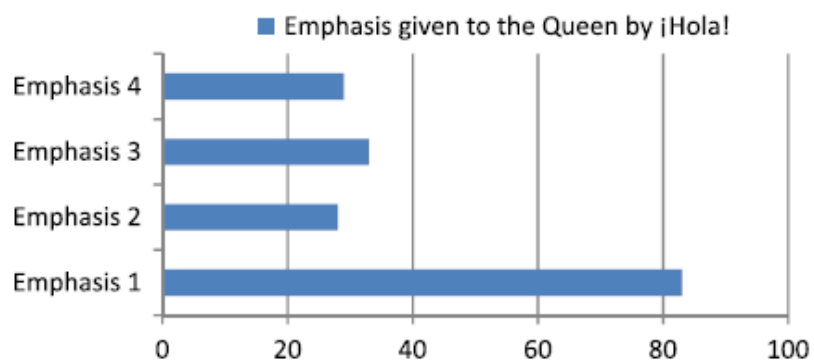
Blain and O'Donnell affirmed in 2003 that members of European Royal Households are often modern celebrities, particularly revered by the gossip press. The content analysis of the *iHola!*'s coverage on Queen Sofia confirms that she also attracts this kind of media attention.

In the space of three years and 158 issues of *iHola!*, the Queen appears in 173 articles what gives an average of appearance of 1.1 per issue (Graphic 1). This very high score shows that Queen Sofia is one of the favorite protagonists of the review (during the studied period only Princess Letizia, current Queen of Spain, had a comparable result). In addition, the analysis of the emphasis given to the Queen in the articles displays a high interest in the personage. In the scale going from 1 to 4 (1 being a strong emphasis characterized by a spotlight put on the Queen and 4

being a sole indication of Queen’s presence or actuation), the prominence accorded to the Queen by *iHOLA!* is situated on the high average level of 1.81 (Graphic 2).



Graphic 1. Monthly frequency of the covering on Queen Sofia in *iHOLA!* from May 2011 to April 2014.



Graphic 2. Details of emphasis given to Queen Sofia in *iHOLA!*'s articles.

In details (Tables 1a and 1b), in 83 articles (48% of all articles) she is given the central position. 51 of them (61.5% of this selection) refer to the public domain corresponding both to the dynastic representation and institutional responsibilities. The dynastic representation encompasses activities resulting from Queen’s royal duties as a member of the Household of Spain, such as participation in religious acts or meetings with members of other royal households in the world. Institutional responsibilities are duties that Queen Sofia executes as the spouse of the Spain’s Head of State. They include charity and social projects, participation in cooperation

projects abroad, official visits in Spain etc. 28 articles (33.7%) cover the Queen in the context of her private activities such as spending spare time with her grandchildren, being next to her husband during his various stays at hospital or enjoying her holidays on Mallorca. Finally, four portrayals of the Queen (4.8%) were published within the studied period, on occasions such as Queen's birthdays or memories of a journalist from a State travel abroad with the Queen.

Table 1a. Articles about Queen Sofia classified by type and emphasis presented with numbers.

Type of article/strength of the emphasis given to Queen Sofia	Very strong emphasis	Strong emphasis	Middle emphasis	Weak emphasis	Total number of articles by type
Public	51	19	17	19	106
Private	28	9	11	9	57
Portrayals	4	0	5	1	10
Total number of articles by emphasis	83	28	33	29	173

Table 1b. Articles about Queen Sofia classified by type and emphasis presented with percentages.

Type of article/strength of the emphasis given to Queen Sofia	Very strong emphasis (%)	Strong emphasis (%)	Middle emphasis (%)	Weak emphasis (%)	Percentage of articles by type (%)
Public	29.5	11	9.8	11	61.3
Private	16.1	5.2	6.4	5.2	32.9
Portrayals	2.3	0	2.9	0.6	5.8
Percentage of articles by emphasis	48	16	19	17	100

In 28 articles (16% of all articles) a great attention is directed to the Queen; however she is not the main protagonist of the papers. A strong majority of those (19 articles which represent 67.8%) relate to the public area, especially the Queen's presence in events in various Spanish cities. The other nine articles (32.2%) are connected to the private domain and focus for example on holidays at Palma de Mallorca or King's health problems.

