Title:

The Faces of the Enemy: the Representation of the 'Other' in the Media Discourse of the Falklands War Anniversary.

Abstract:

The year 2012 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Falklands War, amidst a revival of public discussion of the conflict due to the Argentine demand that the issue of sovereignty be reconsidered. This article will explore how the figure of the 'enemy' was constructed by the British newspaper discourse around the anniversary of the war by offering an analysis of language and press imagery in a selection of tabloid and quality British national newspapers from 2012. The article argues that the British press made little effort to show Argentina's position. The Falklands War of 1982 continued to be justified and validated as a just war by the British press in 2012, supporting official positions and presenting a negative image of the Argentinian enemy 'other'. This brought about a reinvention and reinforcement of British national identities in connection with the war, thirty years after its conclusion.

Keywords: Malvinas/Falklands War; thirtieth anniversary; year 2012; British national press; tabloid and quality newspapers; national identity; enemy; 'Other'

The commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Malvinas/Falklands war coincided with a period of increased political tension. Three main events helped to renew the established friction between the British and Argentinian governments: the oil exploration activities by British companies in the offshore waters of the islands, the visit of Prince William to the islands in February 2012 and the fact that the Argentine government presented its claim to the South Atlantic archipelago to the United Nations Decolonisation Committee in New York in June of the same year. This paper will explore how the Argentinian enemy was perceived by British newspaper discourse around the anniversary of the war by offering an analysis of language and press imagery in a selection of tabloid and quality British national newspapers from 2012. The article will begin with a brief historical and political contextualization of the war and show

how the dispute over sovereignty has extended to the present, followed by a description of the behaviour of the press back in 1982, and how the enemy was described then. Although it is not the aim of this article to establish a direct comparison between the two periods (1982 and 2012) it is indeed necessary to provide an outline on how the enemy was portrayed in 1982. This is followed by some critical theories on the nature and benefits of having enemies, together with an overview of the British press today.

The methodology applied draws from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), a method widely used in media research, which is defined by John Richardson as "a theory and a method of analysing the way that individuals and institutions use language" (2007: 1). Norman Fairclough (1995, 2001) identified the relevant stages and aspects to be considered when performing a critical analysis on media texts: the linguistic, the semantic, the structural, and the cultural aspect. In a further development of CDA by Ruth Wodak (2002, 2006), this method is envisaged as an interdisciplinary, eclectic and problem-solving oriented technique in which historical context is always analysed and integrated into the interpretation of discourse and text. Wodak argued that discourses about nations and national identities rely on four types of discursive macro-strategies: constructive, preservative, transformative and destructive strategies (2006: 19). Out of these four categories produced by Wodak, the second one is especially useful to this study because the so-called preservative (also called justificatory) strategy is the one that aims at the conservation and reproduction of national identities. The British press coverage of the anniversary of the Falklands War can be well explained in terms of this strategy, aimed at preserving the national pride that operated during the war.

Dates and circulation numbers were the main criteria used for the selection of texts, which resulted in the identification of 78 articles from 9 different newspapers. Two iconic dates were chosen: 2 April marks the beginning of the war (a national holiday in Argentina for the remembrance of the war and its victims) and 14 June which commemorates the end of the conflict ('Liberation Day' is a national holiday on the islands). All the articles about the Falklands that were published around these dates in the year 2012 were used for this investigation. Regardless of the different text-types, functions and voices that newspaper articles possess, all the articles studied for this paper have been assigned the same narrative value. That is to say, texts have been treated as places where space and time meet to provide social and political meaning.

Attention has been paid not only to the explicit but also to the implicit; as Pierre Macherey claims, "every text is necessarily accompanied by a certain absence; the explicit requires the implicit" (1978: 85). This implies that texts should be read on two levels: what the text says and what the text silences.

