Mediatized Friends and Enemies

The Relevance of the Schmittian Political in Contemporary Mediatization

Amigos y enemigos mediatizados

Vigencia de lo político de Schmitt en la mediatización contemporánea

Amigos e inimigos mediatizados

A vigência do político de Schmitt na mediatização contemporânea

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ABSTRACT

This article claims that the contemporary conditions of mediatization have reinforced the friend-enemy opposition, criteria of the political according to Carl Schmitt, for the constitution of political groups. Factors like the deepening of non-consensual dynamics, the link between different social actors, the diversification of communication exchanges, and the expansion of the "public" as well as the range of communication resources for building controversy enable the building of a confrontational digital public sphere. There, the Schmittian political, as a deterritorialized concept, finds pertinence for the modulation of political aggregation, questioning the horizon of consent in contemporary democracies. The first section sets out the conditions of contemporary communicative circulation from the perspective of mediatization, in order to discuss, in the

following section, how the Habermasian public sphere and the organization of collective social experience that the digital public sphere entails are undermined. The third part is focused on Schmitt's concept of the political, emphasizing the friend-enemy opposition, its deterritorialized nature, and its confrontational attitude. In the last part, implications of this combined framework are elaborated: conflict and antagonism as central phenomena for contemporary social processes and the assemblage of political communities.

KEYWORDS: *digital public sphere, political, conflict, mediatization, contemporary.*

RESUMEN

Este artículo argumenta que las condiciones de mediatización contemporáneas han potenciado la oposición amigo-enemigo, criterio de lo político de Carl Schmitt, para la conformación de comunidades políticas. Factores como la profundización de dinámicas no consensuales, la vinculación entre actores sociales diversos, la multiplicidad de flujos comunicativos, así como la ampliación de lo público y del repertorio de recursos comunicativos para construir polémicas, favorecen la construcción de una *esfera pública digital* de signo confrontativo. En ese escenario, lo político schmittiano, en tanto concepto desterritorializado, encuentra vigencia para la modulación de la agrupación política, retando el horizonte del consenso en las democracias contemporáneas. En la primera sección se exponen las condiciones de circulación comunicativa contemporánea desde la mediatización para, en la segunda sección, discutir cómo se altera la esfera pública habermasiana y la organización de la experiencia social colectiva que supone la esfera púbica digital. En la tercera parte la atención se fija en el concepto de lo político en Schmitt, enfatizando la oposición amigo-enemigo, su carácter desterritorializado y su orientación confrontativa. En la última parte, se elaboran los efectos de este andamiaje conjunto: el conflicto y el antagonismo como fenómenos centrales para las dinámicas sociales contemporáneas y la agrupación de comunidades políticas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *esfera pública digital, político, conflicto, mediatización, contemporáneo.*

RESUMO

Este artigo defende que as condições contemporâneas de mediatização têm potencializado a oposição amigo-inimigo, o critério político de Carl Schmitt, para a conformação de comunidades políticas. Fatores como o aprofundamento de dinâmicas não consensuais, a ligação entre diversos atores sociais, a diversidade de fluxos comunicativos, bem como a ampliação do "público" e do repertório de recursos comunicativos para construir polêmicas, possibilitam a edificação de uma esfera pública digital confrontacional. Aí, o político schmittiano, como conceito desterritorializado, encontra pertinência para a modulação do agrupamento político, desafiando o horizonte do consenso nas democracias contemporâneas. Na primeira seção expõe as condições da circulação comunicativa contemporânea a partir da mediatização para, na segunda seção, discutir a perturbação da esfera pública habermasiana e a organização da experiência social coletiva que a esfera pública digital implica. Na terceira parte, a atenção se concentra no conceito do político em Schmitt, enfatizando a oposição amigo-inimigo, seu caráter desterritorializado e seu ânimo de confrontação. Na última parte, são elaborados os efeitos desse conjunto: o conflito e o antagonismo como fenômenos centrais para as dinâmicas sociais contemporâneas e o agrupamento de comunidades políticas.

PALABRAS CHAVE: *esfera pública digital, político, conflito, mediatização, contemporáneo.*

1. THE CONDITION OF CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION

Communication is today one of the pillars of contemporary societies. It wasn't that it didn't previously play a relevant and central position, however, the current conditions allow us to view it as a determining factor in the dynamization of processes, government administration, cultural creation, the formation of ideological communities, and processes of coexistence and collectivity.

Within this framework, the media, as communication-producing industries, have become autonomous entities that have increasingly impacted social formation over the decades. The societies in which we live have shifted from being mediated societies to mediatized societies, as the media's influence in various spheres of the social fabric has ceased to be residual or clearly distinct, becoming instead structural. It coexists with educational and political institutions, integrates economic and cultural processes, and is embedded in the historical unfolding and the construction of the events that shape public life and the collective social experience.

Although the media ecosystem is populated by various media, the Internet, as a technical innovation based on digitalization, occupies a fundamental place, as it changed the rules of the game regarding the conditions of communicative circulation: "It allowed us to communicate without intermediaries (…) digitalization favored the convergence of languages and processes. The hypertextual nature of the web has broken with lineality" (Repoll, Garro & López, 2019, p. 143). Historically speaking, digital communication has been decisive, as it transformed the conditions of communication as they were understood until the beginning of the new century.

It brings together certain features that complicate the production of meaning by introducing diverse platforms for expression, linguistic repertoires to construct controversies, and expanded topics that, in turn, broaden what is understood as "public" matters, while accentuating social fragmentation as a phenomenon parallel to its development. Carlón (2016) argues that we are undergoing a specific transformation in communication, driven by "a change in the conditions of discursive circulation, which affects politics, art, the economy, sports, etc.—that is, the set of social practices that comprise, in a broad sense, culture" (p. 129). Information flows coexist, with widely varying scopes: political, economic, and cultural discussions take place at both micro and macro levels, ranging from comment sections on news sites and their Facebook or X pages to closed groups such as private instant messaging chats, and including thematic trends like hashtags or TikTok content.

In this respect, the Internet has been part of a restructuring of social time and new forms of closeness, in which new actors take center stage while others decline or are forced to adapt. As Mitchell (2019) asserts, each new medium entails a new form of immediacy, proposing new possibilities for relating to time

and for the material production of communicative forms, while also modifying the conditions of reception. Similarly, Carlón (2020) notes that digital media bring new forms of actuality, characterized by the fact that among the content circulating on social media, that produced by individual or collective speakers gains prominence over content produced by traditional media institutions—or, at the very least, has the opportunity to compete for attention and interest.