In 33 articles (19% of all articles), the attention given to the Queen is moderate. Although she is not a main protagonist of the article, she appears in at least one

paragraph and/or one big-size picture. 17 articles (51.5%) are related to the public sphere, over all to acts resulting from her royal status. Eleven articles (33.3%) concern private matters. In the last five articles (15.2%) the Queen appears in portrayals of other members of the Royal Family.

In 29 articles (17% of all articles), the presence of the Queen is very weak. She is mentioned in one sentence and/or appears on one picture. In this category as well, articles related to public sphere are the most frequent (19 articles, representing 65.5% of articles in this group). Queen Sofia is also mentioned in nine articles related to private matters (31%) and in one article (3.5%) portraying a member of the Royal Family of Spain.

The tone's analysis displays a clear dominance of positively-opinioned articles. This result was not unexpected, as it corresponds on the one hand to the *iHola!*'s policy of generating a positive coverage of celebrities and on the other to the particular interest of the weekly toward kingship. Nevertheless, the fact that positive articles represent as much as 90.7% of the whole press clipping (only 9.3% represent neutrally-toned articles and there is no negatively-turned articles) permits to prompt the hypothesis that *iHola!* in its discourse on the Queen presents her as a genuinely positive heroine.

As regards the portrayal of the Queen made by *iHola!*, the classification of gender stereotypes by Deaux and Lewis (1984) seems the most appropriate to display an organized and exhaustive way of clichéd charge on the discourse on Queen Sofia. According to Deaux and Lewis, gender stereotypes can be divided into four major categories: traits, behavior, physical characteristics and occupation. Although those categories can exist on their own, when put all together they create a coherent ensemble of a stereotyped perception of women.

When those categories are applied to the traditionalist perception of women, it displays an image of the Spanish woman as fragile, influential and emotional,

however important for the society because fulfilling a critical function of mother, and thus of social and biological reproducer (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas, 2003; Morales & López-Sáez, 1996).

Although the perception of gender roles has evolved, women's work is still anchored to the private domain (Morales & López-Sáez, 1996), because her main duties – being a mother, a wife and a housekeeper – are related to those roles (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas, 2003; Mohammad, 2005; Radcliff, 2002). This social division is enhanced by the discourse of the Catholic Church, still powerful in Spain, whose ideology is based on hierarchy and paternalism (Anderson, 2007). Subsequently, the Spanish woman is expected to be submissive to her husband and silently accept her background role (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas, 2003; Radcliff, 2002). Her very strong dedication to the family and home requires her to be highly self-controlled and disciplined (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Manrique Arribas, 2003). As to the physical, although the woman's body is not destined solely to reproductive purposes as it was during the Franco's dictatorship (Manrique Arribas, 2003), it is still treated as an object. Indeed, following the research of Lopez-Zafra and Garcia-Retamero on the dynamic of gender stereotypes in Spain (2012), women should be 'gorgeous, cute, beautiful and sexy'.

The comparison of this traditionalist imaginary of Spanish womanhood with the results of the analysis of the *iHola!*'s coverage on the Queen reveals an important number of similarities between those two representations. As regards to Queen's traits, the gossip magazine emphasizes above all different facets of Queen's sensibility. She is depicted as a highly emotional and empathic person. She embodies thus characteristics of a perfect mother – she is caring and loving, especially with children and animals, and stands with the most needed. It is important to notice that Queen's responsiveness is an important part of the discourse relative to her public actions, following which the concern toward the

public proves Queen's abilities to assume the role of the Queen Consort. In order to prove the truthfulness of this thesis, *iHola!* has a tendency to describe signs of public opinion's affection toward the Queen²⁴.

