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The portrait of the Portuguese media of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS.

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Mestrado em International Studies

Supervisor:
PhD Raquel Beleza da Silva, Integrated Researcher,
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SOCIOLOGIA
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Resumo

O fenómeno do terrorismo é algo que abrange o sistema internacional, não só em termos de ataques terroristas, mas também em termos dos combatentes estrangeiros que são cada vez mais comuns nas fileiras do Estado Islâmico, principalmente vindos da Europa. Este fenómeno tem sido muito estudado no estrangeiro, mas em relação ao caso específico português existe muito pouca informação. Por isto, nesta tese, decidi focar-me nos combatentes portugueses que decidiram ir para o Estado Islâmico, mas focando-me no papel dos media ao retratá-los nos seus respetivos jornais. A investigação foi feita através de uma análise temática e de acordo com o Critical Terrorism Studies e a influência dos Media. A análise reflete que o retrato dos media é importante para construir a realidade social e para a construção do conhecimento, podendo ser um completo aos Critical Terrorism Studies e que os media refletem os três maiores processos que um combatente estrangeiro passa, que é o recrutamento, radicalização e o potencial retorno. Ademais, demonstra, através da análise, os resultados desta investigação, que os media contribuem para a construção de conhecimento sobre o fenómeno do terrorismo e, neste caso específico, sobre os Portugueses combatentes no ISIS.

Palavras-chave: Critical Terrorism Studies; recrutamento; radicalização; combatente estrangeiro; potencial retorno; media.

Abstract

The phenomenon of terrorism encompasses the international system, not only in terms of terrorist attacks, but also in terms of foreign fighters who were increasingly common in the ranks of the so-called Islamic State, mainly from Europe. This phenomenon has been studied abroad, but specifically, in the Portuguese case, there is not much academic literature. Therefore, in this thesis, I focus on the Portuguese foreign fighters who joined the Islamic State, studying the role of the media in portraying their radicalization, recruitment, and their potential return. The research is informed by the theoretical and methodological principles of Critical Terrorism Studies and it comprised a thematic analysis of news articles from two Portuguese newspapers – *Público* and *Diário de Notícias*. The analysis reflects that the portrait of the media is important to build a certain social reality and to build knowledge, that is completed with the Critical Terrorism Studies and, that the media reflect the three major processes that a foreign fighter goes through, which is the recruitment, the radicalization, and their potential return. Also, it shows the important findings of this research, that the media helps constructing the knowledge regarding the Portuguese terrorism, and on this specific case, the Portuguese Foreign Fighters phenomenon.

Keywords: Critical Terrorism Studies; recruitment; radicalization; foreign fighters; return; media.

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Glossary of Acronyms

CTS- Critical Terrorism Studies.

EU- European Union.

ISIS- Islamic State.

NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

PFF- Portuguese Foreign Fighters.

Chapter 1- Introduction

It was the summer of 2020, and I was looking for a new TV series to watch on Netflix, when I found *Caliphate*. This TV series is about the process of recruitment and radicalization of Swedish citizens, who went to Syria or were in the process of going to Syria. There are two sides to the story, firstly, in Sweden where two girls are being recruited to go to Syria and secondly, of a girl that is already in Syria and wants to return to Sweden with her son.

After that, I decided to write about the phenomenon of the foreign fighters and specifically about the Portuguese Foreign Fighters (hereinafter mentioned as "PFF"), because although there were some PFF in the Islamic State, there is not too much information about them. Therefore, it is important to study their process of recruitment, radicalization, and potential return.

Moreover, this study aims to answer the overarching research question: "How does the Portuguese media portrait the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS?". In doing so, it focuses on three sub-questions:

RQ1: "How does the Portuguese media portrait the recruitment of the PFF who joined ISIS?"

RQ2: "How does the Portuguese media portrait the radicalization of the PFF who joined ISIS?"

RQ3: "How does the Portuguese media portrait the return of the PFF who joined ISIS?"

These research questions will give answer to how the phenomenon happens, what were the PFF's causes, reasons, and motives in wanting to enter the ISIS and to return to Portugal, according to the Portuguese media. This thesis aims to understand how the Portuguese media portrays the Portuguese Foreign Fighters who have joined ISIS. There is not too much information about them, so it is important to know, who they are, why they went there, why they returned and because we need to understand how this news affect the Portuguese society's way of thinking in relation to the foreign fighters. It is important to focus on this topic due to the lack of information that is observable and because it is necessary to see what the government can do about this, which tactics they can adopt to control the recruitment and the radicalization of these individuals.

Consequently, to answer these questions this thesis will be divided into 4 chapters. The second chapter of this thesis will focus on the Literature Review that was used to write it. Firstly, focusing on the theory of the CTS that is going to be used to understand the phenomenon and the portrait, and the role of the social media, to comprehend the reasons that can lead the authors to write in a certain way and if it gives a negative or positive perspective in its audience. Furthermore, this chapter will also focus on what is already known about the phenomenon of the foreign fighters in terms of recruitment, radicalization, and the return in general and Portugal's case specifically.

The third chapter is based on the methodology, where it is explained the methodology, research philosophy, data collection and data analysis of this thesis. The fourth chapter is going to focus on my analysis of the data collected to answer the three sub-questions and to answer the main question of this thesis. The analysis will focus on the different research questions, focusing firstly on the recruitment, then on the radicalization and lastly on the potential return of the PFF and by connecting the collected data from the newspapers with the CTS framework, and with the role of the media on this portrait.

At the end of the analysis, it is possible to understand the connections between the theoretical framework and the data collection, and also to observe the findings of this research.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

This chapter provides the theoretical framework that guides the present dissertation, which draws on scholarship produced in the arena of Critical Terrorism Studies regarding the role of the media in the context of terrorism and on the foreign fighter phenomenon, including processes of radicalization, recruitment, and the return. It is completed by focusing on the Portuguese foreign fighters who travelled to Syria and joined ISIS.

2.1. Critical Terrorism Studies and the Role of the Media

Critical Terrorism Studies (hereinafter mentioned as "CTS") is a line of research characterized by the "appreciation of the politically constructed nature of terrorism knowledge; an awareness of the inherent ontological instability of the 'terrorism' category; a commitment to critical reflexivity regarding the uses to which research findings are put; a set of well-defined research ethics and a normative commitment to an emancipatory political praxis" (Jackson, 2007: 244).

Thus, CTS offer a critic to orthodox conceptions of terrorism, which are considered to be organized around Western states' interests, raising issues that range from definitional to methodological and creating limitations that can be seen at an analytical level – terrorism is seen through essentialist lenses that consider it as an objective reality, neglecting contextual factors – and at a normative level – terrorism studies are based on a "problem-solving pursuit" approach and show, above all, concerns with generating "policy-relevant research" (Jarvis, 2009:14-15). Consequently, the concerns of orthodox terrorism studies are focused on developing counterterrorist proposals, rather than 'gaining a social science understanding of the phenomenon' (della Porta, 2013: 12). In addition, they tend to engage in a discourse that delegitimizes the use of political violence by opposition groups against the state, while legitimizing the violence perpetrated by the state to enforce its political will (Blakeley, 2007).

CTS underline that knowledge is always related to power, which means that "it is 'always for someone and for some purpose' and that 'regimes of truth' function to entrench certain hierarchies of power and exclude alternative, counter-hegemonic forms of knowledge and practice" (Jackson, 2007: 246). Thus, terrorism knowledge is not neutral, and objective and CTS scholars aim "to reveal the politics behind seemingly neutral knowledge" (Jackson, 2007: 247). To do that, they move away from solely focusing on defining terrorism as a concept, considering it as a label, and seeing it as a

social reality. This means that the concept of terrorism varies according to the circumstances, the intentions of who applies the label, and the socio-political, historical, and cultural contexts (Jackson, 2007). Therefore, it can be said that the knowledge about terrorism as a social phenomenon is partial and uncertain, which suggests a need for critical analysis and reflexivity in the process of knowledge creation (da Silva, 2019).

In studying terrorism and political violence, CTS scholars have focused on the discursive field. For example, Martini (2019), studied the prevalence and role of the word 'terrorism' in the United Nations political discourses articulated by selected parties involved in the Syrian conflict. This author focused on the discourse, comparing its instrumentalization by different parties, as regarding the Syrian conflict every involved part tries to delegitimize their enemies "to justify their use of violence against them, and to institutionalize and globalize their violent responses through the power of the UNSC" (Martini, 2019: 737). Through this work, it is possible to see the "importance of political discourses when studying conflict" (Martini, 2019: 737), as they attain legitimacy, or the opposite, to different actors and to their politically violent actions.

On focusing on the discursive field, according to Robinson (2009) the attack towards the United States on the 11th of September 2001, made transformations on the media attention towards the subject of terrorism, because of the impact of the attacks. So, he focusses on the CTS dedication toward issues that are related with the mediatization and communication of terrorism, focusing on the prevention of acts of violence through the understanding of how the non-state actors use or might use the communication technology.

In this perspective, the consideration leans towards "the ways in which the issue of terrorism can become a political tool for powerful interest, how mainstreams discourses shape perceptions of terrorism and terrorist in a way that precludes a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, and how Western involvement in terrorism has been marginalized within mainstream political and media debate" (Robinson, 2009: 2). For him, the discourse and language are both important because they "enable and disable patterns of thinking and action, and it is through language that power is often wielded" (Robinson, 2009: 2). In relation with the media itself, the traditional mainstream media remains the principal form for the public views (Robinson, 2009).

Altheide (2006), also focuses on the discourse of the media and analyzed the news about the United States, where the newspapers in their discourse, always associated the politics fear to achieve their goals, being associated with terrorism and crime, focusing

on how the fear is presented on the terrorism news (Altheide, 2006). To construct the public discourse reflecting a symbolic relationship with threat, order, danger, terrorism is normally associated with fear, crime, and victims (Altheide, 2006). This created a discourse of fear when covering, that relates to "the victimization narratives that make crime, danger, and fear very relevant to everyday life experiences" (Altheide, 2006: 434).