The Malvinas/Falklands war was an armed conflict between the United Kingdom and Argentina that lasted for 74 days (2 April - 14 June 1982) leaving approximately one thousand dead behind: 255 British, 649 Argentine and 3 civilian Islanders perished in the battlefield. The reason for war was the claim of sovereignty over the Malvinas/Falkland Islands, which had been part of the British Overseas Territories since the eighteenth century in spite of the fact that Argentina had always alleged that the archipelago belonged to its own national territory. Although the war was relatively short and resulted in relatively few casualties and losses given the size of the respective military forces involved, it represented an important blow to the collective memory of both nations. For the British, it was the last 'colonial' war and one which allowed Margaret Thatcher to stay in power for almost a decade after the British victory. For Argentina, it was the only war fought and lost in the twentieth century and it brought about the fall of the dictatorship which had been in power since 1976. The war implied a major nationalist project for both nations since national honour and national dignity were at stake. The governments of the UK and Argentina were undergoing severe social and economic crises when the war broke out. It is believed that both nations made use of the war to mask internal troubles (Barnett 1982; Cardoso 1983; Regan 1987; Guber 2001; Canelo 2004). This implies that the war could have been used to raise nationalist feelings and thus unite public opinion against a common outside enemy by creating an "us/them" dichotomy; the governments made use of this dichotomy to divert the attention of those who were discontented, unemployed, discriminated against or repressed at home. The surge of patriotic and nationalist passions was provoked during the wartime with the intention of gaining public support.

More than 30 years have passed since the war, but there is still confrontation between the two nations over the same issues and the basis of the conflict remains substantially unresolved. The claims presented by Argentina are based on the concept of territorial integrity while Britain focuses on the islanders' wishes and vigorously proclaims its commitment to defend them against any aggression. This is shown by the continuous

presence of a combined naval, air force and army deployment on the islands. Britain has always insisted that the power to decide should be given to the local inhabitants. To be consistent with its argument, a referendum was held on the islands in March 2013 asking the Falklanders if they wished to remain British. As expected, 99.8 per cent voted 'yes' (Milmo, *Independent*, March 2013). The government of Argentina gave no credibility to this referendum and assigns no legal value to it. The creation of the recent secretary for 'Matters Relating to the Malvinas' in January 2014 is further proof of the relevant position the issue of sovereignty still holds in Argentina. Meanwhile, in the UK some critical sectors expose the never-ending dispute and demand a solution. One of the main complaints relates to the privileged taxation system that colonies such as Gibraltar and the Falklands benefit from (Jenkins*, Guardian*, August 2013).

The central problem of the whole conflict revolves around the notion of sovereignty. The dispute over the Falkland Islands certainly has a long and complicated history that dates back to their discovery: Spaniards, British, Dutch and Portuguese all claim to have discovered the archipelago. From the moment the British colonists settled there in 1833, the Argentinian government has made several unsuccessful attempts to regain the archipelago. In the second half of the twentieth century Argentina submitted an official report to the United Nations laying claim to the islands. This led to resolution number 2065 (XX) from 16 December 1965 titled "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)". It "invites the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to proceed without delay with the negotiations […] bearing in mind […] the interests of the population of the Falkland Islands". This is a key point which implies that the UN has always considered the Falklands' case as a colonial situation, which needs to be resolved with the participation of the local population. However, this has never been accepted by Argentina which wants government-level discussions with a commission formed by international members. As Peter Calvert puts it, "the claims on both sides are based on historical facts that are by turn vague, confused and disputed, and if there is to be any resolution of the question a great deal of homework will have to be done first by both parties" (1983: 405).

The media, as a massive, omnipresent and powerful ideological apparatus played a key role in getting people into a patriotic mood during the conflict. Newspapers, radio and television combined forces to promote nationalist feelings or – if possible – challenge

the war. The British media played a paramount role in the Falklands War, by providing an important part of the experience of the war itself (Badsey 2005). The war became not only a battle between two military forces which struggled for power over a group of small islands in the South Atlantic; it also became a war of words. As George Boyce argues, “words were as of as much significance as the bayonet of the soldier” (2005: 2).

The British press, especially the popular press, was a key element as regards the formation of public opinion during the war. As Patricia Holland states, “behind the banner headlines and sensational pictures there lies a coherent ideology that plays an important role in forming people’s ideas” (1982: 119). Many newspapers, especially mass circulation tabloids, produced striking front pages with sensationalist large-lettered headlines, as well as double pages with dramatic photographs of the war. The front pages and the inside articles were fully triumphant and conveyed a very patriotic mood which tended towards xenophobia and jingoism on some occasions. Robert Harris argues that “in London the Falklands war enabled Fleet Street to indulge in emotions and language which had been denied to British newspapers for a generation” (1983: 38).