Queen Sofia is also presented as positive and full of joy. The adjective 'smiling' appears the most in her coverage and the majority of pictures show her smiling. *iHola!* underlines Queen's zest of life, which did not decrease despite hardships she encountered in her life. Following the explanation of the magazine, the strength of the Queen is rooted in her satisfaction and pride of her family. It can be thus understood that Queen's most precious good in life is her family and her work is a supplement, fulfilled more by a call of duty than by a genuine professional awareness. Furthermore, the magazine eulogizes Queen's modesty and diligence, in almost religious descriptions²⁵. This particular framing displays catholic influences in the discourse on the Queen and its positioning on the social division of the society.

Finally, *iHola!* frames Queen Sofia as a Spanish patriot, fully integrated in the Spanish society and respectful of the country's traditions. Queen Sofia being born Greek and orthodox, she changed her nationality and confession after the marriage to Prince Juan Carlos. Notwithstanding, the weekly chooses to avoid the theme of Queen's foreign roots and instead highlights her patriotism by covering various

²⁴ 'She has that formidable capacity to feel other people's pain, joy and hopes and for that reason, people respect and admire her. But over all, they love her.' *iHola!*, 13 November 2013, La reina cumple 75 años.

²⁵ 'Doña Sofia, Princess of Greece, Queen of Spain, who knew the hardship of a war and the uncertainty, is, like her mother, a wise woman who stands out by her moral and personal qualities. Her gaze reflects the divine and the spiritual. She speaks without raising the voice. Her gestures are reserved, far from a wild gesticulation, she is open-minded and always smiling. In her veins circulates music with which you fall in love.' *iHola!*, 13 November 2013, La reina cumple 75 años.

examples of her patriotic feelings and enthusiasm toward Spain, especially in the field of sport²⁶.

Moreover, the Consort is presented as a fervent catholic, regularly participating in religious acts. This religious devotion tends to argue that the Queen shares catholic values with Spanish society. Framing of the Queen as a Spanish patriot is profoundly enrooted in the nationalist character of the Spanish patriarchy, especially during the francoist period, when, like in fascist Italy or Nazi Germany, women had to be very careful as to respect of genetic and cultural purity of the Nation (Carbayo-Abengózar, 2001; Enders & Radcliff, 1998).

With respect to stereotypes about the behavior, *iHola!* accentuates the attitude of devotion that characterizes the Queen. On the public stage, the Spanish Consort behaves as a great professional; however she acts by a call of duty toward the country and the Royal Household and not because of personal ambitions. A large coverage of institutional activities (106 articles representing 61% of the press clipping) gives the impression that the Queen is very active, both on national and international stages. Queen Sofía fulfills her duties in a very competent way, never committing mistakes, which makes her an important stakeholder. Nevertheless, from time to time she acts spontaneously breaking thus the protocol. Those moments are used to show that the Queen, despite all her professionalism and expertise, is above all a warm and tender person, curious of the world and open-minded²⁷.

²⁶ 'Queen Sofía, all exited, greeted Spanish Olympic sportsmen, remembering without a doubt the Olympic Games in Barcelona in 1992, and Felipe as the standard bearer of the Spanish team.' *iHola!*, 8 August 2012, La espectacular inauguración de la olimpiada de Londres.

²⁷ 'She danced the chingomana, wearing a 'capulana' and brought to the country thousands of liters of milk and two tons of medicine'. *iHola!*, 24 April 2013, Las imágenes mas entrañables del viaje de doña Sofía a Africa.

iHola! uses a narrative mode similar to that of a traditional tale (Propp, 2010). Queen Sofía is presented as a genuinely good, hard working woman who despite various hardships never gives up and continues her work. In *iHola!* the Queen is framed as a Spanish stakeholder who travels the most to various places in Spain, listens to the people and sympathizes with touched by a catastrophe inhabitants. Like in a myth of a good Queen, Sofía receives warm welcoming of citizens²⁸. This impression of a fairy tale is reinforced by the rhythm of the coverage. In many cases, stories are narrated in various issues of the magazine, which creates an impression of sections, tracing different parts from the beginning to the (happy) end.

