THE VOICES OF BULGARIAN POLITICAL PARTIES DURING THE 2014 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CAMPAIGN

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Abstract: This study examines the specific features of Bulgarian political rhetoric and the subject area of particular interest for this research is the election campaign (2014) in Bulgaria for Members of the National Assembly (MPs). Bulgarian candidates for MPs send and broadcast messages, appeals and slogans where they proclaim both new programs and traditional ideological principles of governance. The investigation focuses on specific verbal and visual elements of political party websites, political blogs and linked spaces throughout social networks, especially featuring their public presentations during the election campaign. The paper displays the summarized results of the research aspect focusing on the arguments of virtual and media political communication during the election campaign which has diverse ramifications.

Keywords: pre-election rhetoric, argumentation, Bulgaria, Parliamentary Election Campaign.

Introduction

Two national elections were held in 2013 and 2014 and both of them are pre-elections for MPs in the principal legislative institution of the Republic of Bulgaria. The elections for the 42nd National Assembly on 12th May 2013 and for the 43rd mandate of the Bulgarian Parliament on 5th October 2014 were both won by Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria [Граждани за европейско развитие на България, ГЕРБ (Grazhdani za evropeysko razvitie na Bulgaria, GERB)].

The situation in Bulgaria between 2012 and 2014 from a political, social, economic and communicative point of view was complicated and some of the reasons lay in the oppositions of Bulgarian citizens.

The protests in the winter of 2012 and the spring of 2013 were against low salaries, the high prizes of electricity, corruption, the high fees, and taxes. The Prime Minister, Boyko Borissov, resigned in the plenary hall of the National Assembly on 20th February 2013. On 14th March 2013 the National Assembly suspended its activities.

The preliminary elections for the Bulgarian Parliament on 12th May 2013 were won again by Citizens for European Development of Bulgarian, but the party refused to form a government. The Coalition for Bulgaria or the Bulgarian Socialist Party [Българска социалистическа партия, БСП (Balgarska sotsialisticheska

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partiya, BSP), the second largest parliamentary group, undertook to form the government and Plamen Oreharski was elected prime-minister on 29th May 2013.

The street demonstrations started on 14 June 2013 and they have continued in the summer and the autumn of 2013. The protests were against Plamen Oreharski, his cabinet and governmental policy. Prime Minister Oreharski resigned in the parliamentary tribune in the National Assembly on 23 July 2014.

The President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Rossen Plevneliev, signed the decrees for a preliminary parliamentary election. The election campaign continued since 5 September to 3 October 2014. The election vote for the Bulgarian Parliament was on 5th October 2014.

Theoretical review of political rhetoric and arguments

The complex nature of the research requires us to introduce some basic concepts and corresponding terminology. We will start with the terms related to political rhetoric and its manifestations in the current society and virtual environment.

Political rhetoric includes parliamentary oratory, presidential statements, diplomatic negotiations and addresses, participations in discussion and debates in international institutions, speeches delivered during the election campaigns etc. Political rhetoric plays a key role during the election campaign and in particular in the parliamentary elections for the National Assembly in Bulgarian after 1990.

The notion pre-election rhetoric consists of the main features of political rhetoric and at the same time it has its specific manifestations. Pre-election rhetoric has changed since 2000 and Bulgarian candidates for MPs have been using combined direct, media and virtual channels.

Pre-election media rhetoric includes video-recorded speeches, presentations or statements delivered by candidates for the Parliament as an inseparable part of the election campaign, as well as individual, team or group participations in media debates and programs directly broadcast by the Bulgarian media or published later on the media sites.

Virtual pre-election rhetoric includes video-recorded speeches delivered by the candidates for national and international institutions and in particular for MPs as well as video clips disseminated on the sites, blogs and social media and networks. New rhetorical genres broadcasted on the Internet are video-conference, video presentations, webinar, virtual forums, and posts. Consequently the pre-election rhetoric in the virtual space has new manifestations.