So, as seen before, the media can lead people into mistake and make them fear everyone that is a Muslim, and on Williamson, Fray and Miles-Johnson (2019) view, this depends on "How the media frames content can influence attitudes and behaviors, as well as the information citizens gather and how they interpret and respond to media messages." (Williamson, Fray and Miles-Johnson, 2019: 1), which means that depends if the information is given to inform the citizens or if it intends to create fear, connecting the immigrants to terrorists, for example.

These frames can be passed through passive or active media. If they are more active, they will be more influential than the passive ones. In terms of the audiences, the passive one, may cause more fear of terrorism then the active one because passive people watch less news, so when they hear or watch something about terrorism, they will be more easily manipulated then the active ones, that are all the time watching the news, and therefore, more informed. Consequently, if citizens acquire more information, they will have more knowledge about the subject and will not fear terrorism and will not be misled into inaccurate information that can lead them, for instance, to xenophobic reactions to the Muslim community (Williamson, Fray and Miles-Johnson, 2019).

It is also important to focus on the type of relationships that the media and terrorism can have. Camophuijsen and Vissers (2012), focus their work on the symbiotic relationship that media and terrorism have, because terrorists depend on the media to publish their cause and to influence the public and media depends on terrorism to meet the needs of the consumers. The media has various crucial since it is the bridge between the public and the government and decides could and could not be important to show to the public, and terrorists also expect them to show their message (Camophuijsen and Vissers, 2012). This message and how it is shown/ portrayed is decided by the media: "the mass media to decide whether they only publish a particular act of violence, or if they also investigate the underlying motivation of that actions in order to engender understanding" (Camophuijsen and Vissers, 2012: 17), and this decision goes in accordance with what attracts more readers, viewers, or visitors. Normally, the media

goes into dramatic stories, and to terrorism, because these topics have more interest to the public, which means that the "media are dependent on terrorism because of its supposed news value (Camophuijsen and Vissers, 2012: 20).

According to White (2020), who focuses her analyzes in the "UK's traditional mass media" (White, 2020: vii), on trying to understand traditional mass media's influence, that includes the "newspapers, radios and television" (Wilkinson, 1997: 51), can have on the danger of terrorism "by encouraging or discouraging radicalization, recruitment, mobilization to violence and imitation" (White, 2020: 1), and by analyzing the "influence of traditional mass media on the impact of terrorism by amplifying or suppressing the social and psychological effects of terrorism" (White, 2020: 1).

White defends that mass media can have different effects, firstly, it can be a way of publicity for the terrorists; secondly, it can be an amplifier of a negative impact; thirdly, journalists can become part of the radicalization process; fourthly, they can contribute to the imitation of terrorism; fifthly, the ethical codes have a positive impact that reduces the negative one; sixthly, media is understood and perceived by different ways, on different circumstances and on different levels (White, 2020). Regarding radicalization, mass media has a "contributory relationship" (White, 2020: 7) with terrorism, because of the role that media has in the way it transmits and reports the information, that in White's paper is through "social contagion of terrorism or imitation of terrorism" (White, 2020: 35). The social contagion theory is related with the way that "behaviors can be transferred within a group of like-minded individuals or communities" (White, 2020: 35) and is a theory that has a strong contributory role, due to the radicalization complexity, the diversity of the factors that have influence and the lack "of consistency of affect across individuals or time" (White, 2020: 35). The second theory is related with the "mimetic theory" (White, 2020: 35). The mimetic theory in White's paper view is more supported than the first theory, because the media has "potential to contribute to imitation of methods or to encourage attacks due to the desire for similar notoriety" (White, 2020: 35). So, media can and has influence on the recruitment, radicalization, imitation of terrorist attacks methods and mobilization to violence, and can amplify terrorism, due to its capacity to broadcast to a big audience, that can be reduced through ways of discourse and framing (White, 2020), being essential to create guidelines and ethical practices to report terrorism.

So, the media informs people of what is happening in the world and influences the construction of ideas about what is being talked about, in this case, about security and

terrorism. As mentioned before, the media has the power to shape the political and societal ideas of common people, influencing "interpretations, reactions and proposed policies." (de Buitrago, 2013: 3). Therefore, the media contributes to the cover of the foreign fighters and of the terrorist attacks and informs the citizens.

Toros (2009), interviewed Fadi Ismail who was the Group Director of Serviced of MBC Network to talk about terrorism and the cover of the media, including the Western media and the non-Western media (Toros, 2009). From this interview, it is possible to understand that Toros tries to comprehend the different problems and issues related to the coverage of the Arab and Western Media.

In terms of the enhance that the media can cause on radicalization, the images of attacks and bloodsheds can be one of two ways, either portrayed "to feel powerless because these things are happening and they can do nothing to stop them from happening" (Toros, 2009: 105) or it "creates anger, which creates frustration, which, in turn, creates in some people an urge for action" (Toros, 2009: 105), this necessity to act can lead to attacks, like suicide bombers or to radicalization, which gives the media a "radicalizing impact" (Toros, 2009: 105), however there are a lot of reasons that can contribute to radicalization, the media are not the only cause of it (Toros, 2009). Also, it is important to mention that Toros asked Ismail about the media being used by political forces, and he answers by saying that they "are not independent actors" (Toros, 2009: 106), they are acting for both political movements and countries and also against their interests, because they have someone always behind a "state-funded or funded by political movements" (Toros, 2009: 106), so sometimes the media is used for their own benefit.

Lopes (2018), arguments that the portray of the mass media on the attacks can have negative impacts, are related to the fact that mass media are being seen as the non-intentional ally of the terrorists, because through their reports they give visibility to the recruitment and propaganda and amplify the violence, contributing to the radicalization, to the disturbance of the security forces and causing damage in antiterrorists missions (Lopes, 2018); and also can have positive impacts by being a way of expression and pressure to the governments and security forces (Lopes, 2018).

In the role of media, we can adopt the perceptions of CTS, because the media helps to create the social construction of this phenomenon called terrorism, by giving information to the society, which is going be perceived as different ideas and different

forms of terrorism, but that together will help the understanding of the phenomenon itself (Goffman, 1974).

2.2. The Foreign Fighters Phenomenon

The ISIS phenomenon and the Islamist movement have been increasing aside with the growth of foreign fighters' phenomenon "Foreign fighters may have proliferated because the Islamist movement grew stronger." (Hegghammer, 2010: 69), but there are a lot of different interpretations of what is a foreign fighter, varying from author to author.

For example, for Bryan (2010), "foreign fighters are not part of governments, however they leave their home and country to fight a cause" (Bryan, 2010: 116). For Malet (2015), "foreign fighters as "non-citizens of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflicts." (Malet, 2015: 456). For Bakke (2010), foreign fighters "exclude foreign legions and private security firms" (Bakke, 2010: 3), foreign fighters are non-citizens of the country or state that they are in, but they decide to join the groups to fight the civil conflicts, which means that normally they go from their own state to another just to fight for something that they believe in.

Foreign fighters from terrorists' organizations were used prior to the existence of ISIS, for example, Al-Qaeda had already used them. In the case of ISIS, they depended on the recruitment of the foreign fighters, because of their operational needs, the necessity to have manpower for the cause, that is divided between the control of the territory for the caliphate, because the "Caliphate will have no border, inshallah, only fronts." (Gates and Podder, 2015: 108), and the political considerations, related with the political legitimacy to have the global caliphate (Mendelsohn, 2019).

The foreign fighters decide to travel to places to fight and to join a cause, as fighting for the jihad. From Hafez (2007) perspective, their ideological reasons to join the conflict are "(a) the humiliation of Muslims, with the blame lying primarily with the West; (b) the corruption, infidelity, ineptitude and subservience to the West of existing Muslim's regimes; and (c) an impeding Muslim military victory." (Wignell, Tan and O'Halloran, 2017: 432) and, because they think that the Islamic law and the Coran says that for them to be considered as a real Muslim, they must join the cause because they have the duty to fight for all Muslims. This perspective is related with the way they interpret what they read and listen and with their friendships and kinship. Also, because they believe that they have the responsibility to defend the Muslim territory and nation (Hegghammer, 2010).

In the Syria conflict, almost 30,000 foreign fighters have joined ISIS or Juhbat-al Nasra, 4,500 from the West (Limbada and Davies, 2016), that came from metropolitan backgrounds, that had no previous connection with Syria or Iraq, and that are fresh Muslims (Wignell, Tan and O'Halloran, 2017).

However, before a foreign fighter decides to join the jihad, they pass through radicalization and recruitment, that are complex processes, with different influences and factors (Neumann, 2015). They are normally radicalized and recruited, in their own countries and then they decide to travel to the jihad, in Iraq or Syria, mostly the ones from the West (al-'Ubaydi, Lahoud, Milton and Price, 2014).

The recruitment normally is made through propaganda in social media and through recruiters, where they try to call the individuals to go to the jihad, giving them motives, causes and reasons to go there "recruitment occurs via the social networks of the transnational communities, and potential recruits are generally closely connected to these identity subgroups rather than to their wider national society" (Malet, 2010: 100) and it can be done by some people that they already now, like a friend, family member or activist (Reinares, 2017), which increases the possibility for the person to join ISIS, because the recruit gains more trust in the recruiter.

The radicalization is not always a radicalization to use political violence or violence, most of the times the radicalization is normally a social process where a person simply identifies with more radical views, but it does not use violence (Koehler, 2015). In the case of people that go to ISIS and to the jihad, the radicalization is a process where the individual himself changes his/her religious, social, and political views, and he/she wants to achieve his/her goals through violent means, even though they are illegal ones, and it is made through different types of phases, from terrorist to Islamist radicalization and to terrorist activities (n/a, 2018).

To understand why the foreign fighters radicalize themselves, it is important to focus in "the emotional and psychological well-being of at-risk individuals; the marginalization of at-risk individuals within increasingly polemic societies; and the fallout from Western states' foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa." (Fitzgerald, Ali and Armstrong, 2016: 6). This is related with the integration of the Muslim community that can be marginalized because of their religion, because of their social economic status, and because of their education, because many terrorists' individuals do not receive an extended education, which makes them an easy target for

the recruiters' manipulation that can lead to feelings of humiliation and frustration, and consequently making them choose terrorism to express their anger. Also, because of the Islamist ideology known as 'Salafist Jihadism', this is considered as the interpretation of the Islam, but can also be interpreted as a support for the violence, as it means to fight against the West and its ideologies, and in the principle "This is known as Jihadism" (n/a, 2018:26) and because of the Shari'a, which is the Islamist Law (Wignell, Tan and O'Halloran, 2017). So, the foreign fighters decide to travel kilometers and join the jihad, because they think that they are following the Islamic Law and the Coran.