Regarding physical characteristics, those stereotypes are not very present in the discourse on the Queen, probably because the Queen does not correspond to the modern canons of beauty lauding youthfulness and physical attractiveness. Nevertheless the magazine alludes to Queen's elegance and her ability to feel good about herself no matter her age. As to the first characteristic of the Queen, the word 'elegant' is the most commonly used in the description of her look. It is worth to notice that the adjective, which the first meaning corresponds to a particular sense of beauty, evokes as well the notion of a certain self-restraint, a respect of socially-established norms related to clothing. Notwithstanding, *iHola!* counterbalances this image of the physical self-control by insisting on the Queen's sense of fashion and her knowledge of the last fashion tendencies. She becomes

²⁸ '(She came to the village) because she wanted to personally inform herself about the progress of the reconstruction works and to lend her support to all the people affected by the disaster (...) doña Sofía listened to them very carefully (...) she was received with warm manifestations of affection and with applauses of the neighbors', *iHola!*, 10 September 2013, Siete días.

thus a model of eternal beauty, as she is able to successfully connect tradition and modernity²⁹.

Through the acceptance of her appearance, the Queen is presented as a woman who acknowledges the time going by and tries to benefit from each period of her life. Hence, she does not try to search for youth, as the majority of modern female celebrities are presented to do. This self-acceptance is explained as coming from Queen's happiness and satisfaction of her life, based uniquely on happy private life. The Queen accepts the transient time as she accepts her changing role within the Royal Family: the Queen passed from being a young wife to being a mother and finally, to being a grandmother. This accentuation of the private domain and a complete omission of the public stage supports a gender stereotype, based on the biological division of society and claiming that the women's dominium is the heart and home and a professional carrier is only an appurtenance³⁰.

Regarding the last category of gender stereotypes, namely occupation, the review presents the Queen in four different roles: as a mother and a grandmother, as a wife, as a housekeeper and finally, as a member of the Spanish Royal Household. It should be noticed that among the four roles that *iHola!* attributed to the Queen, three of them are connected to the private domain. The first and the most important occupation of the Queen is being a mother and a grandmother. This role goes hand in hand with the patriarchal understanding of women's function in the society where being a mother was more important than being a wife. The framing of the Queen in this particular occupation is particularly abundant. The review

²⁹ 'The Queen, smiling and extremely elegant wearing the color of the season', *iHola!* 12 December 2013, El rey presidió el día de las fuerzas armadas junto a la reina doña Sofía y los príncipes de Asturias.

³⁰ 'Doña Sofía, who does not care about the time passing by, often says that every stage of live has its charm and what genuinely counts is being in good health and enjoying the life. And what makes the Queen the happiest is her family, always her family.' *iHola!* 13 November 2013, La reina cumple 75 años.

favors pictures of the Queen with her family, even during public events and all 12 covers dedicated to the Queen presented her surrounded by her grandchildren and/or children. Moreover, several articles claimed that the role of the mother and grandmother out-weighted her duties as the Queen of Spain, and if necessary Queen Sofia was able to change her public plans to respond to some family obligations and issues.

In line with the discourse about Queen's aging, *iHola!* puts the biggest emphasis on the grandmother's occupation. On the fringe of this investigation, it was observed that the mother's role was more exposed in discourses about Princess Letizia and Infants Cristina and Elena, who currently are mothers to young children. The Queen represents then the generation of grandfathers, culturally very close to their grandchildren in Spain. She is thus presented as a woman who concentrates the most of her attention on her grandchildren and who does not hesitate to make every effort to meet her grandchildren and gather her family³¹. This dedication to her the grandchildren is also exposed to create the impression that the Queen harbors more love to them than to her own children, Infants Elena and Cristina and Prince Felipe. This discourse is strongly supported by pictures of the Queen and her grandchildren which generally contain a very high change of positive emotions, such as mutual affection, proximity and tenderness.