This is how we become increasingly interested in the daily lives of the people with whom we share our existence in the world, because there is a constant updating of their lives through photos, texts, and videos; their cultural consumption, such as books, TV shows, or movies; social and political events they have attended or are interested in; among other things. This reflects how the flows of contemporary mediatization are reshaping social life:

> The fact that we are currently all media enunciators has produced a very different landscape of meaning circulation (…) This is because it has led to an exponential increase in the information that society circulates about itself—no longer just about institutions, but about all of us (…) this content is constructing (…) new interpretative contexts that did not previously exist regarding the offline social practices of institutions, groups, and individuals in contemporary life. (Carlón, 2020, p. 202)

By circulating information about themselves, individuals enable others to interpret them in a continuous present—a time that extends until it merges with the immediate and prioritizes a constant exchange among contemporaries. This unprecedented historical condition, though in the making for several decades, is what Carlón (2020) calls the contemporary period, characterized both by hypermediatization and by presentism as the dominant temporal regime.

> If modernity came to be associated with the future (utopia, revolution, history as a teleological construct), and postmodernity with a crisis of narratives and linear conceptions of history—which were often replaced by memory and a revivalist pastiche that looked to the past—then the contemporary implies the emergence of a new regime of historicity: presentism. (p. 191)

In this regime, individuals and collectives live and wish to live in a present that they try to shape according to their needs. The Internet has made available to multitudes a new space for the production, reception, and appropriation of contents, introducing an expanded present, given that its usage logic is based on real-time interaction (or at least its simulation) tensioning the temporal logics of discourses and modifying both interpretative processes and the possibilities for deliberation by directly altering the conditions of meaning production.

In the context of the mass media system's full dominance and prevalence, Eliseo Verón (2004) wrote: "The discourses of so-called mass communications are characterized by a process of circulation-consumption that could be called

instantaneous: the historical distance between production and consumption is practically zero" (p. 21). If that was true back then, more than twenty years later—and given that large segments of the global population are connected to digital devices on a daily basis—that historical gap between production and consumption has narrowed even further.

What we are witnessing, then, is the emergence of a different articulation between the past, the present, and the future, inaugurated by, though not limited to, digital media. The Internet has become the media expression of this presentist temporality, driven since the 1980s by the growing centrality of real time as a media format, materialized in live broadcasts and the construction of events by the mass media, forging the construction of a global reality through events shared across regions and localities (Carlón, 2020; 2023). Added to this is the general acceleration of the pace of life, which has only served to increase social fragmentation, compress processes, and accentuate various phenomena developing in parallel with this mediatization.

In presentist mediatization, the communicative flows of the "before" (past), the "during" (present), and the "after" (future)—which were previously distinguished by the top-down hierarchical relationships established among enunciators—are now being rearticulated. In the "before," individual and collective enunciators release their own content in real time, in a tangle of posts with multiple perspectives, generated through various channels and even with the intervention of automated and generative tools. It is no longer a matter of waiting time, but of the active pre-construction of the meaning of the event. Changes in the ways online enunciators participate are transforming them into interlocutors capable of influencing broadcast content through various actions: coordinating mobilizations, determining presences, previewing segments, expressing positions, and reacting to what is being presented.

The "during" becomes the time of a set of simultaneous flows of meaning, circulating in multiple directions and encompassing not only the event itself or as it is transmitted, but also its interpretations and pre-constructions. The "after" remains a time for debate, but it is now a continuation of that set of flows of meaning. It is no longer the epilogue of the event, but rather its reinterpretation and inscription within a chain of events that affect it both as the immediate past and as a new point of reference (Carlón, 2023).

Similarly, the relationships maintained on platforms have different statuses, as there are personal audiences (Schmidt, 2014)—composed of Facebook contacts or followers on X—and other expanded audiences with whom a stable relational bond is not necessarily maintained (Quinn & Papacharissi, 2018; Carlón, 2020). On the other hand, there are debates segmented by platform, in which different topics gain greater impact and reach on one network than another or spread simultaneously across several. Such discussions may or may not spread to other platforms; they may quickly fade or take on new meaning

(Zires, 2014), or shift in scale, moving from the Internet to the mass media system.

The very topics of discussion are diverse; they can maintain a captive audience for extended periods or attract temporary audiences that fade away when the trend passes. The Internet, in addition, enables interactions between citizens that were once unthinkable, facilitating communication channels between communities and individuals. This horizontal shift in the direction of communication is what Manuel Castells (2009) refers to as mass self-communication.

In this landscape, individuals changed their status. They moved from being on the level of reception (that is, on the reception side) to becoming part of the production level. With this, two directionalities become relevant: horizontal, which occurs between peers, and ascending, which emerges from the "bottom" of social-digital networks or from the WhatsApp underground, and ascends to the traditional media system (Carlón, 2016; 2020).

These new directions of the information flow mean that communicative directionality and the modalities of meaning circulation emerge as decisive elements. It is through them that we can identify issues to address in multiple spheres: the problem of enunciators when actors of diverse origins and scales interact; the increasing complexity of the concept of invasion of privacy or its intersections with freedom of expression, when individual actors have the capacity to incorporate content that could be considered "intimate" to a viral flux.

The interactive nature of the Internet has expanded experiences and circulation conditions, thereby broadening the possibilities for confrontation. According to García Canclini (2019), digital communication

> is generating modes of communication and association that aren't, a priori, either hegemonic or counter-hegemonic. As power structures and actors are reconfigured, ambivalent, hybrid combinations emerge, giving rise to forms of sociability where power does not have a binary structure, but rather a dispersed complexity. Many ways of being together or communicating, and of sharing or disputing resources, coexist. (p. 129)

This recombination and reconfiguration of interactions—in which different actors and discourses blend together, and the emergence of publics and topics of varying scope compete for a place in the digital sphere—shifts questions about plurality, civic action, and social experience and its mediated organization toward new horizons. It forces us to rethink how political disputes are reconfigured, bringing together sectors, individuals, and collectives that are linked in other ways—such as citizens, corporations, and the state, to name a few classic social entities—while also integrating those that are emerging or in the process of establishing themselves and consolidating, such as influencers or amateurs, or even non-human entities, such as bots or artificial intelligence.