There were several constraints in the coverage of the conflict due to technical difficulties, exclusion of journalists for operational reasons, and censorship for alleged security and strategic reasons. All this generated frustration, complaints and frictions between the press, the military and the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Once the war was over, the MoD set up a Defence Committee with the intention of clarifying rules of censorship and the role of the media in future wars. The result was an extensive report titled "The handling of public and press information during the Falklands conflict". A similar report was produced by the MoD Study Group on Censorship titled "The protection of military information". The conclusions of the Defence Committee were interpreted by many as an attack to media independence and journalistic ethics. The scandal was such that some authors, like Greenberg & Smith (1983), even argue that Margaret Thatcher took a ‘totalitarian’ approach towards the media since most of the journalists were working under high levels of governmental and also military control: “normal demands of media independence became cast as a ‘luxury’ that the country couldn’t afford, for reasons of ‘operational security’, ‘morale’ or the ‘national will’” (7). Derrik Mercer (1987) highlights the clash between the armed forces and the media: the

essence of successful warfare is secrecy, whereas for successful journalism publicity is pivotal.

The Falklands was the first overseas war for Britain which received modern media attention; prior to that, the most recent expeditionary campaign had been the Suez operation of 1956. According to Valerie Adams (1986), the Falklands crisis was for two months the single main news story in the British media. Newspapers regularly devoted whole sections to the conflict; some tabloids even developed a logo to identify reports: "the popular press was stimulated to a further excess of jingoism" (89). She adds that there was plenty of misleading and jingoistic material published; much of what was written and said during the war was inaccurate, much was extremely accurate. John Taylor (1991) points out that the press, especially tabloid newspapers, had the problem of keeping up with the demands of releasing daily news stories during the conflict. To compensate the scarce material, newspapers produced daily stories of the personal aspects of the soldiers and their families in Britain, which added to the feeling of patriotism and the imagined British family. That is why it was common to find articles in the newspapers about mothers or wives in despair, or family reunions welcoming the hero home, "which inflected with the imaginary unity of nationhood" (Taylor 1991: 108). Moreover, it was an effective way to avoid censorship. The media showed no pictures of the British dead or severely wounded soldiers and very few of the enemy and although this was considered by many to be a reflection of appropriate good taste, especially those from the MoD, "the absence of the lurid war let in the illusion of a clean war", as Taylor suggested (113). Greenberg and Smith agreed that the images of war were carefully controlled as the MoD remembered the effects television had had on the Vietnam War and the growth of popular opposition in the USA. The effect of the shortage of pictures allowed the British media to create unreal and mystifying portrayals of the war. This has been a constant pattern from then onwards (e.g. Gulf War of 1991, Iraq War of 2014).

Writing about the way the 'enemy' was perceived during the war, Nora Femenia observes that the Argentinian government was characterized in the following three ways: (1) as a fascist dictatorship; (2) as a regime that defied the international community and the rule of law; (3) as a dictator that spread unprovoked aggression elsewhere, offering a bad example to other would-be invaders (1996: 142). Studying

some texts produced by powerful institutions during the Falklands War, such as the media, the government and the military, Femenia adds that "elites [did] promote discursively the attribution of positive qualities to their own nation/allies, and build up the image of the other nation as an enemy" (1996: 12). She blamed the media as having the monopoly on power to manipulate the symbols of identity.

For example, there were several ways in which the Argentine leader, General Galtieri, was negatively described: "a vainglorious incompetent man", a "bully boy" and many other references were made alluding to the fact that Argentina was ruled by a dictator, and "Britain does not appease dictators" (*Daily Express:* 1982). In many British cartoons published during the war, the "Argies" were usually portrayed wearing Mexican hats. Simplification and inaccuracy when describing the rival culture is a way of denigrating the enemy, making them the abject 'other'. This is a frequent technique, one which makes heroes of national soldiers, and 'others' the enemy as being evil, cruel and inferior. Further examples are to be found in texts denouncing that the British flag in the Falklands was "hauled down by an inferior power" (*Daily Express*: 1982). The *Sun* went to the extreme of launching a boycott campaign against corned beef made in Argentina: "refusing to buy corned beef is one way we Brits can show the flag", the newspaper claimed (Harris 1983:46). It also sold thousands of T-shirts with their most grotesque headlines, such as the famous "Stick it up your Junta" or "GOTCHA!" Roy Greenslade, assistant editor of this tabloid at the time of the war, states that the coverage of the Falklands made by the newspaper was "xenophobic, bloody-minded, ruthless, often reckless, black-humoured and ultimately triumphalist but managed to capture the zeitgeist" (*Guardian*, 25 Feb. 2002). Honeywell & Pearce argue that "newspapers organize and give power to the opinions they represent, while leaving actual dissent without a public voice and without a public language" (1982:122).