Her relation with her children is shown as very close and emotional. In the articles covering this particular theme, the most common adjective is 'affectionate' which is supposed to underline emotional links within the family. The narration about Queen's relation with the progeny is composed of three different stories. In her

³¹ 'The Queen acted once again in her role of a proud grandmother (...) the Queen is a great grandmother and she proves it every time she can (...) For the Queen – she says it all the time – the family is the most important and for that reason she does not hesitate to modify her agenda and to travel wherether she has to. It is particularly true when her grandchildren have something important to celebrate.' *iHola!*, 18 December 2013, La reina, la infanta Elena y su hijo, viaje sorpresa a Ginebra para felicitar a Pablo Nicolas, en su decimotercer cumpleaños.

relation with her oldest daughter, Infant Elena, the Consort is a friend, but also a model to imitate. The relation with her younger daughter, Infant Cristina, is marked by the corruption scandal involving the royal daughter and her spouse. Although the case is not directly covered by *iHola!*, the review adopts the sentimentalist approach and pictures the Infant and her husband as suffering of great hardship and obliged to exile. The Queen plays here a role of support to her daughter and proves to be the strongest connector within the Royal Family. Finally, her relation with her son is marked by a strong preference to her only male child. This preference is not illustrated on the emotional level, nevertheless the use of the adjective 'proud' and its variants appears only in articles covering the Queen and her son³².

In relation to the second occupation of the Queen, that of a wife, it can be quickly seen that among the different roles within the family, this one is the less covered. It can be thus concluded that *iHola!* maintains the traditionalist vision of the Spanish family following which the woman had to be mother before being wife. Additionally, the magazine put this occupation in the twilight of its coverage in 2011 and 2012. This particular period corresponded to the period before and in the beginning of so-called *Annus Horribilis*, a serious and prolonged image crisis which touched the Royal Household of Spain and which is seen today as the main reason of King Juan Carlos' abdication. One of the scandals that burst open during the *Annus Horribilis* concerned the royal matrimonial life and presumed love affairs of the King. Spanish media largely relayed a visible distance of the Queen toward her husband and a lukewarm character of their relationship (Widlak, 2014). Nevertheless, *iHola!*, which decided not to cover the scandal, preferred to dissemble the theme. When in 2013, a thaw in relation of the royal spouses arrived, the weekly started again to publish articles and pictures creating a perfect

³² 'While doña Sofía, who participates to the event every year, was looking enthusiastically at her son (...),'*iHola!*, 7 November 2012, Brillante entrega de los premios principe de Asturias, con doña Letizia radiante con su nuevo look.

image of the Royal couple. Following their narration, the royal couple reached to form an enduring and resilient marriage, because they based their relation on mutual respect. There is no indication of any romantic feeling, but tenderness for each other. The Queen is presented in a role of a trusted advisor and companion of the King whose political wisdom allows to the Monarch to execute his role³³. She is also depicted as very loyal to her husband during all his institutional and health problems³⁴.

While tacking with this facet of the Queen's framing, *iHola!* tends to present the Consort as a nurse, always caring about her husband. The choice of this profession is not trivial; nursing was one of rare professions open to women during the rightist dictatorship and its very core, i.e. taking care of others, still matches to the social role attributed to Spanish women (Morales & López-Sáez, 1996). Consequently, it can be concluded that in her marriage, the Queen plays a secondary role, based on support and loyalty to her husband. By the same token, the fact of presenting this unbalanced matrimony as successful displays *iHola!*'s traditionalist vision of the marriage.