Current communication conditions place us in circumstances where collectives intervene in public life and reshape creative and political decisions in real time. They enable citizens to question every government decision that is publicized, to become spectators of the official discourse, while simultaneously remixing it and using it to produce memes, satirical edits, or various other products. They generate contexts in which events are multifaceted and constructed through a wide variety of material supports: textual, visual, audible, and multimodal.

Digital communication and its characteristics increase the potential to generate knowledge by recombining what already exists across different disciplines and intertwining (or colliding) them in diverse organization processes, which expands users' cognitive capacities for different issues: whether to act as interpreters of the enormous flows of information they receive, as citizens, as producers and replicators of content, as speakers discussing various trends, as active participants in deliberations at different levels, or as enunciators of various types. As Vázquez (2018) maintains, the intense conversation taking place in digital spaces allows for the introduction of elements into subjects of controversy that were not previously present.

Based on these contemporary communicative conditions, the concept of the public sphere—as it is typically understood today through Habermas's conceptual framework—is inevitably disrupted. This makes it essential to reformulate its underlying assumptions in order to situate it within the contemporary context and to incorporate these new possibilities for confrontation as well as the changes introduced into contemporary deliberation.

2. CONTEMPORARY DELIBERATION AND THE DIGITAL PUBLIC SPHERE

Due to the previously outlined conditions, the current public sphere is a more confrontational one, as the introduction of mechanisms for dissent, as well as the generation of controversies and conflictive interactions, have gained greater prominence. This contradicts the current framework for understanding the concept, a legacy of the work of Jürgen Habermas (1962), who conceives of it as a sphere of social life in which public opinion is formed based on dialogical exchanges between free and rational individuals regarding matters of general interest. Although this remains a dominant conceptualization (or perhaps precisely because of this), it has faced considerable criticism, whether for grounding its historical trajectory in a European and bourgeois perspective, or for the idealized centrality it assigns to rationality in interaction (Fraser, 1990; Negt & Kluge, 1993; Solares, 1997; Durham Peters, 2014; Masip, Ruiz-Caballero & Suau, 2019).

Although such criticisms are taken into account and integrated into the conceptualization proposed in this paper, the general notion of the public

sphere as a space for discursive and symbolic interactions where speakers who recognize one another discuss issues of common interest (the "public") through arguments remains a fruitful definition of what the concept refers to when analyzing the mechanisms that can enable civic engagement and the deliberation of viewpoints. This is provided (and this allows for theoretical flexibility) that the subsequent integration of missing elements is carried out—such as consideration of the role of the media, mediatization as a process, the expansion of the political, or the functions of language that are not exclusively oriented toward understanding.

The role of the media in shaping the public sphere itself is particularly relevant to this study. From many perspectives, the media appear to be a mere accessory to public debate and opinion, just one of its many facets. However, when considering mediatization, this assumption is overturned: the media have made the formation of this public sphere possible by providing the necessary infrastructure for discursive circulation.

As Repoll, Garro, and López (2019) state: "Participation in the public sphere is conditioned by communication systems" (p. 135), emphasizing their importance as gateways to public discussion. More than mere artifacts that connect emitters and receptors, they are the agents that enable deliberation. It is through them that topics and ideas have been circulated, and events to follow have been constructed. This raises the debate surrounding mediatization as a historical phenomenon that identifies the development of media technologies and the growing influence of the media as singular forces within broader social and political changes (Fernández, 2014; Verón, 2015).

It is essential to recognize the material dimensions of communication in order to address the debate surrounding the public sphere as a possibility rooted in the dissemination of information and the existence of media channels for presenting arguments, viewpoints, and connections between discursive communities. In the contemporary era, it is essential to consider the role of the media in shaping access to and the very nature of political debate and deliberation in urban societies; as well as to identify the social means of meaning production in relation to a framework of conditions that includes the use of technical media (Verón, 2004; 2013; 2015).

The analysis of the mediatized condition of the contemporary era must thus distance itself from the idea that considers the intervention of the media in the political sphere and in politics (the distinction is addressed in the following section) as a "contamination" and instead accept it as a condition of existence and a possibility for the circulation of meaning production at macrosocial levels.

In this context, Habermas' conceptual framework appears to be limited in the face of phenomena that, while not new, are acquiring new dimensions: the production of fake news and communicative distortions is on the rise; the

boundaries between what's public and what's private are shifting; political disagreements, the dissemination of private material, and hate subcultures are multiplying. Also at play are the algorithmic processes that shape online socialization, as well as the private interests of the owners of digital channels and devices who extend their logic to the offline world (Sadin, 2020; Cabrera, 2024).

Habermas' public sphere, oriented toward understanding through communicative action, is confronted by and overwhelmed by multiplicity and fragmentation. Increasingly, the counterpublics described by Fraser (1990) are gaining space on existing channels or have the ability to create their own. By opening accounts on any platform and producing content related to their interests, every movement, ideology, trend, community, individual, or group is able to circulate their demands, adjust their discourse production to the requirements of search engines and positioning strategies, and have the capacity to turn them into trends, gain followers, and increase their reach.

Among many other issues, the public sphere—as a concept and a distinct feature of contemporary social structures—is being redefined and extended through developments on the Internet; and, drawing on these spaces opened up by digital technology, it has shaped new spaces of enunciation that have broadened discursive horizons, the enunciative capacities of individuals, and the tensions surrounding sociological and communicative interactions, as well as those of the media ecosystem itself (Carlón, 2016; Castrelo, 2018; Zaragoza, 2023).

In this work, we opt for a formulation of the public sphere that incorporates critiques of Habermas, while also focusing on the discussion of a particular dimension of the public sphere: one that is constructed within, and circulates through, digital exchanges, and which is referred to as the digital public sphere. This is not exactly distinct from the general public sphere, but rather concentrates the set of current mediatization conditions, enabled by new technological conditions in conjunction with the pre-existing, and is posited as the space for discursive circulation and the forging of public opinion that synthesizes the plurality of communicative and deliberative changes in contemporary communicative circulation. In this, a historic shift in how we communicate is taking place.

This historical shift is proposed to be understood as a change in what Negt and Kluge (1993) call social experience—that is, a dialectical constitution between what's subjective and what's public, an assimilated experience that takes shape within the individual but becomes objectified and comes into play only in relation to others within a specific way of life and in response to prevailing norms. From this perspective, the forms of communication enabled by networks also expand the notion of what we can perceive as "public" issues and what shapes experience, forming it alongside other elements.