Visual virtual pre-election rhetoric is a variant of virtual pre-election rhetoric and it has manifestations on placates, posters, video clips, caricatures etc. disseminated on the Internet.

We will also draw on the basic definitions of some types of arguments analysed in the study of the 2014 Parliamentary election campaign in Bulgaria.

The scheme of Argument Pro Homine is presented by Leo Groarke and Christopher Tindale (2012):
“Promise 1: X says y. Promise 2: X is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and free of bias. Conclusion: y should be accepted.” (308).

Leo Groarke and Michel Tindale accept that argument from authority is a form of pro homine argument (312). The authors clarify the meaning of this argument: “… Argument from authority is an appeal to an authority’s claim that uses their expertise as a base for the conclusion that their views should be accepted” (313). Groarke and Tindale explain the verbal scheme of this argument “A good argument from authority supports a claim based on the fact that the endorsed person or group is deemed to have (1) certain stated credentials, which are (2) relevant to the claim in question, and (3) no biases that are likely to interfere with their assessment of the claim, provided that (4) the claim in question concerns an area in which there is wide agreement among the relevant experts, and that (5) the claim concerns an area of knowledge in which consensus is possible (318).

We will focus next on the meaning of the term \textit{authority} from political rhetoric point of view. The authority in politics can be a politician, party leader or leader of coalition or non-governmental organization etc. The party authority is appreciated as formal leader in the political sphere. A key-opinion leader can be formal or informal but he or she has influences over particular communities and their power and charisma are exerted in front of different audiences. At the same time we cannot isolate the other factors established as a result of the new media, Web 2.0 and public relations. The authority can be increased, enlarged and reinforced by virtue of publicity, popularity and participation in the events, media broadcasts and online interviews. The Internet and new media channels support the effect of information-through visualization or a mix of verbal and visual elements of the virtual space: sites, blogs, social networks and online media etc. The popularity of a politician has connection with channel and context but their reputation associates with the real achievements and with moral values and ethics. Consequently it is important to make differences between ethical argument and party leader’s reputation, argument and presenting of the person or political formation, coalition or party.

In accordance with the aims of the current research it is reasonable to introduce the term \textit{visual argument}.

Leo Groarke and Christopher Tindale (2012) give a definition of visual arguments in the dictionary of the book “Good Reasoning Matters! A Constructive Approach to Critical Thinking”: “Visual arguments are arguments that convey premises and conclusions with non-verbal images one finds in drawing, photographs, films, videos, sculptures natural objects, and so on. In most cases they combine visual and verbal cues that can be understood as argument” (455).

The above definition stands in close agreement with the theoretical grounds of this search, especially with the position that verbal and visual cues are combined to support the process of understanding the arguments and we will continue to use it as a part of the theoretical background of this study.
Georges Roque (2010) reasons about arguments and draws the conclusion that arguments are better expressed visually and he adds that the arguments are much better displayed visually than verbally especially in the case of diagrams displayed as statistic curves (1724-1727).

The researchers and scientists mentioned above have their singular contributions to the theory of visual argument and visual argumentation.

We can add that the visual arguments include unique elements as well as well-known portraits, pictures, plots, posters, and other forms of slogans and mottos adapted to the specific situation or the political orator and communicator paraphrase them using visual analogy and other rhetorical figures and techniques.

**Research design**

The hypothesis is that *Bulgarian pre-election rhetoric* has diverse forms of manifestation and specific characteristics and that the argumentation in the sites, blogs and social networks during the election campaigns goes through different transformations combining verbal and visual elements. The manners of presenting the ideological appeals and ideas for government in Bulgaria have changed as a result of the decisions of experts on political rhetoric, political communication and political public relations.

The aims of the current study is an investigation on the different political messages and kinds of arguments used by the candidates for MPs in the Bulgarian Parliament; to analyse the appropriateness and effectiveness of the combination between different instruments.