Friend/Enemy, Good/Evil were polarized in the newspaper discourse of the war, which promoted the illusion that the nation was a united front against a common enemy and greatly ignoring those who oppose the war. The *Daily Mirror* and the *Guardian* initially questioned the use of force and expressed some opposition to a war promoted by the Conservative government. Competition for leadership was fierce, and, remembering that circulation numbers decreased in those newspapers that opposed the Suez War of 1956, they had to be careful as to how to approach their disagreements over this new war,

since they would not risk a drop in sales (Harris 1983: 55). The *Sun*, playing the ultra-patriotic role, accused the *Daily Mirror* and the *Guardian* of being traitors to the nation. The *Daily Mirror* answered back with the attacking headline "the Harlot of Fleet Street" referring of course to the *Sun*, remarking on its editorial article that "The *Sun* today is to journalism what Joseph Goebbels was to truth" (Greenslade, *Guardian* 25 Feb. 2002), adding that it should be compelled to carry an official Government announcement on each copy with the phrase: "Warning: reading this newspaper may damage your mind" (Harris 1983: 52). Newspaper readers in Britain were thus exposed to this sensationalist and absurd performance by the media.

Research on the social psychology of intergroup relations has shown that social categorization implies in-group/out-group (we/they, us/them) distinctions and that positive attributes are connected with the 'self' (self-group or nation) while negative ones with the 'other' (Tajfel 1971; 1982). David Finlay (1967) argued that the military, the political and the social enemy perform psychological, sociological and political functions in a given society by symbolizing the antithesis of core values and beliefs regarding human needs. Enemies are useful scapegoats that help to reduce stress or to spot sources of frustration, serving to justify actions that otherwise would be considered as improper or illegal, providing thus a sense of moral superiority when compared to the flaws of the foe. Sociologically speaking, enemies play a key role in maintaining group solidarity, social coherence and unity. Politically, "images of 'we' and 'they' are significant in establishing one's own identity, in legitimizing actions and programs, and in providing rationales and models for attaining goals" (Bittner 1963: 938). Arthur Gladstone, in his analysis of how the enemy is conceived in times of war and/or conflict, argues that it becomes a moral duty of every citizen to hold a conception of the enemy as "capable of great brutality and evil doing, to be something less than human and therefore hardly deserving respect or consideration, to be insincere and untrustworthy" (1959: 132). The rival nation is defined in negative terms and is projected as a threat to the home nation, and the deliberate polarization of 'us' versus 'them' results in an effective mechanism to foster the national bond. Historically, war propaganda has relied on the dehumanization of the enemy, sometimes even portraying that enemy as a beast or as an animal, or as cruel and uncivilized. This is one of the processes by which military psychology can transform the act of murdering into patriotism, allowing soldiers to kill without guilt (Keen 1986: 17). Dominant discourses

create the Enemy by attaching certain negative characteristics that simultaneously work in favour of the construction of self/national-identity: the Other is created, shaped and transformed in and by discursive practices. According to Sabina Mihelj, "during periods of war, mainstream journalists tend to put aside their disagreements and adopt a patriotic stance, organising their narratives around the basic conflict between 'us' and 'them', between 'our community' and its enemies" (2009: 122). As Mihelj explains, the media frequently encourage fear and hatred in the context of war, and once the traumatic event is over, they collaborate in the re-establishment of social bonds by proving a sense of direction.