Regarding the third occupation of the Queen, the housekeeping, this frame, although not very developed, has a strong potential of creating a personification effect on *iHola!*'s readers. Indeed, this democratization of every day's activities of the Queen humanizes her image and place the Queen at the same place as other Spanish woman. Naturally, the Queen does not perform typical household chores, still she is presented as the hostess of the Royal Palace. This rather metaphorical occupation is also used to justify Queen's crucial position within the Royal Family.

³³ 'Her political sagacity has helped the King in various and sometimes very difficult situations.' *iHola!* 13 November 2013, La reina cumple 75 años.

³⁴ 'In one fugitive kiss, the Queen shows one again her support to the King in the hardship.' *iHola!* 2 October 2013, El esperado y cálido encuentro de los reyes de Holanda y la familia real española marcado por la operación del rey.

In the *iHola!*'s discourse, Queen Sofía is the genuine leader of the family as she does not only manage the functioning of the Royal Palace, but also brings together all the Royal Family, playing the role of a peacekeeper and organizer of the family's life. She clearly dominates the hearth, unlike her husband who is almost invisible in his role of a father and husband³⁵.

In the fourth occupation of Queen Sofía, corresponding to the public representation of the Crown of Spain and of her foundation, the analysis of the clipping demonstrates that paradoxically a high activity of the Queen in that field, is not an illustration of a successful professional career, but rather of a fulfillment of social and moral duties. *iHola!* concentrates on three types of Queen's actions: cooperation projects, local representation and assistance to her husband in national-scale events. In general, the articles covering official events follow a typical structure of gossip writings; they skip the description of the very event focus on the description of the personage. In the case of Queen Sofía, the superficial is the feature: the narrative features commonly the look and behavior of the Consort, paying a very small attention to the content of her participation.

The stress is put as well on social activities which on one hand gives an opportunity to portray the Queen in her role of the guardian angel of all those who need her help and on the other permits to depolitize her image. We can thus conclude that this particular frame of the Queen as a public stakeholder goes hand in hand with the frame of the Queen as a mother and a family protector³⁶. Moreover, despite a

³⁵ 'Doña Sofía, the great hostess of the Palace during Christmas. (...) The night confirmed that the family's protocol for those holidays is like always. All united in the hearth of the Kings celebrating the Christmas Eve.' *iHola!* 3 January 2013, La imagen más esperada de Navidad.

³⁶ '(...) Like the ethical engagement that she fulfills with all her professionalism and all her heart (...) Those five days were very intensive because of all the public meetings. Nevertheless they did not lose warmth and profoundly emotional encounters, above all when the Queen visited places of solidarity projects financed by the Spanish cooperation (...),' *iHola!* 2 April 2014, Doña Sofía la reina de la

strong public presence, the Queen in practice does not go outside her scope of competence, that is to say the family. Finally, a constant reminder of Queen's sense of responsibility regarding her public actions creates an impression that her presence on the public stage results from the social contract and could be contrary to her personal ambitions, reduced to family caring.

5. Conclusions

The article offers a positive answer to the primary hypothesis of the function of the coverage on Queen Sofía as a vector of promotion of the traditionalist vision on womanhood. The coverage on the Queen is heavily charged with gender stereotypes and features characteristics and behaviors that the Spanish patriarchal model has tended to impose to women. A strongly positive and embellished image of the Consort presented in *iHola!* confirms that she is presented as an ideal of womanhood rather than as an average woman. A high number of articles, by far unequaled by other celebrities, proves a particular affection of *iHola!* to the Queen. Additionally, a very partial choice of events to cover during the *Annus Horribilis* shows that the magazine decided to maintain the idealized image of the Royal Household of Spain.