This study aims at providing answers the following research questions:

What were the political, social, communicative and technical circumstances during the 2014 parliamentary election campaign?

What is the role of media and social networks during the election campaign?

Which arguments on verbal and visual level did the candidates for MPs use purposefully to convey their main messages, influence the public conscience of the Bulgarian citizens?

Which rhetorical techniques on verbal and visual level did the candidates for MPs use purposefully to influence the electorate and mobilise them to support their ideas?

The empirical sources for the present study are selected and included in corpora, the materials have connections with the topics ‘2014 Parliamentary election’. The study is based on a grounded analysis of 50 posters and placates selected from the party’s sites, political blogs and Facebook profiles; 10 video clips posted on YouTube channels and sites, 10 media participations of TV broadcasts since 1st September to 4th October 2014.

The research design is a result of selection of elements of the same spheres in particular from the article “Ideology and discourse analysis” (Dijk 2006: 115-
rhetorical argumentative analysis and the adapted model of rhetorical image analysis (Broek et al. 2012: 110-111). The model of rhetorical image analysis is reconstructed on the basis of the rhetorical canons and principles.

**Political situation and communication**

Twenty two parties and seven coalitions have declared participation in 2014 Parliamentary elections in Bulgaria. Due to irregularities, the Central Election Commission refused the registration of two parties: the Bulgarian Communist Party and Bulgarian Worker-peasant Party.

The main political formation GERB follows liberal ideology, the abbreviation has a meaning in Bulgarian language ‘emblem of state’ or ‘blazon’ and communication strategy includes appeals about security, stability, statehood etc. GERB combined different communication channels and tools, the candidates organise meetings and concerts in the streets and big halls (for example ‘Arena Armeetz’, the biggest hall in the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia). The candidates use also the social networks and principally Facebook as well as they took part in direct communication with the electorate. The party GERB won 32.667% and 84 seats in 43 National Assembly.

The coalition ideologically oriented to the left included 13 parties and it was named BSP – Лява България ([БСП – Лява България (Liava Balgariya)]). The main members are BSP, Bulgarian Social-Democrats’ [Български социал-демократи (Balgarski social-demokrati)], Movement of Social Humanism [(Движение за социален humanism)], three small formations including the ideological word ‘Communist’, New Dawn [Нова зора (Nova Zora)], EuroRomes [Евророма (Evroroma)]. The coalitions prefer traditional techniques to persuade the electorate during the meeting with representatives of hard electorate and at the same time BSP uses sites and social networks. BSP won 15.398% and 39 seats.

The Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS) [Движение за права и свободи – ДПС (Dvizhenie za prava i svobodi)] was an active participant in the parliamentary competition and it generally accepted as an ethnic minority party with a liberal ideology. The candidates of DPS prefer direct meetings with the electorate and they use sparingly social networks and media channels. DPS won 14, 837% and 38 seats.

The results of BSP are almost equal with the DPS and the configuration on the National Assembly was transformed because BSP loses the influence as the second parliamentary force.

The party ‘Alternative for Bulgarian Revival’ [Алтернатива за българско възраждане, АБВ (Alternativa za balgarsko vazrazhdane, ABV) followed the left ideological cannons but in this campaign ABV played in a coalition with Bulgarian Party of Liberals [Българска партия на либералите (Balgarska partiya na liberalite)], United Labour Block [Обединен блок на труда (Obединen blok na truda)] and FAGO [Федерация активно гражданско общество – ФАГО Federation ‘Active Civil Socicity’ (FAGO)]. The candidates combined traditional
communicative channels and new media tools during the campaign and they won 4,149% and 11 seats.

‘Movement 21’ has left ideological orientation and it plays independently following modern model of propaganda and contemporary pre-election tools, TV channels and Facebook and as a result it won 1,195% and received state donation.