Benedict Anderson (2006) had argued that the temporal synchronicity of reading a newspaper promotes a shared sense of national community because the reader imagines other members of the nation performing the same action at the same time. Michael Rosie (2004), however, argues that although Anderson's proposition is appealing it implicitly assumes that the reader would indeed imagine other fellow readers in specifically nationalised terms. Moreover, when a reader from the multinational UK thinks in national terms, which is the specific nation evoked? According to Rosie, the mass media are central to the reproduction and evolution of national identity and newspapers; in particular, acting as national institutions:

> Newspapers which have more than a local or regional remit are essentially national institutions which encourage their readers to see the world in general in specifically national terms, 're-mind' them of their own nation in particular and help them to think in patriotic terms about it (2004: 437).

British newspapers constitute a mature and very competitive industry which has managed to remain powerful in the video age (Tunstall 1996). Michael Higgins (2010) acknowledges the long-time decline in newspaper sales since the emergence of the Internet especially.[1] Nevertheless, he believes that newspapers remain important in the construction, maintenance and reproduction of social, cultural and political identifiers. British daily newspapers are conventionally divided into popular (tabloids) and quality press (broadsheet). A further sub-division can be applied to tabloids, resulting in a third category, the middle-market (also called respectable tabloids) and the lower-market

[1] Though this is a global trend, newspaper circulation around the world dropped by only 0.9% in 2012 according to the latest survey conducted by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers.

(sensationalist tabloids). Jeremy Tunstall pictures tabloids as having "an overwhelming emphasis on personalities; such 'serious' news is often presented via one personality attacking another. Much material is look-at material, there are many pictures, big headlines and the advertising is also mainly display, which again involves pictures and big headlines" (1996: 11). Broadsheet newspapers, popularly referred to as the 'heavies', pretend to be more objective in the presentation of news and the narration of events. However, they include opinionated articles by star journalists which usually deal with politics, economy and culture. The articles are frequently long, deep, and thought-provoking as quality papers are widely read by those with higher levels of education.

Editorial attachments between newspapers and political parties are well-known, since most British newspapers take an active role in politics and elections. With the recent shift in British politics towards the centre, some traditional alliances between papers and parties have altered. Broadly speaking, the majority of newspapers (both in number and readership) support the Conservative Party; while the *Daily Mirror* has traditionally supported the Labour Party; *Today*, the *Guardian, and* the *Independent* can also be classified as having left-of-centre tendencies (Billig 1995: 110). Tunstall believes that the entrance of the news magnate Rupert Murdoch in 1969 (after his purchase of the *News of the World* and the *Sun*) marked an end of independent journalism, as he openly uses newspapers to make politics. Ownership is another factor that cuts across the tabloid/quality distinction: Murdoch owns different kinds of papers, such as the *Sun*, *Today* and the *Times*. A further differentiating characteristic of the newspaper market in Britain is that it is sharply segmented in social class lines, and they help to maintain divisions of culture and class. While some countries have middle-class readership only, all social classes consume newspapers in the UK and this is the reason why the tabloid newspapers are so powerful.

The newspaper discourse of 2012 includes several references to the military Junta that provoked the war. This enemy at the time of war is described as a "Fascist junta" or a "brutal military dictatorship" (Hastings, *Daily Mail*, Apr. 2012); a "murderous military junta" (*Daily Telegraph,* Jun. 2012), and Galtieri is regarded as an intransigent drunkard (Jenkins, *Guardian*, Apr. 2012). However, it is Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the democratically-elected Argentinian president in power in 2012, the one who takes over the role of the dictator as she is repeatedly blamed of behaving like one by 'bulling' and

'hectoring' the islanders with on-going sovereignty claims. The *Times*, for instance, reproduced the angry declarations of Falkland Islanders who accused the Argentine government of wishing "to take away our people's rights, annex our islands and subject our people to alien subjugation and domination" (Strange, 15 Jun. 2012: 15). More accusations of these dictator-like actions can be found: "Argentina is bullying the islanders, their human rights are ignored by the President" (Hughes, *Daily Telegraph* 15 Jun. 2012: 19). In an article written by William Hague, British Foreign Secretary, and published in the *Daily Telegraph*, the author sustains that the "Argentine policy had been deeply regrettable". Hague accuses Argentina of intimidating Falkland Islanders by its "combative policies" and "recent aggressive actions" (2 Apr. 2012: 22).