For different authors the cycle of a foreign fighter is different, through Kaplan, the fighter first goes through the pre-war mobilization phase, when it is recruited, when it gains sympathy with the cause; through the second phase, when he travels to the conflict zone; and through the third phase when the foreign fighter decides to stay or leave the conflict (Mendelson, 2011); through Reed, Roy van Zuijdewijn and Bakker, the foreign fighters have different pathways, they can die on the conflict; they can play a role in the front-line of the conflict; a supportive role; they can do terrorism at home or in another country; they can stay in Syria but leave ISIS and join another group, or simply integrate within the Syrian Society; they can leave ISIS and try to return home. (Reed, van Zuijdewijn and Bakker, 2015).

However, returning home is not an easy process. Firstly, because of the difficulty of getting out of the conflict (R. Neumann, 2015), and because the countries to which they are returning have been increasing their concerns regarding the ex-foreign fighters' return, especially the ones from the West (al-'Ubaydi, Lahoud, Milton and Price, 2014). The process of returning can be done through integration, where there is the need to have a de-radicalization, where the individual leaves behind his/her thoughts about jihad and ISIS and reverses it, and dis-engagement, when a foreign fighter reduces his/her participation on ISIS (Reed, van Zuijdewijn and Bakker, 2015). But it can also be done by other forms, like prosecuting the foreign fighters, by revoking their citizenship, which prevents them from return home and by airstrikes, that would kill the foreign fighters, and reducing the possibility to have to deal with them in their own countries (Reed, van Zuijdewijn and Bakker, 2015).

It is important to mention that not all the foreign fighters are men, there are also women, that normally play an important role in terrorist organizations in "activities including logistics, recruitment, political safeguarding, operations, suicide bombing and combat." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 4). The idea of establishing a Caliphate, with the

territorial ambition and of establishing the ISIS led "to the importance of families, to create infrastructures within the sharia, so that is why women are important to the ISIS, to marry jihadists fighters and have children for propaganda purposes" (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017: 60).

There is a difficulty to know how many women decided to leave to the "Caliphate", from the European countries, however there are 550 Western women in the "Caliphate" and The Soufan Group defend that 18 percent of that are the number of the European foreign fighters (Bakker and de Leeded, 2015). The number of women that went to the ISIS territory started to increase between 2013 and 2014, normally young girls that went alone, with their husbands or with other young girls (Bakker and de Leeded, 2015), but is also made by old women, with kids. Normally the girls came from Muslim moderate families (Bakker and de Leeded, 2015).

There are pull factors, that "might include well-framed ideological messages by terror organizations aimed at the target group" (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017: 61); and push factors "include societal pressures such as discrimination and poverty." (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017: 61), for the women to go and leave to the Caliphate.

According to Saltman and Smith (2015), there are three pull factors which explain why women go to the Caliphate, the "Feeling isolated socially and/or culturally, including questioning one's identity and uncertainty of belonging within a Western culture." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 9), which includes the fact that kids from the second and third generations do not integrate in the Western society and feel isolated from it; the "Feeling that the international Muslim community as a whole is being violently persecuted." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 9), related with the fact that many women wear a niqab; and "An anger, sadness and/or frustration over a perceived lack of international action in response to this persecution." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 9), related with the oppression that has been felt by the Muslim community.

They also have three pull factors: the "Idealistic goals of religious duty and building a utopian 'Caliphate state'." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 13); the "Belonging and sisterhood." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 13), related with the bond that they create with other women that are in Syria (Bakker and de Leed, 2015); and the "Romanticization of the experience." (Saltman and Smith, 2015: 13), to be married to a jihadist fighter and the Jannah (Bakker and de Leed, 2015).

Their roles in the jihad are normally, propagandist, mothers, and wives (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017), but they can fight as a last resort if necessary and they can also have roles in collecting money and supporting other families (Bakker and de Leed, 2015). They are normally radicalized and recruited online by other women (Pearson and Winterbotham, 2017).

2.3. The Portuguese Foreign Fighters

ISIS attracted 15 foreign fighters of Portuguese origin, only one of them being a woman (Pinto, 2015). Most of them grew up in the metropolitan and suburban areas of big cities, some in Portugal and some in other European countries. The Leyton Group, composed by 6 individuals already knew each other from Portugal, they were all sons of immigrants and lived in, the so called "Linha de Sintra", in the suburbs of Lisbon. They all ended up moving to London, at different points in time, to look for better opportunities and it was in London that they converted to Islam.

The members of the Leyton group had limited recourses, poor jobs, and lack of school attendance (Arena, 2018), and they all went to London and lived by the state subsidies which they gained from their application to university that they almost never went to (Arena, 2018) and only one of them had a bachelor's degree, Edgar. Other members of the group were Portuguese descendants but lived in other countries since they were kids, like Mikael Baptista, Miguel Parente and Mikael dos Santos that were from France, Ângela Barreto that was from the Netherlands and Steve Duarte from Luxembourg, they also converted to the Islam in the cities that they lived on (Pinto, 2015).

They were radicalized outside of Portugal, in London and in other places in Europe, like Luxembourg and Paris. In their cases, they were mostly conducted to the Islamist ideology through some friends and kin, and through their visits to the mosque, like, for example the mosque in Leyton by the London group (Arena, 2018). They radicalized fast, they were "called the express Muslims, that were recruited fast and radicalized by the Internet" (Franco and Moleiro, 2015: 18), because they started by having interest in Islam, then started to watch videos about the jihad, then started to change their clothes and started to go to the mosque, to pray and to meet other Muslims, with the same radical ideas (Arena, 2018). The reasons that probably led them to radicalism, are probably the lack of interest in their education, the fact that they did not have much money and they lived in the subsidies of the state, because of low-level of jobs, and the difficulty with their cultural integration in Europe (Arena, 2018). For

example, when Ângela started to wear a 'burqa' many people made fun of her (Pinto, 2015), but most likely, the main reasons were the socioeconomic factors.

On this research, it is important to focus on Fábio Poças, even though he is not alive anymore, because he gave a very important interview, in 2014, to Nuno Tiago Pinto, a Portuguese journalist, where they talked about a lot of relevant information. It is important to mention that during their conversation, Fábio almost justified every single answer with the Coran, for him and ISIS, everything they are doing is justified in the Coran. Fábio Poças thought that the "(…) jihad is the only option for the humanity" (Pinto, 2015: 156), so every Muslim should join their cause and submit themselves to the Sharia and to the Khilafa (Abu Bakr Baghadi), because if they do not join, they are not faithful to the Coran and to Allah. Fábio justified his departure to Syria as a Muslim's duty, because the Syrian people were being persecuted and tortured by the Bashar al-Assad regime, and as a Muslim it is his duty to help one another, as brothers (Pinto, 2015). Also, he gave information about Ângela Barreto and her duty as a woman on ISIS, which was to take care of the house and study Islam, also he mentions that she left home because she wanted to join the cause (Pinto, 2015). It can be said that his disappointment with becoming a football player took his direction and created an opportunity for his radicalization (Franco and Moleiro, 2015).

To what we know, they all had different roles within ISIS. It seems that Nero Saraiva was very important in recruiting new foreign fighters via Facebook (Pinto, 2015). He was also one of the guards of the hostages in Manjabi prison (Franco and Moleiro, 2015) and now of writing, he is in prison in Iraq awaiting deportation to Portugal (Pinto, 2020). Edgar Costa also had an important role of collecting and delivering information to high level ISIS officials (Pinto, 2015), but right now he is presumed dead (Pinto, 2020: 19).

There are also some Portuguese foreign fighters that want to come back to Portugal, that were confirmed in 2014, by Rui Machete, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time and there has been an increasing surveillance of the families of the foreign fighters, by the Portuguese authorities (Franco and Moleiro, 2015).

So, it is possible to understand that the Portuguese foreign fighters have many things in common and it is probably because of this, that they have decided to join the jihad and to join ISIS.

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2.4. Conclusion

This chapter contains the important information about the main points of this thesis: the role of the media, the Portuguese foreign fighters, and their radicalization, but to that it is also important to consider the theoretical framework, the CTS, and the role of the Media.

So first we had a notion of what the CTS is a critical theory of the terrorism studies that take in consideration all type of actors and not only states, which means that it can take into consideration the common individuals of society, and individuals like foreign fighters that have decided to join ISIS and the jihad.

To help the CTS it is important to adopt the role of the Media, because of its connection with the CTS with the discourse and language that is used, and because it is the media that informs the societies and deems what is right or wrong. It is important to consider that media is not right all the time and can mislead the readers. This role will be important to understand the comments that are made in journals afterwards.

The foreign fighter phenomenon is not a phenomenon from nowadays, but the Portuguese one is 'recent', they are not many Portuguese people fighting for Islam, however it is understandable what they have in common, they all come from metropolitan and suburban areas, they are Portuguese descendants or immigrants in other parts of Europe. In terms of radicalization, they were almost radicalized at the same time, and the main understandable reason can be their socioeconomic status, but probably also the lack of education and the xenophobic reactions that some people had towards them.

Chapter 3- Methodology and Research Design

Now it is important to demonstrate the methodology and the research design that is going to be used. So, first this chapter focus on the research philosophy and on the research design, which includes the important research questions, the methodology and the data collection, the data analysis, and ethics.

3.1. Research Philosophy

After analyzing the literature available, was decided that this research is focus on the scholarship produced by the Critical Theory of the Terrorism Studies authors, being conducted by the CTS, that focuses on the importance of knowledge and on the discursive fields. It is important to take into consideration that the CTS, in terms of ontology and epistemology is characterized by the influence of constructivist vision that see reality as something that is constructed and not objective, by questioning the conventional understandings of terrorism "rise in the critical scholarship which aims to question the conventional understandings of terrorism and counter-terrorism" (Stump and Dixit, 2011: 200). It is also going to be conducted through the role of social media that is related and it is used by the CTS scholars, due to the discourse that the media generates in their portrait of the PFF.