Seven conservative and right parties participated as member in the coalition The Reformist Block [Реформаторски блок (Reformatorski blok). The Reformist Block was the main player, other bigger members are the Union of Democratic Forces [Съюз на демократичните сили – СДС (Sauz na demokraticnite sili)], the Bulgarian Agrarian Union [Български земеделски народен съюз (Balarski zemedelski naroden sauz)], Democrats for Strong Bulgaria [Демократи за силна България – ДСБ (Demokrati za silna Bagaria)] etc. They tried to revive the messages from the beginning of the democratic changes in Bulgaria after 1990 and as a result the communicative strategy has been fluid. The candidates prefer virtual pre-election communication as well as direct meetings with the hard electorate. The Reformist Block won 8.8888 % and 23 seats.

Some nationalist parties and coalitions took part in 2014 Parliamentary election campaign: The main payer was the “Attack” party [Атака (Ataka)] and the candidates follows aggressive manner to present their appeals. The candidates, especially party leader Volen Siderov, used the Alfa TV as well as street meetings, party site, Facebook and YouTube. Attack won 4,516% and 11 seats.

The coalition “Patriotic Front” included two formations: The National Front for Saving Bulgaria [Национален фронт за спасение на България – НФСБ (Nacionalen front za spasenie na Balgariya – NFSB)] and the Internal Macedonian-Odrin Revolutionary Organization [Вътрешна Македоно-Одринска революционна организация – ВМРО (Vatreshna Makedono-Odrinska revolyutsionna organizatsiya – VMRO)]. They combined meetings, media participations, blogs and Facebook pages broadcasting patriotic appeals to Bulgarian citizens. They won 7,283% and 19 seats.

The party “Bulgaria without Censorship” (BWC) [България без цензура – ББЦ (Balgariya bez tsenzura – BBC)] was the main member in the heterogeneous coalition including 10 political formations among witch Party of Bulgarian Women, ‘Gergiovden’, Union of Free Democrats Agrarian Union, Bulgarian Agrarian-Industrial Party etc. The online media and social networks, TV communication channels are combined with political events during the campaign. BBC won 5,694% or 15 seats.

Vox Populi [Глас народен (Glas Naroden)] was a relatively new political party and its very active participants in the election addressed verbal and visual messages to young Bulgarian citizens who regard themselves as active members of the civil society in Bulgaria. Party’s leader Svetoslav Vitkov took part in TV programs. One of the most preferable party in Facebook during the 2014 parliamentary election campaign was Vox Populi, the party has a Facebook groups in different Bulgarian towns, for example Varna, Turnovo etc. Vox populi/Glas Naroden won 1,137%.
The Party of Greens [Партия на зелените (Partiya na zelenite)] took part independently, it won 0,609%. The Green Party [Зелена партия (Zelena partiya)] participated in a coalition with ‘Left’ [Левите (Levite)], they won 0,214. The eco/green parties use social networks and meeting with the electorate during the campaign.

New alternative [Нова Алтернатива (Nova Alternativa)] organized attractive campaign following the main aim to recognize it; the candidates used video clips, interactive games and visual argument ad hominem but it won only 0,353%.

On 27 October 2014 started the 43 National Assembly including 8 parliamentary groups: GERB, BSP, DPS, Reformatorski Block, BBC, Ataka, Patrioticen Front, and ABV. On 7 November 2014 GERB supported by Reformatorski Block, Patrioticen Front and ABV selected the staff of the Council of Ministry named the second Borissov’ cabinet.

Bearing in mind the above data of 2014 parliamentary election campaign, it is possible to summarise that the party system in Bulgaria included traditionally ideologically oriented formations of the left, right and liberal as well as conservative and neoliberal, nationalist and eco or green, nationalistic, patriotic and ethnic minority parties. Consequently the parties and coalitions broadcasted verbal slogan and visual messages, video clips and posters, placates and speeches. The main features of this campaign are heterogeneity of political parties, coalitions, vitiated tools and techniques, clear and strong ideological appeals and at the same time fluid messages sent to the electorate. As a result the 43 Bulgarian parliament is fragmented. There are MPs from parties which follow diametrically ideological ideas, it is difficult to reach agreement on key issues for Bulgaria and the decisions will be taken based on many compromises.