Blaming the President for behaving like a dictatorship by ignoring human rights is a direct attack to her principles and political ideology and practice. Cristina Fernández and her late husband Néstor Kirchner implemented a firm policy against the crimes committed by the last military dictatorship (1976-1983), which led to trials of the members of the Junta and the restitution of identity to families of the 'disappeared'. This predisposition to condemn crimes against humanity has been greatly praised by human rights organisations such as Madres de Plaza de Mayo. As Fay Walker states, "only now under the Kirchners is the process of seeking truth, justice and reconciliation being pursued and the notion of political memory re-emerged" (Walker, 2011). Apparently, Fernández felt the need of defending herself from these strong accusations in a communiqué published in the *Times* and the *Guardian* titled "Let us bring colonialism to an end by complying with United Nations resolutions". In the text, the Argentine president tries to reinforce the self-image of the country by distancing herself from the fascist government. She declares: "Argentina is today a democratic country that has overcome the fiercest military dictatorship on record in our history and is a global example in the fields of human rights" (Fernández de Kirchner, *Times* and *Guardian* 14 Jun. 2012). She begs the citizens and governments of the world to put an end to what she considers an instance of colonialism and to respect the resolutions of the UN.

A second strategy is the de-legitimisation by means of personal attacks, often in gendered terms. Frequent comments were made about Fernández's rhetoric as well as the tone and manner of her declarations. She was blamed for sullying a day of

remembrance due to her provocative speech. Furthermore, she was accused of dishonouring the dead with her flurry of aggressive statements and her sabre-rattling rhetoric. The *Daily Mail* added that "President Kirchner provoked outrage with a fresh rant over UK territory" (Drury, Jun. 2012). Likewise, the *Daily Mirror* believeed that the leader "has launched a loud and vociferous campaign to claim the Malvinas […] with aggressive threats" (Palmer, Jun. 2012). Cristina Fernández was acknowledged as a skilful speaker thanks to her high eloquence and oratory powers, all of which, combined with an aggressive style, may convey the impression of arrogance. Her manners, together with her words, did not pass unnoticed, and they became strategic tools used by both allies and rivals in order to praise or attack her. Moreover, her political discourse, always under scrutiny, has become useful material for academic analysis. Research has shown that the Argentine president builds a composite ethos in her speeches, succeeding in articulating efficacy, empathy, experience and commitment (Pedrazzini 2012; Bitonte 2011).

The President was frequently described as 'strident' and 'hysterical' when fuelling the war of words by means of her hyped up rhetoric. Hysteria is a word with heavy gender connotations. Elaine Showalter (1993) points out that hysteria has been constructed as a woman's disease, a feminine disorder, or a disturbance of femininity. Physicians used to believe that women were prone to hysteria for biological reasons, which implied that all women were potential hysterics. But, as Showalter argues, "in the 20th century, these views about an essential and organic female biology that produces hysteria have mutated into more psychological portraits that link hysteria with femininity and with a range of feminine personality traits" (286). However, the significant change to the understanding of the disorder has come in the past decades when women historians have proposed that hysteria is caused by women's social roles and male domination rather than by their bodies and/or psyches. Moreover, language has played a major role in the history of hysteria both for its diagnosis and its treatment, Showalter claims (290). Michel Foucault has also contributed to the development of the present understanding of the illness. In *The History of Sexuality* (1979) he suggests that hysteria was a label imposed on female sexuality by male doctors.

The other major event connected with the anniversary revolves around the fact that the Argentine government presented, once more, its claims to the South Atlantic