To reinforce the said impact, convince and engage more deeply the readers, *iHola!* has created a typical to modern celebrity culture fantasy on the Queen with the use of components such as idealization, strongly narrative discourse and an emphasis on the physical. As explained by Ang (1990), 'In line with psychoanalytic theory, fantasy should not be seen as a mere illusion, an unreality, but as a reality in itself, a fundamental aspect of human existence: a necessary and unerasable dimension of psychical reality.' It should be noticed indeed that this reality is strongly

cooperación lleva su sonrisa... Y mil kilos de medicinas a los más necesitados de Guatemala.

gendered – the construction of this fantasy is based on sexist bases of physical appearance and the sex division. Queen Sofia is set in her gender role and in consequence, put into relation with the other (male) sex. This leads to the situation in which the fantasy on her is delimited by the male gaze.

Although *iHola!*, guided by its fondness to the world of monarchy, overexposes the members of the Spanish Royal Household, an empirical analysis of other gossip reviews confirms that the Queen is constantly put in a spotlight and in many reviews she represents a category in herself. Like in a typical construction of the gossip press' discourse (Dakhliya, 2009), her personality is the focal point of the coverage and stories are secondary and give a pretext to speak about the said person. It offers as well an opportunity to the review to 'use' a celebrity as an embodiment of certain ideologies. In the case of *iHola!* and its coverage on the Queen this willingness is so strong that the magazine does not hesitate to use a procedure that could call into question its journalistic principles: in various articles on the Queen *iHola!* used the same expressions and, in some cases, even the same phrases. This attitude allows to ascertain that the image of the Queen in *iHola!* is strictly controlled and, presumably, is constructed in aim to defend an ideology or a world view. Her symbolic position of the wife, mother and grandmother in the most exposed family in Spain offers to the magazine a possibility to create a narrative promoting a traditionalist perception on woman's role in the society and the importance of the family in Spain.

The application of gender stereotypes that persist within the Spanish society to the image of the Queen disclosed by *iHola!* showed critical similarities. Despite the fact that in quantitative terms the coverage on the Queen is dominated by articles relating to the public stage, qualitatively the private domain reigns. Indeed, Queen's *raison d'être* on the political scene is entitled to exist only because of her social status. Therefore, her public obligations are in a way an extension of her private situation. Like in her household, where she is of assistance to her husband

and children, Queen Sofía broadens her role of a helpmate to the most needy in Spain and abroad.

Notwithstanding, the most important role of the Queen is that of a grandmother and mother and family-keeper. Despite thus a superficial touch of modernity given by the numerical emphasis of the professional work, the Queen embodies traditional values of housekeeping as the principal and almost exclusive role of a Spanish woman. The Queen is thus presented as 'the mother of Spain', a model to follow by also an example easy to identify with. Presumably this framing could have a certain effect of recognition on the audience of *iHola!*, as the readership of the review is mainly composed of housekeepers.

The description of the Queen's character is similar to the nationalist vision of women's role. On one hand, idealized and poetized as national heroine, she had to be submissive to her country and, on a smaller scale, to her husband and her family. In the *iHola!*'s discourse the Queen is above all conscious of her obligations toward her family and toward the country. She accepts her duties without questioning them. Moreover, she seems to enjoy her life as the core of her satisfaction is her family. This particular frame has a double effect: on one hand it provides to a moral standardization and on the other produces an effect of idealization of the place attributed to women by the patriarchal model.

After the abdication of King Juan Carlos I in June 2014, the legal status of Queen Sofía changed. Although she kept the honorific title of 'Queen', she became replaced in her functions by Queen Letizia, the spouse of King Felipe VI. The media focus shifted thus to the young Consort, especially since Queen Sofía retracted from the public stage. Consequently, her apparition on pages of gossip magazines diminished. Nevertheless, taking into account several factors and among them the public image of Queen Letizia based on modernity and a seeking for independence, hence contrary to the promoted ideology, it can be presumed that the gossip press

would still use the image of Queen Sofía to embody the traditional perception of Spanish womanhood.

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