This theoretical framework will inform how the media and social media portrait theories regarding the Portuguese Foreign Fighters radicalization, recruitment, and potential return.

3.2. Research questions

This thesis aims to offer a critical analysis of media portrait of the Portuguese foreign fighters who joined ISIS considering the overarching research questions "RQ- How the Portuguese media portraits the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS?". Specifically, it addresses three sub-questions:

RQ1- How does the Portuguese media portrait the recruitment of the PFF who joined the ISIS?"

RQ2- How does the Portuguese media portrait the radicalization of the PFF who joined the ISIS?

RQ3- How does the Portuguese media portrait the potential return of the PFF who joined the ISIS?

The main questions of this thesis are going to help with the construction and the point of this thesis which is to show how they are portraited by the Portuguese media.

3.3. Research Design

This research is based on a case study, that is the PFF on ISIS, since a case study allows "in-depth research of a real-life phenomenon" (Yin, 2009: 16) and is going to be conducted through a qualitative analysis that is going to be based on the collection of data on primary and secondary sources. Most of these sources will be obtained from the media platforms of *Diário de Notícias* and *Público*.

The data was collected through a qualitative analysis of primary sources and then was analyzed through a thematic analysis, by diving the data collected into themes, and giving the biggest importance to themes that were referred to more times and given more importance in the newspapers.

3.4. Data Collection

This study focuses on a period of five years, since 2015 until 2020. So, the data collected from Portuguese newspapers spans over from 2015 until 2020. The data related to the PFF on ISIS, since 2015, there was an increase of the importance of terrorism and of foreign fighters, that was very much related with the Paris attacks and other attacks in Europe, and due to the refugees' crisis, which it is also connected with the potential return of the PFF and their families to Portugal. The chosen newspapers were *Diário de Notícias* and *Público,* because these two newspapers are the biggest newspapers in Portugal and because they were the only ones that offered me access to Premium articles.

This thesis focuses on qualitative analysis, based on primary sources to understand how the media portraits the phenomenon of the Portuguese foreign fighters who joined ISIS, to understand, their motivations, their recruitment, their radicalization, and their potential return.

The use of primary data analysis can have two sides to it a positive and a negative one, the first side mentioned relates to the reliability of the data and having what is needed for the investigation, the reliability relies with the fact that the source of the data is known, with a "detailed knowledge of the collection methodology" (Butlion, 2019) and having what is necessary relies on the fact of knowing which information is necessary to

complete the analysis, that in this case are the newspapers. The latter side relates to the necessary "multi-stage process to clean, organize and validate" the data (Butlion, 2019).

On the chapter of Analysis, the collection of the information will be based on primary data of Portuguese journals, as *Diário de Notícias* and *Público*, that have information about the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS since 2015 until 2020. They were chosen, due to the starting questions about this article and because they have a good reputation and influence in Portugal (Ranking, 2006-2021), seeing that they have reputed journalists on this topic, who have also written books, like Hugo Franco and Raquel Moleiro, who wrote the book *The Portuguese Jihadists*, and also, Nuno Tiago Pinto, who wrote the book *The Fighters of the Islamic State*.

There were some difficulties related with the access of the newspapers, due to the restriction of some articles that were exclusive to Premium accounts. The access to the newspaper articles were provided by different workers from different newspapers' companies, that provided me with the necessary access to the respective newspapers' articles for the collection of data. However, there were two articles from 'Diário de Notícias, from 19 of March of 2019 and 25 of March of 2020, that I could not have access to, because they were still restricted to some clients and workers.

The newspapers data was retrieved through Microsoft Excel, with the division of the starting questions in tables, of additional information, to fit the different categories that will be withdrawal from the different newspapers' articles.

3.5. Data Analysis

After the newspapers articles were collected, the data was analyzed and coded according to the principles of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method of analysis helped on "identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 6), which means that it helped this thesis on the identification of the important themes within the collected data.

So, this method is important to this thesis because it "examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so one are the effects of a range of discourses operating within the society" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 9), this is applicable to the way that the journalists report the news about the Portuguese foreign fighters, to the way they are radicalize, recruited and the reasons for their potential return, helping the examination of the portrait of their realities on their discourses.

In this method of analysis there are themes, that can be semantic or explicit level (Braun and Clark, 2006: 13), the one that is going to be used in this thesis is the semantic approach because "the themes are identified within the explicit or surface meanings of the data and the analyst is not looking for anything *beyond*" (Braun and Clark: 2006:13). So, the purpose of this thesis is to relate the data content with its meaning and implications with the previous literature review. This indicated the important and predominant themes that were present in the newspaper's articles, giving me the reasons to choose the themes that I have chosen to present in the analysis of this thesis.

The process of this method by Bran and Clark (2006), helped this thesis by firstly, getting myself familiar with the data collected in the newspapers, which means the process of getting familiar with the collected data and the start to engage that data with the analysis; generating initial codes, the phase of the ideas and the formation of the initial codes from the data; searching for themes, when the data is collected and coded, creating the relationship between the coded, themes and levels of themes; and the produce of the report, when the themes are done and how they make the final analysis that is culminated in a report.

The process of analysis started with the examination and with the review of each of the chosen newspapers, taking the frequent themes, to include theme in thematic areas. What helped to code the information was the previous sources of the literature review that helped on choosing what was and was not important for the analysis of this thesis, not mentioning what was not important, like, for example, the support of Rómulo Costa to the death of the infidels. There was another information that was omitted in this analysis because it was not important for this analysis. After that, all the information was coded and integrated into the biggest themes that are the recruitment, the radicalization, and the potential return of the PFF.

The sub-themes integrated in the main ones, are the role of the Portuguese foreign fighters in the recruitment and radicalization; the crime of recruitment; accusation threat to security; religion, Muslim and Catholic; support of the Portuguese to others foreign fighters; Portugal as a platform of logistic support for the PFF; detention and prison; Leyton Cell; Group of Linha de Sintra; radicalization abroad; extremism political-religious Muslim; signaling radicalization; if returnees can increase radicalization; radicalization in mosques; Portuguese descendants; jihadists; children; women; attacks; better life conditions; disillusion; arrest warrants; reintegration; International Cooperation; return of women and children; as access (to who committed crimes and their

rank in Jihad; as repatriation; investigation <u>and</u> trial to who wants to return from Syria; monitoring; as through a case-by-case analysis and approach; special measures to women and children; and as difficulty between choosing consular protection duty and the country's security protection duty.

3.6. Ethics

There is no evidence involved in this topic and research, and because of that there is no concern of harming myself or causing harm to any other individual/person during the analysis of this topic, so the risk can be considered minimal. I do not foresee this investigation to cause me any harm but if that does in fact happen, I would talk with the university ISCTE-IUL.

3.7. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it is important to understand that the point of this thesis is to answer the starting question of "RQ- How the Portuguese social media portraits the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS?", through a qualitative method of research based on the thematic analysis theory collecting information, and primary or secondary sources. In this case, the newspapers which have information of the Portuguese foreign fighters on ISIS since 2015 until 2020.

Chapter 4 – Analysis

After gathering and explaining the literature review and the methodology of this thesis, the analysis of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS can be progressed. On this chapter, the research questions are going to be answered, the main one being: "RQ- How does the Portuguese media portraits the PFF who joined ISIS?", and the three sub-questions:

RQ1- How the media portrays the recruitment of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters?

RQ2- How the media portrays the radicalization of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters on ISIS?

RQ3- How the media portrays the return of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters from ISIS?

This chapter is firstly, focus on the data of the newspapers *Público* and *Diário de Notícias*. Afterwards, it focus on the major questions of this thesis, the recruitment, radicalization, and the return of the Portuguese Foreign Fighters, using a thematic analysis, it analyzes what has influence in these three processes, by also comparing them with literature review.

The data was collected from 77 news articles, 63% of these articles were from *Diário de Notícias* and 36% from *Público* (figure 1). Also, 79% of these articles were written by women and 21% were written by men (figure 2).
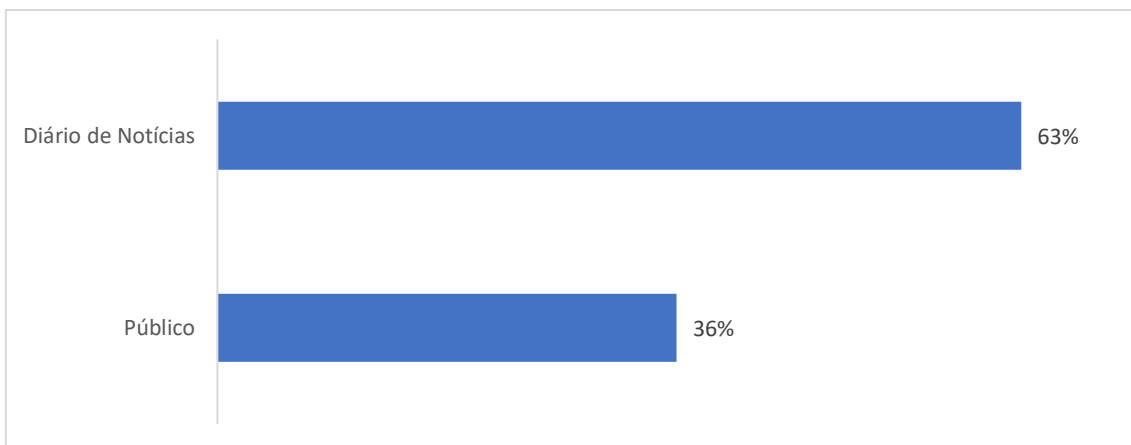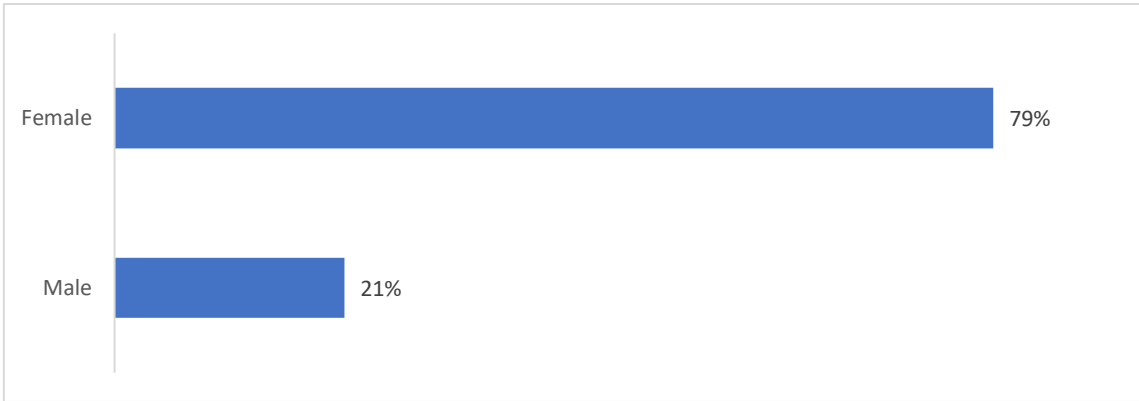

Figure 1.Number of articles.