archipelago in the United Nations Decolonisation Committee in New York in June 2012. The *Times* considered it a "diplomatic offensive" and classified her visit as a "stunt", adding that "Argentina rejects the possibility of self-determination" and has done nothing else but "ramping up the pressure" by accusing Britain of militarising the South Atlantic (Pavia, 14 Jun. 2012). On the following day, the same newspaper, in an attempt to show a certain sense of impartiality, published the communiqué quoted above. Many other examples of the attacks made by the British press on the Argentine President and her policies are found in the data under study. Uki Goni, for instance, writes that the claim for the Falklands has become the central theme of her self-termed national and populist government (*Guardian,* 3 Apr. 2012: 4). Caroline Davies quoted Britain's UN ambassador, Mark Lyall Grant, saying that "Argentina is making a song and dance at the UN for obviously purely domestic political reasons" (*Guardian,* 15 Jun. 2012: 11), and Ian Drury suggested that Kirchner should address her own country's problems (*Daily Mail,* 15 Jun. 2012). Dan Milmo recalled one of the incidents that heightened the anger of the government in Buenos Aires, the oil exploration activities in the offshore waters of the Falkland Islands. Fernández sent a threatening letter to the British and American banks and enterprises involved in the explorations, telling them they should "bear in mind [...] the sovereignty dispute and [...] the consequences of any unlawful hydrocarbon exploration activities in the Argentine continental shelf in proximity to the Malvinas Islands" (*Guardian*, 3 Apr. 2012).

Several photographs of the Argentine leader appeared in the newspapers under analysis; her name and face were repeatedly shown in the media according to her different moods and emotional gestures: holding up a plaque with the map of the Malvinas Islands or raising her fist in a demanding and angry posture, among others. The *Daily Telegraph*, for instance, published a smiling Fernández shaking hands with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. In the photograph, she is still wearing her black mourning dress as a sign of bereavement of her late husband, the former President Néstor Kirchner, with her long wavy hair caught by a breeze, which has become her individual stamp of femininity (see Image 1).

Image 1: *Daily Telegraph*, 15 Jun. 2012: 19

To summarise, the portrayal of the Argentine President offered in the press discourse was disrespectful. For instance, she was frequently addressed not by her maiden name but through the name of her late husband: 'Kirchner' instead of 'Fernández'. Her policies were regarded as 'stunts' and 'sabre-rattling' and her character described as 'hysterical' and 'strident'. The way in which the leader was described reinforced sexist stereotypes as women being hysterical, attention-seeking and vacuous; moreover, little value is given to her actions and to her words.

Another point of interest is the description made of the enemy's troops which were presented in two contradictory terms. On the one hand, the press collected some narratives of British heroes who described the foreign troops as being well-equipped and resourceful; while on the one hand, the Argentine troops were said to have been useless, sorrowful and abused by their own officers. The common assumption that the Argentinian Task Force was mainly formed by conscripts unable to fight effectively (Regan 1987: 172-173; Guber 2001: 112) is denied by war hero Robert Lawrence in the following passage: "Some people think that all we were fighting were 15-year-old conscripts but we weren't – we were fighting incredibly well-trained soldiers, with very good equipment, better than ours" (quoted in Willetts*, Sun* Apr. 2012). Rick Cross, another British war hero who fought in the battle of Goose Green, remembers how the Argentine troops outnumbered, out-positioned and outgunned the overwhelmed British

forces. It is now widely believed that the British task force was severely strained – its superior training and professionalism prevented a failure (Regan 1987).

But on a different note, some of the texts analysed for the present case study acknowledge the fact that many Argentine troops suffered severe ill-treatment by their own officers during the war.[2] Of a special interest here is the article published by the *Daily Telegraph* in which journalist Jonathan Gilbert interviewed an Argentine veteran in his hometown in the interior of the country. Through the use of several personal anecdotes narrating the ordeal the soldiers underwent, the article reinforces this argument of the abused Argentine troops in the hands of those in power:

> We were starving in the trenches [...] we used to escape when the officers were asleep and got to Stanley to root through the bins [...] once, after I stole a tin of meat, a sergeant placed his rifle against my head. I knelt down and, crying, pleaded for him not to kill me. He pulled the trigger, but the cartridge was empty […] our own officers humiliated us and destroyed our morale (POW Miguel Savage, quoted in Gilbert, *Daily Telegraph* 2 Apr. 2012: 17).

Though a certain degree of empathy for the troops of the other nation is implied, this acknowledgment is yet a further argument against the nature of the 'enemy': they were so evil that they even mistreated their own soldiers. Newspapers neglect to inform their readerships that the foreign troops did not abuse the civil population during the occupation. There were, however, three female civilian Falkland Islanders accidentally killed during the war by British fire.