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Social experience shaped by specific forms of contemporary communication entails not only transformations in how connection and communication are experienced through devices and formats permeated by digitalization and its devices, but also in how interests are grouped, how imaginaries are renewed, and how the objects that will become part of deliberation are perceived and constructed, how positions are confronted, and in which ways of life find viable or challenging horizons. At the intersection of the media and subjectively lived experience (a relationship inaugurated by modernity and the emergence and consolidation of the media ecosystem), modifications specific to the contemporary era emerge.

Negt and Kluge (1993), in addressing the fundamental weakness of the traditional public sphere[1]—namely, its division of the public and the private and the consequent exclusion of the latter from the horizon of collective social experience—assert that the latter overlaps with what they call "public spheres of production," derived directly from the productive sphere and identified with the mass media:

> Instead of the mechanisms of exclusion characteristic of the classical public sphere, what characterizes the public sphere of production (…) is the oscillation between exclusion and intensified incorporation: existing relationships that cannot be legitimized become victims of a deliberately manufactured non-public sphere; power relations in production processes that are incapable of legitimizing themselves are injected into generalized interests that have become legitimate and are thus presented within a context of legitimacy. (Negt & Kluge, 1993, p. 14)

In the public spheres of production, façades of legitimacy are brought into play that attempt to introduce their issues into the public agendas of deliberation in order to pass off private interests as common interests, with the effect of marginalizing social concerns originating from subordinated and precarious groups and sectors in public discussion or directly making them disappear.

Social media platforms could well be interpreted, at a basic level, as public spheres of production, since their infrastructure, operational logic, and forms of social organization are shaped by and serve corporate interests that drive online socialization while allowing certain audiences to form while others remain isolated, or favor certain topics and forms of debate depending on how enunciators manage to position them using analytical strategies and metrics provided by the platforms, or as they formulate discourses in sensational terms

1 The authors refer to the traditional public sphere as the bourgeois public sphere, directly contrasting it with Habermas' conceptualization, which they discuss in highly critical terms: "The interests of workers appear in the bourgeois public sphere as nothing more than a giant, cumulative 'private interest,' not as a collective mode of production of qualitatively new forms of public sphere and public consciousness" (Negt & Kluge, 1993, p. 7). They contrast this, on the other hand, with what they call the proletarian public sphere, which would constitute a radically different concept for understanding and shaping public life, including within its scope not only the experiences of the working class, but also those of all groups excluded from public opinion in the bourgeois public sphere.

and amplify some disagreement or opposition within a broader social field. Or even when the platform is deliberately modified to establish some barrier or obstacle in favor of or against a particular account, space, site, or conversation[2].

Engaging in a process of conceptual assembly based on the elements presented, while networks can be considered, in a certain sense, public spheres of production, it is also true that, in addition to this and with significant differences from the mass media system, the digital public sphere operates and enables an unprecedented expansion of audiences that disrupts the forms of social connection between groups, as it is a type of mediation that offers resources to overcome exclusions from the classical public sphere. In its ambiguous and contradictory nature, it constitutes a set of experiences that could potentially contribute to broader discussions about what's "public".

It is preferable, then, to interpret the digital public sphere as a space where a form of organization of social experience operates (Negt & Kluge, 1993), thereby offering the possibility of integrating elements into its mode of operation and content.

By shifting from an understanding of the public sphere as a space for discursive circulation oriented toward consensus and understanding (Habermas, 1962) to understanding the digital public sphere as a space for the collective organization of social experience (Negt & Kluge, 1993), we can include multiple phenomena—not always positive or consensual—in the repertoire of existing public expressions worthy of analysis. Communicative and political phenomena considered within the horizon of experiences that are part of the collective, despite their problematic and even aggressive nature, are expanding. The use of polemical, satirical, and violent linguistic resources (which, despite everything, are available and recognized as communication tools) comes to be recognized as a phenomenon inherent to contemporary collective social experience.

In this way, the deliberation and criteria for the formation of political groups are revealed in a different, brighter light, allowing us to understand where they stand in the debate, where they emerge from, and what social horizons they bring into discussion, rather than pushing expressions of dissent and conflict to the margins of deliberation or considering them deviations.

This brings our discussion to the fragmented, multifaceted, and confrontational conditions that contemporary communicative circulation introduces into the social sphere, and how this set of conditions of mediatization allows us to understand the articulation of a digital public sphere whose horizon is not one of consensus. With that said, we will examine Schmitt's concept of the political to highlight its defining characteristics and, subsequently, establish some correspondences with this communicative framework, in order

2 This is the case with trends that perpetuate violence against women and classist rhetoric under the guise of partisan political opposition, as was the case with the hashtag #Presirvienta, which was used by opposition groups to criticize Mexico's president, Claudia Sheinbaum. Or the deliberate blocking of pro-Palestine accounts on X, in the context of the genocide against Palestinians perpetrated by Israel in 2024 and 2025.

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to observe their combined effects on the formation of political groups in the contemporary world.

3. FRIENDS AND ENEMIES: THE POLITICAL IN SCHMITT

A starting point is to identify the mindset that led Carl Schmitt to reflect on the concept of "the political," as distinct from "politics." Elias Palti (2018) rightly identifies Schmitt's work, The Concept of the Political, published in 1932, as the first place where this concept and this distinction appear, which will make the political a field prior to the legal one and to politics, an instance of the social totality referring to the exercise of government within institutional frameworks.

Schmitt attempts to find a criterion capable of distinguishing what is political from what is not. "Where does the political appear?" he asks in light of the apparent indeterminacy of the phenomena that are usually called such, marked by a certain inconstancy. One may well accuse an adversary in politics of being "political" by placing them in an accusatory, self-interested position; or one may simply apply this label to any phenomenon that stands in antithesis to another sphere: the economic and the political, the moral and the political, among others (Schmitt, 2009).

Something was missing to define the criterion that would allow us to identify which phenomena can be described in this way—what gives substance to a word that describes specific human relationships distinguishable from others. A first distinction marks a distance between the political and the State, based on the recognition that this seems to be the sphere to which "political activities" are commonly attributed. While he acknowledges that there was a period when the political coincided with the State, and indeed was synthesized in the figure of the sovereign within the context of absolutist monarchies, Schmitt identifies a break at the moment when democratization processes made it possible to recognize a "society" linked to a "State," and, moreover, when that "society" began to challenge the State in various spheres:

> The equation state = political becomes incorrect and leads to error precisely to the extent that State and society interpenetrate one another; to the extent that all spheres that were previously state-based become social and, conversely (...) Then the previously neutral spheres (...) cease to be natural in the sense of being non-state and non-political. (Schmitt, 2009, p. 53)

Once the political is separated from the State, it becomes clear that the concept denotes something that transcends the limits of the exercise of power. Schmitt thus suggests that the strictly political is expressed in a fundamental and irreducible antithesis: the opposition between friend and enemy. Its purpose is to mark the maximum degree of intensity of a separation or a union, the decisive point at which an association or a dissociation is generated, giving

rise to a split into an "us" and a "them"—blocks established from the moment it is decided who are friends and who are enemies.