Figure 2. Percentage of the gender of the authors of the articles.

4.1. How does the Portuguese media portrait the recruitment of the PFF who joined ISIS?

The thematic analysis used to analyze the data from the 77 Newspapers 'Diário de Notícias' and 'Público', made it possible to understand how the recruitment related with the PFF is seen by the Portuguese media. The next figure relates to how the recruitment is seen by the media according to most of the extracted data of the newspapers.
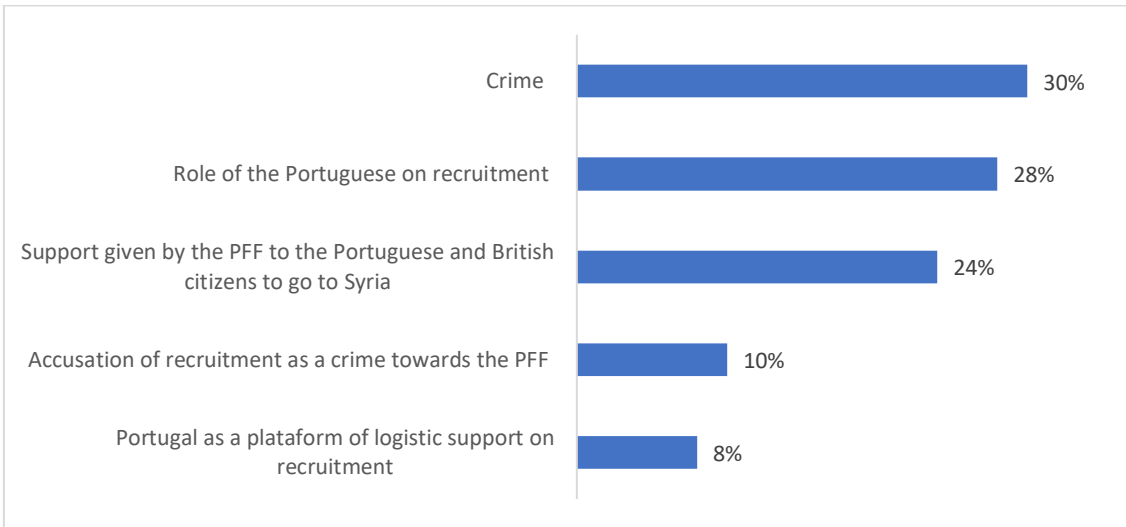
Figure 3. Percentage of how recruitment is seen by the media.

As noticed, in Figure 3, the recruitment is seen as a crime committed by the PFF with 30% of representation in the Portuguese newspapers, 28% refer the role of the PFF on the recruitment; 24% refer to the support given by the PFF to the Portuguese and British citizens in order to go to Syria; 10% that mention the accusation of recruitment as a crime towards the PFF; and 8% refer to Portugal as a platform of logistic support on recruitment. All these references in the newspapers are related with each other and they are mentioned, most of the time, in the same way and perspective.

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So, the major reference in the newspapers of recruitment is it being seen as a crime because, most of the time the authors refer to recruitment as a crime and not as recruitment itself "crime of international terrorism recruitment" (Marcelino, 2019), since this type of recruitment is related with taking citizens from the country of from outside the country to the Jihad, for them to become jihadists that will fight for ISIS.

The references towards the recruitment as a crime normally related the accusation of this crime with the PFF. According to the newspapers, this accusation was led by the Public Ministry of Portugal (n/a, 2019), after they started a crime inquiry in 2013, due to suspicions that two PFF were involved in the kidnapping of two journalists, John Cantile and Jeroen Oerlemens (Marcelino, 2020). The Public Ministry of Portugal accused eight Portuguese citizens of the crime of international terrorism recruitment (Marcelino, 2019). These citizens were Nero Saraiva, Fábio Poças, Sandro Marques, the brothers Celso, Edgar and Rómulo Costa and the other brothers Sadjo and Cassimo Turé, with Rómulo Costa detained in Portugal and Cassimo Turé with identity and residence term, the rest of them are death, presumed death or their whereabouts are unknow (Marcelino, 2019).

The accusation of recruitment towards the PFF means that they had a role on the recruitment of other citizens to go to Syria to join the Jihad "All recruited" (n/a, 2020), at least this is what was portrayed by the authors, by using Portugal as a platform of logistic support and by giving support to other citizens to go to Syria as well. The fact that the PFF were involved in the recruitment, can be related with the fact that ISIS depend on the recruitment of the foreign fighters, to accomplish the Caliphate, because they needed the military support and support on another areas.

In 2013, the Portuguese information services discovered that Lisbon was being used as a stopover, through the use of Costa's brothers' family's house in the Linha de Sintra group (Ribeiro, 2015), for friends' friends or family. For the authors, Portugal was being used as a local of passage because of the "information services, to go to services, to go to Turkey and the reason is because of the direct flights to Istanbul" (Ribeiro, 2016).

The Leyton group or Linha de Sintra group, which is the group formed in London containing Portuguese citizens from Sintra and that are being accused by the Public Ministry of Portugal, used Portugal as a support base for the jihadists that they have recruited. Every different one had a different type of post, "Sadjo Turé convinced and enticed young British citizens in London and send them to Lisbon. Edgar Costa, Sandro Marques and Cassimo Turé support them in Portugal, giving them logistic support and then send them to Turkey to go to Syria. Nero Saraiva collected them in Turkey and try

to send them to Syria through his connections" (Marcelino, 2019). It is known from the literature review that Nero Saraiva had a very important role in the recruitment of the foreign fighters, mostly from Facebook.

Because of this and because there are proofs that the PFF were involved in the recruitment, that are mentions that the Public Ministry wants Rómulo Costa and Cassimo Turé, to be the only ones present in the trial to be condemned eight years, for the crime of recruitment and support of the travel of Portuguese and British citizens to Syria. The Court decided to sentence Rómulo Costa with nine years and Cassimo Turé with eight years and six months for the same reasons that the Public Ministry of Portugal wanted them to be condemned (Trigueirão, 2020).

When the newspapers' Portuguese authors talked about recruitment, and saw it as a crime of terrorism, it has to do with the way that the authors of the newspaper see and label terrorism, as they have the intention of labeling it as a crime, for the purpose of creating fear and impact towards the audience that will read those newspapers, as it will be seen next.

So, as recruitment being portrayed as something that is happening in Portugal and that is being done by the Portuguese citizens that went to ISIS, it is possible to understand the symbiotic relationship that the terrorism and the media have, since the media uses the fact that Portugal is acting as a local of passage, in order for the readers to buy more newspapers and click on their news, using the discourse of fear that is mentioned by Altheide (2006). This can lead people into mistake and can make Portuguese people fear every Muslim.

Also, it is important to mention the fact it depends if the people that are seeing the newspapers are passive or active readers, because if they are passive readers, they would probably fear more than the active ones, because they would be less informed (Williamson, Fray and Miles-Johnson, 2019).

4.2. How does the Portuguese media portrait the radicalization of the PFF who joined ISIS?

As well as in the recruitment, the thematic analysis allowed to understand how the radicalization is portrayed by the Portuguese media. The next figure relates to how the recruitment is seen by the media according to most of the extracted data of the newspapers.
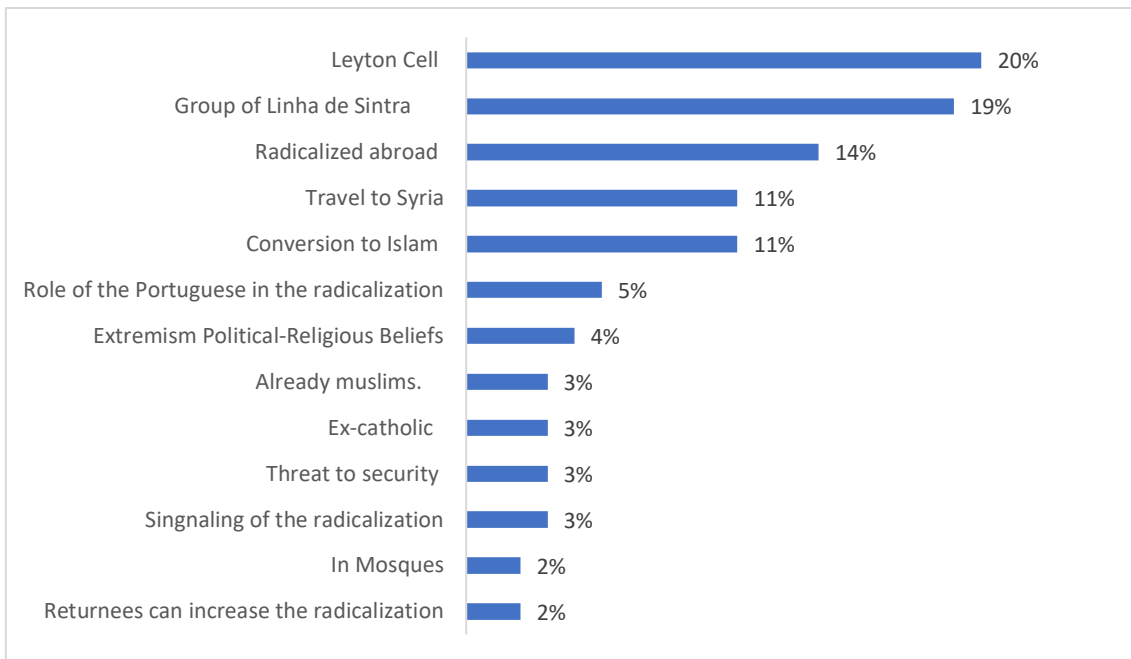
24

Figure 4. Percentage of how the radicalization is seen by the media.