Verbal arguments

The candidates from different Bulgarian political parties for MPs try to present themselves as moral, competent and active politicians or leaders. From their point of view Bulgaria could develop better, the ruling or management of the state can become more efficient if they and their party or coalitions took part in the legislative process in the National Assembly and state institutions. Therefore, the candidates and parties did their best to send powerful verbal messages and influence voters who had lost confidence in the government and the Bulgarian political elite during the last decades.

GERB chose the slogan “Stable Bulgaria. It’s time!” which consists of two sub-parts. From a rhetorical point of view the elliptical sentence “Stable Bulgaria” corresponds to the intention of GERB to rule again and to pursue a responsible policy concerning the state. The verbal message of the first part sounded as a result, the second part confirmed the responsible intention of former ruled party “Stable Bulgaria. It’s time!” The slogan expressed the self-confidence and active position of GERB.
The Reformist Block which united right parties broadcasted the main slogan “Everything is in your hands” and it is an appeal to activate the Bulgarian electorate and voters. This slogan was written on placates and posters next to the portraits of the candidates and it is an attempt to personalize this appeal. The state, statehood and reforms are the leading words of the slogans of The Reformist Block, the candidate Peter Slavov sent the message “For reforms and order of our state” or “For reforms to put our country in order!”

The Union of Democratic Forces (SDS), a right ideological formation, prefers two different ways to present their ideas. One of them is “*We are blue again!*” Probably this verbal message is the result of the desire to return to the post-1990 democratic values and the aim is a re-recognition of the political formation in new political configurations through nostalgia. The second verbal message consists of social elements directed to young Bulgarians who prefer to be immigrants “Young people have to stay in Bulgaria”. The ideological identification of SDS was neither clear nor effective.

The coalition “Bulgaria without Censure” (BBC) broadcasted during the general national elections the following verbal message: “Bulgaria deserves more”. ‘Bulgaria’, the name of the state, is included in the slogan but the message sounds vague and indefinite. Bulgaria is a part of the party brand and the repetition of this key word aims to reinforce the effect of recognising BBC, a relatively new political formation, and to direct the attention to the meaning of statehood and responsibility as ethotic argument.

The Patriotic Front followed the same model by creating the main verbal slogans during the 2014 Parliamentary election campaign: “Bulgaria above all!” This slogan has connection with the ideological programs of the patriotic and nationalist parties (Nacionalen front za spasenie na Balgariya and Vatreshna Makedono-Odrinska revolyutcionna organizatsiya]), the members of the Patriotic Front.

Dvigenie 21/Movement 21 broadcasted the slogan “Best ideas for the good of Bulgaria” and the ambition of their MPs was to raise new proposals and they declared their willingness to work for the good of the state and the people.

ABV (Alternative for Bulgarian Revival) in accordance with the brand and left ideology followed the same approach incorporating the word ‘state’ in the slogans. ABV disseminated the slogan “For a strong state, successful nation and dignified life!”.

BBC was focused on the obligation of the state: “The state cares for the people”.

Another party, “New Alternative”, implemented the word “state” in the slogan too but the focus is on the functions of the state: “For a strong, not forceful state”.

Stefan Danailov, a well-known Bulgarian actor and professor, who has experience as MP and minister of culture disseminated the verbal message “Dignified life in a just state”. His popularity and charisma play the role of
argument from authority, his portrait is combined with the verbal appeal which is relevant to the left ideology and policy of the Bulgarian Socialist Party.