This does not mean that every phenomenon in which opposing positions exist is political. What is political is that which forces a grouping into friends and enemies. The emergence of this antithesis is a matter of intensity that may stem from a minimal impulse, but it becomes political when it reaches a decisive point of dispersion and union based on the perception of an affinity or an existential threat.

The implication of this is profound, for it can be observed that Schmitt has shifted the focus of the political away from an established institution or relationship and positions it as something that can arise in any instance and in any relationship. The political can encompass all possible relationships that constitute a social nucleus: any interaction can be politicized:

> The "political" (…) is a type of relationship that can develop in any space, regardless of whether or not it remains within the institutional realm of "politics" (…) It has no specific objective or particular actors, nor does it need its own institutional support. The only thing that matters is the presence of friend-enemy oppositions (…) The "political" is, therefore, a living movement, the magma of conflicting wills. (Arditi, 1995, p. 343)

The political is thus a deterritorialized criterion that can, however, become definitively territorialized. Its condition is one of ubiquity. It is not specific to any space, but it can appear in any. It subsists as a possibility within the accessible repertoire of forms that human relations can take, as a potential for differentiation.

Now we must ask about the identity of the enemy: how far does that spirit of animosity extend, dispersing groups until they identify it? In other words, what degree of enemy is my enemy? Once situated there, can it be anything else?

The political enemy is an existential enemy. He is not private nor necessarily someone one hates personally. The enemy will be "the other," the one who represents an incompatible otherness and who fundamentally denies one's own mode of existence: "to determine his essence, it suffices that he be existentially distinct and strange in a particularly intensive sense. In the worst-case scenario, conflicts may arise with him that cannot be resolved either by any existing general regulations or by virtue of a third party's judgment or ruling" (Schmitt, 2009, p. 57).

In this sense, the political enemy is a public enemy: that group of individuals who embody or advocate a way of life that differs decisively from one's own. Their threat is ontological, yet marked by a public character; the political enemy is *hostis*—that is, the one against whom a visible war is waged, the one who fights us—not *inimicus*, against whom one harbors private hatred. Initially, value-based criteria for characterizing the adversary are set aside, since it is not

necessary for the *hostis* to be morally evil, aesthetically ugly, or economically harmful. They may be so, but such characterizations would come later, after they have been identified as an enemy.

By placing the enemy in the public sphere, we find that, as Arditi (1995) states, political enemies are collectives, not individuals. For this work, this characterization is important, as it addresses a fundamental concern: social coexistence itself. With whom will we coexist? With whom do we not wish to coexist?

On the other hand, underlying the friend-enemy opposition is an even more general assumption: that of the mere possibility of distinguishing between one or the other. If we focus on the decision-making process involved in identifying someone as an enemy or a friend, we will find a decision of distinction: the willingness to establish a boundary and to opt for grouping and ungrouping. The enemy does not exist in nature; he is not found in the world until he is constructed. The decision is made to distinguish him. Understanding the political as an instance of distinction allows us to begin identifying which powers and forces are separated and which are united; it makes it possible to trace the moments when the decision was made and to identify the forms of opposition that will guide the encounters with the enemy. For, if the public enemy is the one with whom a public battle is waged, we likewise find a disposition for confrontation.

Schmitt (2009) states that war or struggle is the extreme horizon of the friend-enemy opposition: "War proceeds from enmity, since the latter is an ontic negation of a distinct being. War is nothing but the extreme realization of enmity" (p. 63). This does not imply that saying "political" is the same as saying "war" or that such a confrontation (referring to the concrete possibility of physical attack and not merely in an abstract sense) is desirable, necessary, or the actual content of the concept. It simply appears as the extreme consequence of clustering and dispersion.

Of course, this way of understanding the political is not the only one, even though it is historically groundbreaking (Palti, 2018). However, it is a compelling conceptualization, and although it has been questioned for years by the illiberal tradition in which the author himself is embedded, it offers us a criterion of opposition that today, in contemporary societies, manifests itself in concrete and tangible actions and ideas—ones that challenge us to reflect on the state of democracies today.

4. SCHMITT'S CONCEPT OF THE POLITICAL IN CONTEMPORARY MEDIATIZATION: CONFLICT AND ANTAGONISM

Based on these coordinates, it is considered possible to discuss the combined effects of this conceptualization of the political and contemporary mediatized conditions. It is argued here that the set of these conditions of mediatization

has directly accompanied the rise of forms of political grouping that can be analyzed using Schmittian political criteria. The promotion of fragmentation; the expansion of communicative resources for the construction of controversies—including virulent and aggressive ones—; the expansion of debatable topics and, with it, of what is considered "public"; as well as the proliferation of non-consensual dynamics—have contributed to the multiplication of debatable issues, conferring upon a diverse range of phenomena the status of "public issue" and, therefore, imbuing them with a fully political polemical dimension, insofar as they demand a decision of distinction. In light of this, it is considered that the formation of political communities in the contemporary era increasingly appropriates Schmitt's criteria: the opposition between friends and enemies, the identification of political enemies, the distinction between "them" and "us," the drift toward a combative spirit, and the ubiquity of the political as a possibility of emergence in any relationship.

The correspondence between Schmitt's conception of the political and the processes triggered by communicative circulation in the construction of the digital public sphere—understood as a forum for organizing social experience—provides a conceptual framework from which two direct effects can be identified, effects that trigger processes in contemporary social life: conflict and antagonism.

This does not imply that Schmitt's conception of the political is operating directly in the social sphere, but rather that it constitutes, together with current conditions of mediatization, a tool for analysis through which to become aware of phenomena existing at this historical moment. Likewise, it is not claimed that there is a fully conscious appropriation of Schmitt's political concept, but rather that it arises as the result of disturbances that have made conflict one of the primary forms of social interaction, forcing collectives to establish antagonistic relationships by acknowledging both their existential affinities to identify their friends and their disagreements to do the same with their enemies. Such upheavals are both effects and causes of the conditions of mediatization in which the digital public sphere is constructed, stemming from the expansion of the social experience that passes through it and mobilizes the objects and themes that can be crossed by the effect of the political: bodies, diversity, sexual orientations, social roles, ethnic inclusion, recognition, and the actions of the State and governments.