As it is seen in Figure 4, the radicalization is seen through the Leyton Cell by 20%; through the Group of Linha de Sintra by 19%; through the radicalization abroad by 14%; through travelling to Syria by 11%; through the role of the PFF in the radicalization by 5%; through Extremism Political-religious Muslim by 4%; through already being Muslims by 3%; through being ex-catholic by 3%; through being a threat to security by 3%; through signaling the radicalization by 3%; through returnees can increase the radicalization by 2%; and through radicalization being made at the mosques at 2%.

The Leyton Cell was the major reference in the newspapers when talking about radicalization, with relation with the Group of Linha de Sintra, since most of the PFF, in accordance with the newspapers, where from the so called Linha de Sintra, in the suburbs of Lisbon and went to London "some Portuguese radicalized in London where from Sintra" (Ribeiro, 2015), to the Leyton neighborhood, that is known for being "one of the biggest Muslim communities of England" (Marcelino, 2019), where they radicalized themselves "jihadists of Sintra converted and radicalized in England and not in Portugal" (Marcelino, 2015) and formed the Leyton Cell "name of the group of the Portuguese jihadists that had emigrate from linha de Sintra" (Marcelino, 2019). It was a group of eight PFF, Nero Saraiva, Sadjo Turé, Cassimo Turé, Edgar Costa, Celso Costa, Rómulo Costa and Fábio Poças.

Nero Saraiva born in Angola, in Portugal lived in Massamá, went to Leyton with his mum where he met the others. Sadjo Turé and Cassimo Turé, born in Guinea Bissau,

lived in Massamá, went to Leyton, Sadjo in 2003 and Cassimo in 2005/2006. Edgar Costa, Celso Costa and Rómulo Costa lived in Massamá and went to Leyton, where they converted and met with Nero Saraiva, except Rómulo, that stayed in Portugal. Fábio Pocas, lived in Mem Martins, went to Leyton at his 19 years old with the brothers Costa, there he radicalized himself (Marcelino, 2019). Sandro Funa Monteiro joined them, after leaving Sintra and going to Leyton (Marcelino, 2015).

They also all converted to Islam in London (Maia, 2015), except for Sadjo and Cassimo, that were already Muslims, the rest of them were catholic before the conversion "brothers Turé were the only one that were already Muslims the rest were Converted Muslims, of Suni current, with extremist politic-religious convictions" (Marcelino, 2019). That is what it is portrayed in the newspapers, that their conversion to Islam, bring the extremist politic-religious convictions. It is also important to mention, that their radicalization in Leyton was made through their connections as friends, but also made through the mosques they used to go in the Leyton neighborhood "radicalized in mosques of the British capital" (Ribeiro, 2016). This perspective goes in accordance with the perspective of Hegghamer (2010), that friendships and kinships have importance on the way they interpret the Coran.

The radicalization that is portrayed is not the radicalization without the violent means, but the radicalization in which the individuals change their religious views, as it was seen through some of the elements of Group da Linha de Sintra that were Catholics before and changed to Muslims, being radicalized in the Mosques near where they used to live, with the objective of going to Syria to fight for the jihad, using violent means.

Besides the group of Linha de Sintra, there were also other groups of PFF that were mentioned in the radicalization and that were radicalized abroad, but not in Leyton, like the group of the "second and third generation of emigrants in France and in Luxembourg, with identity and inclusion problems" (Ribeiro, 2016). Mikael Baptista, that was a Portuguese descendant, of 23 years old who radicalized himself in France (Diário de Notícias, 2015), José Parente, who was born in France with parents from Tondela, that also radicalized in France (Marcelino, 2018) and Ângela Barreto, who was Portuguese but with origin in the Netherlands and was radicalized there.

So, it is possible to understand that in accordance with the newspapers the radicalization was done abroad and not in Portuguese territory (Ribeiro, 2015). So, the PFF are mostly from the Group of Linha de Sintra and the Leyton Group and were then

converted to Islam and radicalized in London. The others were the ones that were Portuguese descendants and that were from other cities in Europe. It was seen that they all radicalized abroad and through mosques. Their radicalization be considered as a fast radicalization, as mentioned by Arena (2018), where they went to mosques, started to use Muslim clothes and to have radical ideas and wanting to leave to the jihad.

The majority of the PFF who were already converted to the Islam and radicalized, went to travel to Syria to join the jihad, because it was through their travel to Syria that they would become official fighters of the ISIS "The organized radicalization of the Portuguese. Citizen group and their relocation to Syria, with their women and children, to integrate ISIS and fulfill the jihad" (Lusa, 2020). For the authors of the newspapers, the radicalization is also the first step before joining the jihad, that is why they mention the travel to Syria in their newspapers, because after PFF radicalized themselves in the countries that they were living in, they decided to leave to Syria to join the jihad. Almost every PFF travelled to Syria, because of the way they interpret the Islamist ideology, which as Wignell, Tan and O'Halloran (2017), mentioned is the Salafist jihadism, an interpretation of the Islam that can have a violence connotation regarding what is the Jihadism, that obliges the jihadists to go to Syria to fight for the Jihad and use violence means to fight the West and its ideologies. So, for them is a duty as a Muslim to travel to Syria, to help the Syrian people, to help their brothers, like Fábio Poças said to Pinto (2015) in his interview.

As well as in the recruitment, the media portrayed the role of the PFF on the radicalization. It mentioned the role of a Portuguese in a group of Morrocan citizens, that had a role in the radicalization of the news members in ISIS (Lusa, 2015), and mention the role that the Leyton group had on the radicalization of Portuguese and British citizens (Marcelino, 2020).

The mention of radicalization as a threat to security, and how signaling the radicalization and the returnees can increase the radicalization are connected to one another. It is a threat to security to not prepare and not do the signalization of the returnees which consequently might probably increase radicalization in Portugal "not preparing the return of these individuals can worsen the risks of radicalization in the national territory" (Marcelino, 2015), which even authorities recognize that it can be a real threat (Diário de Notícias, 2016). So, because of that it is important to detect the radicalization signaling "through a proximity policing, a project begun by the PSP" (Marcelino, 2017) and it is important to see the returnees as a way of combating the radicalization (Marcelino, 2018),

to not increase the radicalization in Portugal. This concern with the radicalization is felt by all the countries that the foreign fighters can return from the West, because if it is not done and prepared in the right way, it can make the radicalization increase in them.

The way that the authors portrait the radicalization of the PFF enable a pattern of thinking that the PFF were all radicalized outside of Portugal, what can lead into mistake, because even though the newspapers do not mention, there is always the probability that there are some Portuguese that can or cannot have been radicalized in Portugal, which means that the media can influence people's way of thinking in just one straightforward way and make them not think about the other possibilities, not only related with the radicalization being done outside borders, but with all the rest of the portrait.

As we can see above the authors talk about, through the same type of discourse as in the recruitment, the discourse of fear, defining the radicalization according to their own perception of what it is, how it is connected to terrorism, in specific with the ISIS and with the PFF, and how the PFF were radicalized and how they were involved on it. This happens because the radicalization is also seen as a threat to the Portuguese security, which can amplify the fear of the society, in specific, of the people that read the newspapers. However, it is also important to mention, that on seeing the PFF and the radicalization as a threat, as something to be afraid of, the authors of the newspapers are giving power to the PFF, through the language that they used (Robinson, 2009).

It is important to mention that the authors of the newspapers do try to understand the phenomenon of the radicalization and the social reality of the phenomenon, by analyzing where they radicalized, how that was done, what affected them and led them into the process of the radicalization. So, they pay attention towards the social reality of the PFF and of the phenomenon on itself, so they do not focus only on the labels.

4.3. How does the Portuguese media portrait the potential return of the PFF who joined ISIS?

As well as in the recruitment and radicalization, the thematic analysis is used to understand how the potential return is portrayed by the Portuguese media. The potential return is divided in the profile of returnees; why they want to comeback; and how the situation is being dealt with by Portugal. The next figure is related with how the profile of the returnees is seen by the media, according to most of the extracted data from the newspapers.
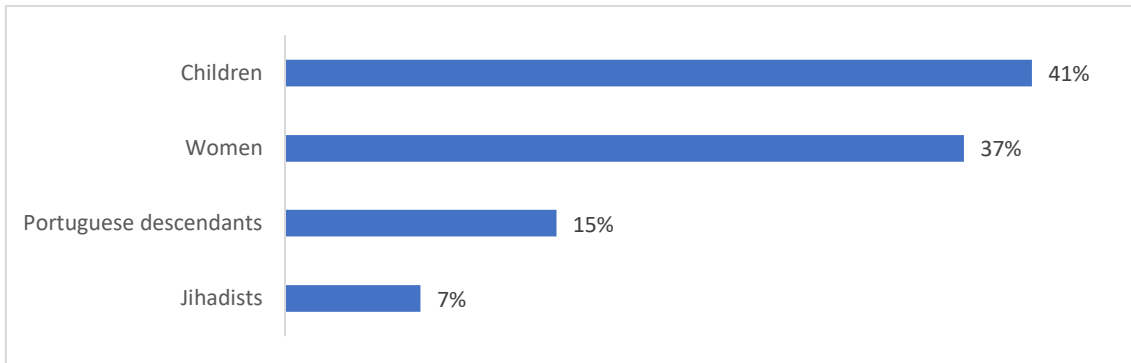
Figure 5. Percentage of the profile of the returnees.