The Nationalist party Attack and the leader Volen Siderov combined argumentum ad populum and argument from authority during the 2014 Parliamentary election campaign. Attack disseminated on posters, video clips, party website and social networks the following slogans: “Our patience has come to an end! Attack. Victory!” and “Attack – the last stronghold of the people”. At the same the leader Volen Siderov is presented as a strategist in the verbal messages “Plan Siderov”. The second variant of verbal slogan included the pathetical message: “God is with us!”

Nova Alternativa/New Alternative disseminated the slogan “Output has” but from a rhetorical point of view it is fluid, unclear and amorphous.

Meglena Kuneva, the candidate from the Reformist Block, disseminated on the Internet a lot of verbal messages but all of them followed the model of proverbs or aphorisms and she has tried to present rhetorically framed norms or moral maxims. For example Kuneva published on the Facebook wall the sentences “The state is the ultimate standard of the people “ and “The public policy can be translated into everyday language through the National Awareness orders”.

DPS traditionally prefers the words ‘freedom’ and ‘security’, where ‘freedom’ is an important part of the party brand (Movement of Rights and Freedom). An additional variant of the slogan consisted of the word ‘freedom’ as in “Freedom is inside you!”. It is obvious that the value of freedom is declared directly on a verbal level in the slogans of DPS.

The freedom in other contexts was included in the slogan disseminated by the party Glas Naroden/ ‘Vox Populi’, because the main appeal was addressed to Bulgarian citizens and their choice in civil society, their responsibility in choosing the rulers and political elite: “Freedom!” “Difficult choice. Live in freedom!”

To summarize, it is fair to say that the participants in the competitions for MPs prefer to combine words denoting values with ideological words. Bulgaria, state, stability/stable, security, freedom/freely, people, life, standards, reforms, choice etc. are the words incorporated in the slogans. The argument from authority is used in different contexts, Attack presents the family name of the leader: ‘Plan Siderov”; BSP – popular persons for example Stefan Danailov. Big parties achieved identification on a verbal level: BSP as a left party focused on justice, reform in the Bulgarian labor market, jobs for young people and higher pensions. GERB as a former ruling party emphasized stability, DPS repeated often the word freedom; Reformatorski block sent appeals about standards, life, state care, reforms; patriotic and nationalistic parties – state, stability, government, new parties like Vox Populi – choice and freedom, Movement 21 – best idea and statehood etc. Consequently we can conclude that the diversity of verbal slogans and message heterogeneity are typical features of the 2014 parliamentary elections.
Visual arguments

The adapted model of rhetorical image analysis was used in this part of the paper and it includes analysis of the materials from corpora including placates, posters, video clips etc. in connection with logos, colours as well as arguments presented on visual levels. Traditionally BSP used red colour and red rose and the decoding by the electorate oriented to left ideology is very easy. The same model was followed by other parties. DPS traditionally used olive branch painted in purple color. The nationalist party Ataka posted on placates shield with elements of Bulgarian history and proto-Bulgarians. The visual element is a variant of the proto-Bulgarian sign used by BBC and it is important to say that the sign is colored in yellow and gold but the background is light blue. ABV preferred the variant of the other symbol of Bulgaria and statehood – the lion and the variant of purple color synchronised with the main aim as a party for Bulgarian Revival. VMRO as a nationalistic party traditionally incorporated in placates, video clips, blogs and social networks dark red and black colors with Bulgarian flags, shields and weapons presented as symbolic ideals for freedom and a strong state. The party ‘Zelenite” following the aim of recognition as eco party uses the green leaf and bright colors as a background of the verbal messages or placates. GERB has presented for 8 years the party brand as a mix of light blue, yellow stars associated with the European Union and the name Citizens of the European Future of Bulgaria. The blue colour has different nuances and it is in connection with the parties’ brands: GERB, Refromatorski Block etc. New parties aim to identify themselves and to recognize the candidates for MPs, they prefer variants of well-known colors in different nuances: Movement 21 use variants of purple, New Alternative – light green etc. Glas Naroden/Vox Poluli had a creative approach with a relatively new visual argument in political communication in Bulgaria – the cock and the message combined visual and oral elements: bright colors of cock’s comb and pip crowing sound familiar upon awakening for everybody.