If the digital public sphere, as it is currently experienced, does not seem to be achieving the cohesion and consensus necessary to establish and sustain liberal democratic societies, it is because its communicative dynamics and the social contexts in which it is constructed have constantly brought disagreement to the fore, reminding us that it is a fundamental element of public discourse.

The public sphere has historically also been a space for the confrontation of positions, where differing viewpoints find an arena in which to express their

vision of the world and of social coexistence. And given that in social life there is always a struggle between conflicting collective interests, it is necessary to recognize that participation and interaction among polarized groups engaged in deliberation always implies some form of confrontation or struggle, even though it may be expressed only in terms of a discussion (Dahlgren 2018) (or escalate into much more aggressive interactions, in its extreme forms, and with that we would be facing the spirit of confrontation that we locate in Schmitt).

In practice, the discussion of the public sphere is not always framed in terms of consensus. This is even less the case in interactions within the digital public sphere, as these unfold under the premise of a proliferation of exchanges—in both form and content—which is coupled with a deepening of non-consensual dynamics: "More than ever before, social media has brought to the forefront a form of interaction rooted in various forms of controversy: from the exchange of opinions to insults and the belittling of one's interlocutor" (Castrelo, 2018, p. 72).

The maelstrom of discursive expressions circulating through the digital public sphere facilitates exchanges that easily lead to deep disagreements, as there are always avenues available for interpreting the "other"—those who do not think as one does, those who express things differently. The meaning of what's public has been remixed, and the organization of knowledge has become decentralized, fragmented, delocalized, and altered (García Canclini, 2019).

This has redefined deliberative capacities in civic engagement and in the forms that discussion processes take both online and offline. Fragmentation and deliberation marked by multiplicity introduce and organize disputes around new social values related to individual self-expression, autonomy, and quality of life, or to moral issues that, in another historical moment, belonged to the private sphere. Such a landscape is conducive to topics such as the body, behaviors, ethical positions, and relationships between men and women or between groups and individuals—linked to so-called identity politics or politics of recognition (Honnet, 2010; Keucheyan, 2013; Masip, Ruiz-Caballero & Suau, 2019), to become recurring issues on the conversational agenda, triggering multiple stances, among which there are disagreements that manifest in conflicting interactions and antagonistic groupings.

When addressing this diversification of positions and modes of expression—which disrupt the political decisions and actions of contemporary actors—classical political positions do not fully capture the emerging realities. The left-right dichotomy, though still present, is no longer always so clearly defined. Not because the meaning that historically identifies one side or the other with a certain consistency has completely faded (Bobbio, 1995), but because of the reconfiguration of positions, of antagonists, of their demands; of who has been brought in and who has been left out as "fellow travelers" (Traverso, 2023). Confusion is also part of the picture:

> In one of the greatest ironies of our times, the left has become intolerant and the right, a defender of workers. The uncomfortable movements of multicultural tolerance championed by the left have become the trend to combat, while the necessary repoliticization of the economy has been taken up by the ultra-conservatives. (Rodríguez Cano, 2020, p. 32)

At the confluence of social media practices, there exists a "confessional and self-referential cascade of posts that refer to mere everyday life" (Vázquez, 2018, p. 55), which serves to consolidate a social space where interest grows in the common experience, in continuity, and in the meaning of life and experiences; no longer just one's own, but also those of others. In principle, this need not necessarily spark antagonism. However, many reported situations and events are permeated by political factors and disagreement, and the likelihood of interpreting them in antagonistic and conflictual terms increases, thanks to the resources made available for creating elements of controversy.

As more individuals share their particular mode of existence, it becomes increasingly clear that this will spark controversial reactions, since the very identity of individuals and groups becomes a matter of public discourse and is therefore open to politicization. This is one of the areas in which Schmitt's concept of the political reveals itself as a fully valid epistemological resource for thinking about the present moment: its ubiquitous nature corresponds to the deterritorialization in which the digital public sphere exists. As a space without physical existence but no less real, it is open to the diverse relationships that can develop through it. In the flows it enables, in the actors it connects, in the themes it allows to be introduced, the political emerges and possesses expanded capacities for proliferation.

The digital public sphere is a space particularly conducive to the emergence of the political, because they share a condition of detachment where the appeal to criteria of distinction is encouraged. The expansion of non-consensual dynamics, in turn, consolidates conflict as the perspective from which the political emerges and which, in turn, sustains it. The criteria of the political according to Schmitt can be used as conceptual tools to observe the resources available to those who participate in this digital public sphere: the spirit of confrontation, the decision to distinguish, the opposition between friends and enemies. These are flexible criteria that are widespread and encouraged in contemporary communication.

It is no coincidence that polarization and discord have intensified in this era. Conflict is not only not concealed, but is displayed in multiple forms, some of which even take on aggravated negative forms. Moreover, this is not merely a characteristic of the digital public sphere; since this is a form of organizing social experience (Negt & Kluge, 1993), it is reasonable to think that these are phenomena that cut across contemporary society. Amid this maelstrom of conflicting wills, of living speakers who communicate continuously, the lives

of individuals and groups unfold as they are forced to take a stance constantly on the most diverse public issues imaginable.

If we return to Habermas's conception of the public sphere (1987), consensus has been positioned as the horizon to which all deliberation in democratic societies must aspire. In his model, the proliferation of conflict is conceived as a temporary obstacle that will be resolved, as a symptom of decline, or as a starting point that must be overcomed. It is argued that this view of conflict has the effect that, when it is not resolved or when its persistence or recurrence is observed, the consensual position appears to be stunned, as it witnesses the transgression of a "public reason"[3] (Rawls cited in López de Lizaga, 2021) that was assumed at the core of democratic societies as a stable and immovable foundation.

In contrast, we might cite the words of Georg Simmel (2010): "Conflict in itself is already a resolution of the tension between opposites" (p. 17). Regardless of the causes that may trigger it, conflict, from his perspective, is a form of socialization that stands in stark contrast, first and foremost, to indifference. Where we find conflict, we also find a series of movements that act against social unity on the same plane as those that work toward convergence. Both types are intertwined and operate in favor of defining the form that the social takes.