As portrayed in the Figure 5, the Profile of the returnees is portrayed as Portuguese Descendant by 15%; jihadists by 7%; children by 41%; and as women by 37%. The return will be mostly done by children, women, and Portuguese descendant of the PFF jihadists that also wanted to return, but most of them are death, presumed death or their whereabouts are unknown. The children, were subjects of ideological indoctrination, can be traumatized and could have been recruited at nine years old, as well as Portuguese descendant and the women are characterized as having a familiar role and mother figure (Marcelino, 2019).

The majority of the PFF that want to return are women and children, this is because the majority of the PFF men are death or their whereabouts are unknown. Most of the women that want to return are the ones that went to ISIS with their Portuguese husbands and now they are dead, and they want to return. The children are the children of the PFF and their wives/women. They were and are very important for ISIS, to create a family, but they can also fight if) necessary (Bakker and Leed, 2015).

The next figure is related with how the media portrays the reasons for the PFF and their families return.
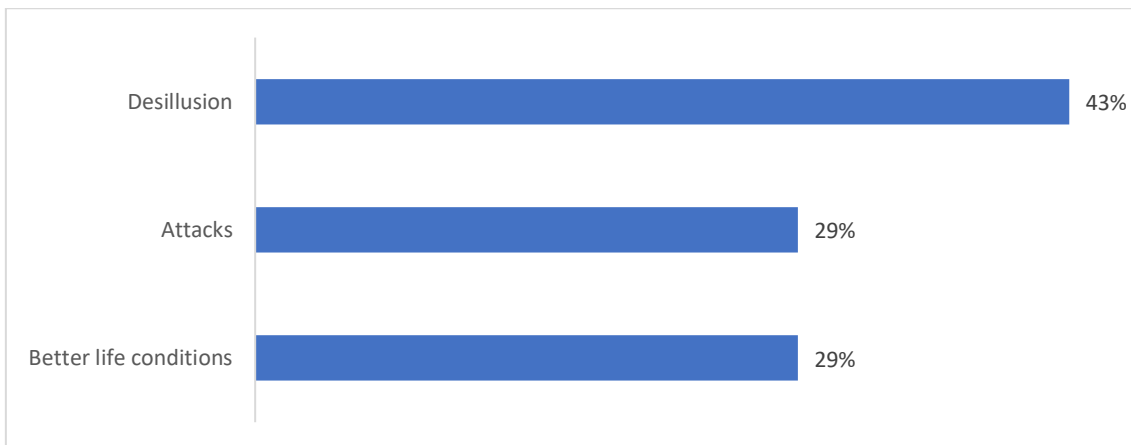

Figure 6. Percentage of the reasons for the PFF and their families.

As portrayed in Figure 6, the reasons for the PFF and their families return are attacks by 29%; better life conditions by 29% and disillusion by 43%. The first one is related with wanting to come back to Europe to commit attacks; the second one with the fact of not having good conditions in Syria or Iraq; and the third one is related with their expectations of something different leading to disillusion (Marcelino, 2018 and 2019).

These pathways go in accordance with Reed, Roy van Zuijdewijn and Bakker (2015) perspective, that the foreign fighters have different pathways when they decide if they want to stay or not in the conflict in Syria. In this case, the pathway that is portraited in the newspapers is that they decide to return home to do attacks; to leave ISIS permanently and return home because they do not want to be there anymore, that can be related with the better life conditions and disillusion.

The next figure is related to how the media portrays the return of the PFF and their families and how the situation is being dealt with in Portugal.
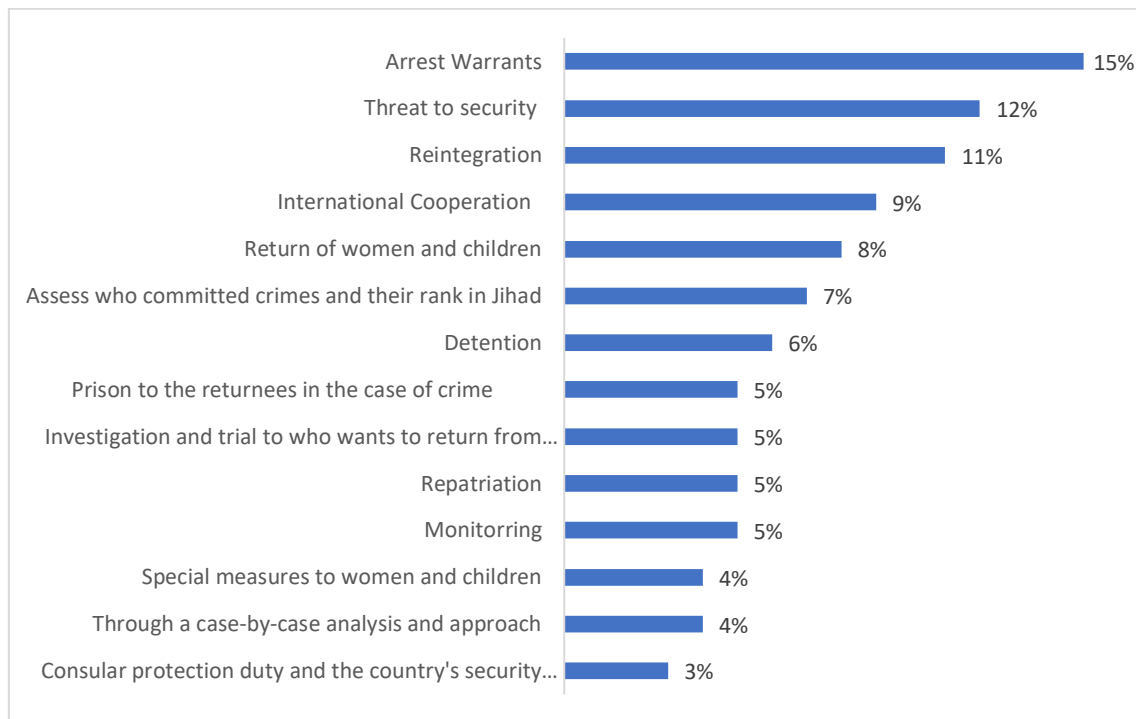
Figure 7. Percentage of how the return is portrayed.

As portrayed in Figure 7, the return is seen as arrest warrants by 15%; as threat to security by 12%; as reintegration by 11%; as International Cooperation by 9%; as return of women and children by 8%; as assess to who committed crimes and their rank in Jihad by 7%; as detention by 6%; as prison to the returnees in the case of crime 5%; as repatriation by 5%; as investigation and trial to who wants to return from Syria by 5%; as monitoring by 5%; as through a case-by-case analysis and approach by 4%; as special
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measures to women and children by 4%; and as difficulty between choosing consular protection duty and the country's security protection duty by 3%.

The return of the PFF to Portugal, represents a threat to the security, both to Portugal and to the European Union (hereinafter mentioned as EU) (Marcelino, 2018). There is the possibility of return of the jihadists and of their women and children to Portugal, although the biggest risk to the national security is the return of the PFF, and with that comes and forces "punish measures, of surveillance and deradicalization" (Marcelino, 2019). However, women can also be a danger and a threat to security according to the Portuguese Judiciary Police (Marcelino, 2019). So, it is possible to understand that returning home is not an easy process, especially due to the concern of the countries and the threat to the security of those countries that are going to receive them, normally the Western countries, like al-'Ubaydi, Lahoud, Milton and Price, (2014) mentioned, and this concern is also a Portuguese one.

The return of the PFF and their families makes it complex to the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Fights due to the duty to provide consular protection to national citizens, but whilst also having into account, the duty of protection and security, towards the countries that are part of the EU, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter mentioned as NATO), and international colligation against ISIS, so take into account two variables, the Portuguese national security and their obligations (Lusa, 2019). This return was also confirmed by Rui Manchete, the Minister of the Foreigh Affairs in 2014 (Franco and Moleiro, 2015).

Because of this threat to security, it is very important to understand and separate the ones who committed crimes and the degree of their efforts in the jihad (Marcelino, 2018) through a case-by-case analysis that will allow to determine the level of intervention and the support to adopt, evaluating the profile of the individuals, that will distinguish the different individuals (Marcelino, 2018 and 2019). In the case of the absence of their direct involvement on ISIS, it is still important to see if they represent a threat to security, being accompanied or detained, or if they are victims (Marcelino, 2019). The ones who are victims and did not commit a crime and did not have a role in the jihad, but want to be reintegrated (Marcelino, 2018).

The arrest warrants are one of the major things that it is talked about in the return since the Portuguese Public Ministry had an issue with them, in result of investigations done by the information and security services, for the ones that they know committed crimes. These arrest warrants were made for the ones who exalted and shared things

related to ISIS, that might be subject of two arrest warrants one from Portugal and the other from the country where they converted to Islam and radicalized (Ribeiro 2015). There were six PFF targeted with arrest warrants, from the Group of Linha de Sintra, that were brothers Costa, Sadjo Turé, Sando Funa, Fábio Poças that are presumed death, although is not taken from granted due to the impossibility of confirming it and of it possibly being simulated (Marcelino, 2017), and Nero Saraiva, that is the only one alive (Marcelino, 2019). The execution of the arrest warrants is seen through the detention of the person (Marcelino, 2017), that is the final objective, but they also help to control their movements, to monitor them (Maia, 2015).

This monitorization is portrayed as a security measure of the entities in charge, to understand and view where the PFF and other jihadists are. The monitorization and the international warrants, are made through the cooperation of the European authorities, like Europol, and Portugal is involved to fight jihadism in Syria and in Turkey (Ribeiro, 2015), this allows the permanent sharing of information about the European jihadists that went to ISIS (Marcelino, 2015). This surveillance of the PFF and their families increased by the Portuguese authorities in 2014 (Franco and Moleiro, 2015).

After the detention of the subjects of the international warrants, the destination is prison (Marcelino, 2019). The prison depends on the evidence that the authorities have against the PFF to sustain the condemnation. Sentences can be of fifteen years in case of relating to terrorism acts and crime (Lusa, 2019).