Most of the pictures published in the British press show the Argentine soldiers as weak, unarmed, in surrender. The *Daily Telegraph* publishes a powerful image of a large number of Argentine war prisoners, unarmed personnel who did not pose a threat (see image 2). This large group, this mass with no individual quality, stands as a whole in the sense that all the soldiers are there as a collective, performing the same function

[2] Official evidence regarding this ill-treatment can be found in the Rattenbach Report (made public in 2012 by the Argentine government), which concludes that the Junta sent its troops to the war without adequate preparation and that many conscripts faced serious malnutrition.

(hobbling on their way as prisoners), wearing the same clothes (combat uniforms, dark green jackets and hats), suffering the same cold and dejection.

Image 2: *Daily Telegraph*, 14 Jun. 2012: 23

The *Daily Mirror* included a well-known photograph of an empty battlefield with several discarded helmets belonging to the Argentinian troops (see image 3). The picture, which was taken at Goose Green right after the surrender, transmits a feeling of desolation and dejection.

Image 3: *Daily Mirror*, 3 Apr. 2012: 19

Whilst most of the other newspapers showed the Argentinian soldiers in defeat, the *Guardian* published a contrasting picture of them in a successful move marching into Stanley after the invasion (see image 4).

Image 4: *Guardian*, 2 Apr. 2012: 6-7

Although Foreign Secretary William Hague declared that the deployment of Prince William and the warship HMS *Dauntless* were routine military movements and denied any provocation to Buenos Aires (*BBC News,* 5 Feb. 2012), the visit of the monarch's grandson upset many in Argentina. Klaus Dodds (2012) argues that the figure of Prince William in particular is highly symbolic as he represents the ideal combination for the traditional Falklands community: a member of the Royal Family serving in the British armed forces. On the occasion of the commemoration of the war, there were several riots in the capital city of Buenos Aires with protesters clashing with riot police at the storming of the British embassy. Several newspapers published images of the riots and of protesters burning an effigy of Prince William and setting the Union Jack on fire (see images 5 & 6). Many British readers would perhaps feel uncomfortable with this attack on national symbols and may consider them a provocation. In turn, this would produce an effect on how the contemporary Argentines are perceived: problematic, disrespectful, uncivilised, as well as unpredictable.

Image 5: *Daily Mail*, 3 Apr. 2012: 11

Image 6: *Daily Mirror*, 3 Apr. 2012: 6

There is a strong tendency in the newspaper discourse of 2012 to recall arguments that justified British involvement in the Falklands War. The main justifications are the ones connected with the sovereignty of the national territory, self-defence, moral obligation and the right of self-determination for the islanders. The majority of the newspaper articles analysed here whip up a sense of triumphalism over the war, depicting the Falklands as a war worthy of support, admiration and praise. It proved to be a highly successful war experience for the British in the sense that it was won in a short time and the objectives were clear from the beginning: to expel the invaders from a part of the national territory. Consequently, it can be seen that the anniversary is celebrated in such a way that feeds the pride of being British and raises the national spirit. In addition, the press emphasised the fact that war resulted in prosperity to the territory in the form of economic progress.

All in all, the Falklands War of 1982 continued to be justified and validated as a just war by the British press in 2012, supporting official positions and presenting a negative image of the 'other'. To do so, readers were reminded of the social construct of the enemy. Many newspapers, especially those from the popular press, over simplify the topic, offering a one-way simplistic approach to a rather complex matter. They concentrated solely on a British patriotic point of view, leaving aside other perspectives and shades of meaning. While it is certainly true that the cruel Argentinian dictatorship

could no longer be used for this purpose, many other negative attributes could be transferred to the figure of the democratic president and the Argentinian people, reinventing and reinforcing British nationalism. Many readers could still be seduced by these patterns of over-simplification of their relationship with the South American country, disregarding the complex multidimensional reality of the conflict and ignoring essential parts of it, such as the degree of importance that Argentina attached to its claims. There is a constant reminder of the Malvinas in that country, an issue that has become part of the daily life of the citizens. There are countless examples of street names, cities, monuments, official documents, public events where the claim is present. All this shows a strong degree of engagement with the topic. Most British readers would probably ignore this Argentinian commitment, and the thirtieth anniversary of the war could have been a good opportunity to make them aware of it.

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