Conflict constitutes the social just as much as agreement; war and combat, just as much as peace, participate as horizons of experience in shaping what it means to live in society. Order and disorder, peace and war, conflict and agreement—it would be better to consider them, in the manner of Simmel (2010), as successive and simultaneous events: "so intertwined that the conditions of the next battle are gestating in peace, and vice versa" (p. 82). Of course, without viewing conflict as a "degeneration" of a peaceful state, nor granting it the status of a "momentary" phenomenon—one in which one lives while awaiting peace and agreement—a commonly held assumption.

From this perspective, conflict is inherent to the social realm. It is not a fleeting phenomenon, nor does it occur solely where peace has failed, for it is intrinsic. Movements toward unity and disunity, agreements and disagreements, follow one another and go hand in hand.

Hence, Schmittian politics holds particular relevance today as an epistemological resource capable of approaching an analysis of the formation of political groups in the contemporary era. It is a conceptualization that arises from viewing conflict as a type of interaction intrinsic to society and that indicates to us the extent to which it is ineradicable from the structure of collective coexistence. Likewise, within the broader conditions of mediatization in the

3 The public reason would be "the identification of a set of political principles that all citizens must share, regardless of their respective overarching ideologies, and in terms of which they must articulate their positions" (López de Lizaga, 2021, p. 521).

contemporary era, his criteria prove flexible and conducive to revival, as they are particularly well-suited to the framework of communicative operations through which individuals and groups come into contact today. The identification of political friends and enemies is constantly reproduced, just as a confrontation is contemplated on the horizon of that opposition; for it is no coincidence that confrontational language has entered public discourse across the entire political spectrum (Calvo & Aruguete, 2020; Fabian, 2020; Marantz, 2020).

Identifying Schmitt's concept of the political as an analytical tool and viewing it as an operative effect of contemporary mediatization does not amount to glorifying conflict or seeing the proliferation of political enemies merely as a phenomenon in the face of which we can do nothing. It is not an ideal situation. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge it as a fact.

The aim is to highlight it as an active phenomenon in order to make explicit its traces in the discursive formations and political actions generated by the tensions and articulations of contemporary mediatization, which occur both in the digital public sphere and in its connection to current social contexts. Taking this into account can serve as a starting point for exploring how it might be a step toward the construction of a new *status civilis* (Arditi, 1995), insofar as disputes and socializations under tension serve as modulators of general discussions to identify points of controversy and ruptures in understanding that necessitate novel reconfigurations for the updating of arrangements in coexistence.

It is true that the effects of a political grouping based on the criteria of friendship and enmity also introduce negative effects. López de Lizaga (2021), drawing on a critical analysis of the work of Chantal Mouffe (2003) and Ernesto Laclau (2011) argues that the concrete overcoming of political liberalism and the consensus-oriented deliberative model is not occurring through the radicalization of democracy, but rather through cynicism—a discursive style that consists of "defending political positions in the public sphere that lack any foundation, or making statements that are manifestly false or unacceptable" (p. 518). Cynicism seems to be found both in political figures and in other contemporary political groups and communities, which prioritize conflict over consensus, yielding to statements that renounce the claims to validity articulated by Habermas and focus on building a society of enemies.

We do not argue that this point lacks reason. Quite the contrary. This critique is precisely the current condition that this work seeks to highlight: the construction of enemies as a key feature of contemporary politics—a phenomenon amplified by today's media-driven environment—whose analysis cannot be conducted solely within the framework of the consensual model rooted in liberalism.

The reason for its inadequacy lies in the conceptual model itself, which we can trace back to John Rawls's theory (1995) and the central place occupied by the notion of reasonable. It is true that political liberalism encompasses

differing positions within itself, so it would be a lie to attribute to it a quest for homogenization that smooths over differences or fails to recognize divergent interests among groups. However, what it does regard as one of its requirements is that differences and actions aimed at satisfying diverse needs be articulated within principles of reasonableness and tolerance, where pluralism is accepted but within the basic idea that a society is a just system of social cooperation over time (Rawls, 1995).

What is being called into question in the contemporary world is precisely this understanding of society, which destabilizes the very notion of reasonable behavior by challenging its central role in structuring collective order. Conflict, in the specific way it is currently expressed, ceases to be a starting point and basic assumption, emerging instead as a lasting phenomenon, visible on the surface, not as something to be eliminated, but rather to be stoked and maintained. How can we interpret this historical moment without first considering it harmful? Understanding these coordinates requires accepting them as the current condition, and it is argued that if they are judged rather than understood, possible solutions (which are not the objective of this text) may not fully grasp what they are facing.

Now, if the figure from which the conflict is configured is not the adversary but the enemy, this corresponds to the concept of antagonism, a term referring to the production of a certain type of political subjectivation that is articulated in terms of an "I" emerging from the conflict, which is forced to oppose something. In its conception linked to Marxist theory, antagonism is embedded in the tension of the capital-labor relationship and leads to a connection with the worker's autonomy, insofar as it constitutes an awareness of their subordinate position in the relations of production (Modonesi, 2010; 2016).

The emergence of such an "antagonistic consciousness" can be understood as the impact of insubordination on consciousness; a perspective and a form of subjectivity forged in the act of opposition. Here we find a connection with Simmel (2010), who in a certain passage attributes a joyful, even liberating dimension to conflict: "opposition provides inner satisfaction, amusement, relief; opposing allows us not to feel completely crushed in the relationship, it allows us to assert our strengths" (p. 21).

In contemporary political theory, the post-Marxist current, represented by Laclau and Mouffe (2011), has developed it as a category for thinking about the "flaw" in the social order, taking it as the name for the limit of all objectivity: "A notion for thinking about the instability of order and the openness to change" (Retamozo & Stoessel, 2014, p. 17). For Laclau and Mouffe (2011), antagonism is, above all, a relationship marked by an impossibility: that of fully constituting oneself, from the moment there exists an "other" whose presence threatens me or prevents me from fully unfolding my being. It is the kind of relationship that prevents and will continue to prevent the final suturing of

the social, the "grand consensus" (Camargo, 2013; Retamozo & Stoessel, 2014; Modonesi, 2016).

For Mouffe and Laclau (2011), Schmitt's concept of the political is significant precisely because of its emphasis on conflict as the driving force of the social sphere. However, in their proposal they make a substantial shift: they detach the opposition from the enemy and anchor it to the figure of the adversary. Their aim is to shift the expression of conflict—which, rooted in antagonism, presupposes a tension of potential extermination—toward the *agon*, with whom there is a constant mutual provocation based on the recognition that this is an "other" who prevents my full constitution, but whom I do not necessarily wish to eliminate (Camargo, 2013; Retamozo & Stoessel, 2014).