The argument from authority has different ramifications on a visual level. The portrait of Siderov, the leader of the nationalistic party Ataka, is presented as a monument painted in brown color and the face is in combination with the verbal massages “Plan Siderov” or “God is with us!” The face on the posters is bigger than the verbal element and the sentences: “Plan Siderov – against colonial slavery” and “Plan Siderov – Ataka’s programs for governance”. GERB is a leader’s party, the figure of Boyko Borissov plays the key role of an argument from authority, consequently Borissov was presented very often in placates, posters, video clips, presentations during the election campaign. The smaller figures of candidates of MPs are placed around the bigger figure of the leader Borissov.

The same model has been followed by Glass Naroden, the party’s leader Svetoslav Vitkov is presented as a leader, his figure is bigger than that of other
candidates. The candidates from this party presented as a team, the collaboration and activity are visual messages on the other placards.

The purple colour is a part of the new visual image of “Movement 21” and the posters, placards and video clips use this colour combined with the colours of the national flag: red, green and white in a different and modern design. Reformatorski Block incorporated in their posters and video clips the number 7 and it is presented in the specific script with a particular font. The number 7 acquires different meanings from a semiotic and a symbolic point of view. The number 7 was downloaded in the Central Election Commission and it is integrated as a visual element and argument with verbal messages.

The argument from authority was used in video clips, press conferences, events and speeches during the 2014 Parliamentary election campaign. GERB invited the celebrities and popular persons (Edvin Sugarev and Georgi Markov) from SDS and from the beginning of democratic changes and transition; all of them declared their categorical support for GERB. In the same video they included appeals and greetings delivered by the President of the Election headquarters of GERB Tsvetan Tsvetanov and by the mayor of the capital of Bulgaria Yordanka Fandakova who was nominated by GERB. All verbal sentences included in the video clips expressed confidence in the victory of GERB and the successful future ruling. GERB is represented by authoritative political figures as a savior and the only possible alternative. The orators often repeated the importance of stability during the meetings in the big halls built during the GERB ruling and this is an argument from authority too.

The Green/Zelenite do not have a long experience in the Bulgarian political life and they incorporated as argument from authority the photos and video clips presented their participation in the protests and names of the street manifestations and demonstration against governmental policy concerning nuclear energy, Black Sea resorts, etc. The green background is prevailing on the clips and posters.

The posters and video clips broadcasted by Vox Populi include the argument Pro Homine and they included the portrait of celebrated Bulgarians. The visual argument Pro Homine used by them are the portraits of the political leader of the Bulgarian Revive Vassil Levski.

In conclusion we can say that colors, symbols, numbers, flags etc. are used as visual elements and that the argument from authority had different manifestations on a visual level during the parliamentary election in Bulgaria.

**Conclusion**

The candidates of political parties aim to impact on party members, political leaders, competitors, and citizens during the 2014 parliamentary election campaign. They understand the necessity of developing rhetorical and digital competence and of using different, distinguishable, memorable, powerful and persuasive messages and ‘voices’ in a metaphorical way. As a result the process of constructing political
massages and design arguments has been gradually changing by including and combining different elements.

The arguments of virtual political communication during the election campaign have diverse ramifications. The Bulgarian candidates for MPs sent and broadcasted slogans, they proclaimed new programs, reforms or traditional ideological principles.

The voices during the 2014 parliamentary election campaign are multiple and very diverse. The candidates for MP took part in the meetings, TV media broadcasts, they used new communication channels such as blogs, Facebook, YouTube in accordance with political decisions and pre-election situations. Bulgarian citizens received the information from different channels.

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