Besides the return of the jihadists, the newspapers refer to the return of their wives/women and of their children, approximately of 20 humans and children of the PFF (Diário de Notícias, 2018), that were waiting for authorization and support to go to Portugal (Marcelino, 2019). Portugal is preparing this return, like other European countries, but for this situation is necessary an exceptional regime of reintegration, due to the humanitarian question of people needing support, being there right to return to Portugal (Lusa, 2019). The repatriation of these children and women is being prepared by the Government, but there is a warning from the Radicalization Awareness Network, the strategy of repatriation cannot promote a mass acceptance (Marcelino, 2019).

It is important to reintegrate the jihadists in society, and their families can have a principal role in the attempts to social insertion, even the ones that were accused and arrested for belonging to ISIS, after leaving prison must be reintegrated, using that as one of the major instruments to combat the jihadism in Europe (Marcelino, 2017), being

important to reintegrate the jihadist and their families (Marcelino, 2017). The reintegration depends on the will and on the effort of the individuals that are submitted to them (Marcelino, 2018). In the case of women and children, they are being subject to special measures and special models of reintegration, due to the fact of probably not wanting to be there and not being involved in the crime and with ISIS (Lusa, 2019).

Therefore, the PFF's process of returning that is portrait by the newspapers is the process that Reed, van Zuijdewijn and Bakker (2015) transmitted, where the returning off the individual must be done through their integration in the society, that in the newspapers is portraited as something very important to combat the jihadism in Europe. But there are other forms besides their integration, such as the prosecution of the foreign fighters that is also portraited in the newspapers with the arrest warrants, monitorization, detention and with the imprisonment as other ways of dealing with them. Although it is portraited that even after them being detained and in prison, they should also be integrated in society.

During the portrait of the return of the PFF there is possible to notice the role of the media. It is present in the portrait of the return of the PFF the symbiotic relationship that is proposed by Camophuijsen and Vissers (2012), where the terrorists depend on the media and the media depends on them. Here it is possible to see the bridge that the media has between the government and the public, by the mention of the preoccupation of the government with the return of the PFF and with the portrait of the measures that have been taken by them to control, monitor, detain and reintegrate the PFF's return. Besides, here the media is worried about going deeper on the motivations of the return and not only on just publishing the acts of violence on itself. They were worried on showing what lead them to want to return and that there are other possibilities for the PFF besides prison, because not all of them have been committing crimes, that it is important to distinguish them.

In this case the media tries to contribute for giving by providing about regarding the social reality of the return of the PFF. They portrait who is coming back, what reasons might they had to come back, the good and bad reasons, and try to understand what is being done to control the entrance of the returnees, by portraying the good and bad alternatives that the PFF may have when arriving in Portugal. This image is important to understand which context led them to return and which context led the Portuguese authorities to take different actions.

4.4. How does the Portuguese media portraits the PFF who joined ISIS?

This chapter will focus on answering the main question of this thesis, connecting the three points mentioned previously about recruitment, radicalization and return of the PFF in one.

Firstly, it is important to mention that the newspapers portrait the three parts of the cycle of the foreign fighter that is proposed by Kaplan (2011), in which the first process is the recruitment, that happens before the mobilization phase, which means essentially the phase occurring before the conflict, it is when the foreign fighter gains the sympathy with the cause. In this specific case, the recruitment is more portraited in terms of the fact that the PFF contributed to the recruitment of other people, which means that they gain the sympathy of other foreign fighters and contributed to the cause. Besides that, they also had the second phase which relates to the travel to the zone of conflict, that in this portrait is the travel to Syria where they were radicalized. These two phases are not done in Portugal but in the country that they were living in before the third phase, which occurs when they decide to stay and leave the conflict, that in this case, it is the departure of the conflict by the PFF, because they wanted better conditions for their lives, they were with ISIS or because they wanted to commit the attacks.

It was possible to see that the media has a symbiotic relationship with terrorism and the phenomena related to it, like recruitment, radicalization, and the potential return. The media during their portrait has a symbiotic relationship by being the bridge between the government and the public, through the information they give to the audience about what the government has been doing about the PFF, especially in terms of the return of (adicionar of entre return e the) the PFF to the country. They focus more on this aspect, because that is what causes more impact in the Portuguese society and also creates more fear, attracting more readers, viewers and visitors (Campophuijsen and Vissers, 2012), demonstrating that the media "are dependent on terrorism because of it is supposed news value" (Camophuijsen and Vissers, 2012: 20), by writing about articles and topics that possibly create more interest in the public.

This symbiotic relationship creates fear in the readers that have read or will read the newspapers which talk about the threat to security that the PFF fighters might originate, using a discourse of fear. By portraying the risk that the PFF were and are in connection with the recruitment and radicalization, because of their role in these two phenomena, in which they recruited and brought to Portugal the recruiters whom were

already radicalized, that could be potential threats to the country and by portraying the threat that it is to receive the PFF without a plan and without a division between the ones that have committed crimes to those that did not.

Furthermore, it is possible to see the contributory relationship between the media and terrorism, that was studied by White (2020), because of the way that the authors represented the recruitment, radicalization, and the potential return, since by transmitting news about these factors, the radicalization, recruitment of the readers might increase.

So, it is also important to mention the frames regarding what the PFF did and are, as it can influence the types of attitudes of the readers, it depends on the way that the audience interprets what it is written, and there are some parts in which the authors advise them about the threat of the creation of fear in the Portuguese security. This fear also depends on if the audience consists of passive or active readers, if they are passive, they can be more easily manipulated then the active ones, because the active ones are more informed and have more knowledge about these subjects then the passive ones, that can be reading this type of news for the first time.

Besides, it is also important to mention that in this portrait, the media can contribute for the publicity of the PFF as terrorists, because it is giving visibility to the recruitment, radicalization and propaganda that can have influence on amplifying the violence towards the PFF or the motivation to join the ISIS, if the readers think that what the PFF have done is a good thing and not a bad one. But it is important to mention that although these newspapers can contribute to the radicalization or the recruitment, their objective is not to contribute to the cause, the media does not wish to condone that.

Also, as it is possible to understand the discourse that the media uses has a very important role throughout the newspapers. The discourse helps to understand the social reality of the PFF, it contributes by giving knowledge to the phenomenon of terrorism, and in this specific case, to the phenomenon of Portuguese terrorism, trying to understand the politics behind the neutral knowledge, that in this case is by trying to understand the reasons that led them to the path of ISIS and what also led them to want to return. However, this social reality of the PFF route can have more details that are not explained throughout the newspapers since it has its own way of seeing the phenomenon, that goes accordingly with the "social-political, historical and cultural contexts" (Jackson, 2007) of the Portuguese society.

4.5. Conclusion

So, during this chapter, it was possible to understand that the newspapers mentioned all the three phases that the foreign fighters passed through when they decided that they wanted to join the ISIS. Also, it was possible to see the relationship between the media and terrorism.

Chapter 5- Conclusion

In this thesis, I have studied the PFF, and the portrait made by the Portuguese media, focusing on the Portuguese newspapers "Diário de Notícias" and "Público", especially related with the recruitment, the radicalization, and the potential return of the PFF.

During the writing of this thesis, it is possible to understand that the media as an important role, since they transmit and write the news. The Portuguese newspapers served as a bridge between the public and the government, by providing the audience with information about what the government's actions on PFF matters will be, but by also using the importance of the language to transmit their news, in this specific case, the discourse of fear of Altheide (2006)") was used. Also, it was possible to see the contributory relationship and symbiotic relationship that the Portuguese social media and terrorism have with each other.

It is also possible to understand the importance that the media has on constructing the social reality of this phenomenon, contributing for what the CTS defend as the knowledge of terrorism, that is not a neutral one, that is always changing and, in this case, this thesis contributes to understand how the social media understands the different pathways that the PFF had through this whole process.

Furthermore, it was possible to understand the portrait that the Portuguese newspapers, mentioned the three processes of the foreign fighters into the conflict; mentioned the fact that the PFF have a role in the recruitment and the radicalization; that their return is not a simple process, even for people that did not commit a crime, because it is necessary to understand who did and who did not; that Portugal is being a cooperative country internationally in this theme; that the PFF that went to ISIS did not go directly from Portugal to the conflict zone, but instead they went from other countries of Europe, where they were radicalized; they mentioned in more frequency the Leyton Cell and Group of Linha de Sintra that were related, because they consisted of the same people; that Portugal is acting against these processes, trying to combat the process of radicalization and recruitment in the country.

The biggest finding of this thesis was that with this analysis is possible to observe how the Portuguese media portrait the recruitment, radicalization, and the potential return, finding that the Portuguese media has a big role in contributing for the knowledge about terrorism and in this specific case, about the PFF that joined ISIS.

However, there were other findings on this thesis, there is a symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism, and with the case of the PFF, that can create fear

towards the readers and the Portuguese society. And the contributory relationship between the media and terrorism too, through the way that the articles transmitted the recruitment, the radicalization, and the potential return of the PFF. Also, the crucial importance of the discourse that the media used on the portrait of the PFF, that shows the social reality of citizens and of the phenomenon, contributing to the increase in the knowledge of the phenomenon of the Portuguese terrorism, that helped understand what lead them to join the ISIS and to potential return.

In this thesis there were three major limitations. The first limitation is related with the main source of this thesis, that are the newspapers. The newspapers articles can have the influence of the journalists' opinions, agendas, and ideological thoughts, instead of being objective and informative. In the specific case of this thesis, it was noted how the articles used the threat to security to mention the PFF, that can increase fear and xenophobic threats from the Portuguese's society part against the Muslim community.

The second limitation is the fact that it only focuses on two newspapers, that restrings the area of investigation, because there are more journals in Portugal that mention the PFF and that possibly have relevant information to add to this thesis. So, it would be beneficial if another individual in the future decid to study and focus on this theme as well, and on another newspapers to see if there is compatibility between them and information to add, that can be important.

The third limitation is the fact that this investigation is only focusing on the newspaper's articles, but it would be interesting to also focus on the society perspectives before and after reading the Portuguese newspapers about the PFF.

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