The adversary is a figure that seeks to eliminate the destructive tension inherent in the Schmittian enemy, and through this, Mouffe and post-Marxist theory attempt to rehabilitate conflict in liberal democracies, but without yielding to the impulse to eliminate the opponent. López de Lizaga (2021), however, denies that this represents a break with the assumptions of political liberalism, as he finds that, by attempting to suppress the enemy's destructive tension, one merely seeks a radicalization of democratic coexistence within the terms already presupposed by liberalism itself. This work highlights precisely this point: the identification of Schmitt's concept of the political as an analytical tool that informs current and concrete social expressions in the distinctions made by contemporary political groups, which include—rather than deny—the horizon of war.

We assume that many of today's political movements—especially those that have emerged from the most heated debates of our time, such as feminism, gender diversity, or progressive policies on inclusion, economic support, and equality—are structured in ways that relate to the criteria for constructing political enemies rather than simply identifying adversaries. This implies, as a secondary idea—though one with enormous implications that cannot be addressed here due to space constraints—that the liberal foundations of contemporary democracies are unstable, since the concept of the enemy is a criterion of distinction that is necessarily excluded at their core. The enemy is a figure incompatible with liberal democracy, and thus its manifestation poses a social problem that must be addressed.

Hence, revisiting antagonism as a concept that designates a divided terrain—where oppositions proliferate between groups with differing perceptions and visions of coexistence—is an analytical necessity for understanding current contexts. Alongside conflict, it manifests as an effect where Schmitt's conception of the political can correspond to social events, which are in turn amplified by the forms of personal and collective articulation made possible by contemporary communicative circulation in the digital public sphere—that arena for the organization of collective social experience. Antagonism denotes

a conflictual and antithetical relationship between collectives, where synthesis is not contemplated as a feasible horizon. This appears to be how the existing rifts between groups of differing stripes are functioning: conservatives and progressives, left and right, feminist and sexual diversity movements, and their anti-abortion, anti-feminist, and anti-rights reactions, among other examples. We seem to be facing a new gestation of this antagonistic consciousness, which leads to the assimilation of an experience forged in struggle and which does not hesitate to recognize and confront its enemies.

This paper seeks to highlight that in the contemporary world, driven by today's mediatization and crystallized above all in the digital public sphere (the primary form of media nowadays), there is an appeal to a political subjectivity rooted in a consciousness that knows itself to be distinct from others in its way of viewing the world—a condition of subjectivity that constructs and assumes enemies and shapes a social terrain built upon oppositions and antithetical struggles. Conflict and antagonism, which stem from decisions regarding political grouping among collectives that can be analyzed through Schmitt's concept of the political, mobilize, are amplified by, and in turn empower, the social in the contemporary era.

5. CONCLUSION: INTEGRATING SCHMITT

The conditions of contemporary communicative circulation have introduced social tensions and enabled forms of expression in which the Schmittian concept of the political is activated as a reflection tool, as it possesses characteristics that make it particularly malleable to correspond with the mediatization of our era (Carlón, 2020; 2023) and the set of political actions of aggregation and disaggregation. To understand this from a perspective other than that of bitter analysis, we propose an understanding of the digital public sphere as an instance of the organization of collective social experience (Negt & Kluge, 1993). This makes it possible to incorporate expressions that are not oriented toward consensus as a symptom of the contemporary era, a trace of what is happening, and allows us to broaden our conception of the public, of the production of meaning in the contemporary era, and of the social experiences brought to consideration in this expansion of forms of coexistence. The substrate of the political in the present time, where dialogue among "lives" is promoted, is particularly amenable to being approached through Schmitt's theory of the political and his criteria of distinction. Why is this so, and what does it imply for today's democracies? That is the discussion.

It would seem sensible to begin by acknowledging the fragility of liberal assumptions in contemporary media-driven democracies, particularly the ideas of consensus, reasonableness, and dialogical exchange grounded in truth and rationality—assumptions that have thus far served as the foundation for

attempts to understand and construct the public sphere. Not to dismiss them as naive ideas, much less to remove them from the horizon of building a shared society. Within these assumptions, pluralism has been able to flourish and form the basis for substantive social and historical changes, such as improved living conditions, public transportation policies, and labor achievements. Rather, the aim is to recognize the historical moment in which we find ourselves and even to propose, perhaps, other possibilities for coexistence, whether they align with the liberal model or even transcend it, since to consider the opposite would be to give undeserved credit to the theses that positioned it as the regime at the "end of history." Conflict and antagonism stand as relevant and ongoing effects in the contemporary era, and must be accepted as conditions and objects of analysis.

Today, political cynicism (López de Lizaga, 2021; Sloterdijk, 2003) is not merely a looming threat but a phenomenon already present. One need only look at the forms of government communication, Donald Trump's style of discourse and governance—especially during his second term—or those of Javier Milei, Argentina's libertarian president since 2023. They coexist with other emerging ways of establishing political communities based on the opposition between friends and enemies and a spirit of confrontation, which exemplify the erosion of liberalism currently underway: from conservative-style counterrevolutions to the "gossip" on social media formulated in antithetical terms and from various standpoints, including activists who single out elites and political networks to create tension with them by identifying them as the real causes of social, ecological, and economic disasters. The idea behind these forms of grouping and ungrouping seems to be that of interacting through conflict and the establishment of antagonisms.

Criticisms of the supposed liberals of contemporary democracies seem to be gaining strength from various standpoints and to varying degrees. And it is precisely here that the ubiquity of the political, as defined by Schmitt, grants his criteria the potential to function as measures of distinction at the disposal of any ideological pole. The implications of this challenge to consensus as the structuring framework of the public sphere—and the proliferation of political groups based on the friend-enemy dichotomy and a spirit of confrontation—will be the subject of further analysis. Studies of contemporary mediatization still need to focus on the political and ideological effects generated by the articulations and tensions between individuals and groups made possible by contemporary communicative circulation. Meanwhile, this paper proposes recognizing that Schmitt and his concept of the political provide tools that shed light on current changes in the historical regime of the contemporary world; we thus call for their integration into our understanding of the social and the political in our present.

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* The dataset that supports the results of this study is not available for public use. The research data will be made available to reviewers, if required.

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