

The Power of “Merkiavelli”: Representations of Angela Merkel in the Portuguese Press (2008-2015)

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Abstract : Since 1989, with the Fall of the Berlin Wall, Germany has undergone a profound restructuring political and economic process. When the Euro Crisis broke out, Germany was no longer the “sick man” of Europe. Instead, it had recovered its dominance as the strongest and wealthiest economy within the European Union. With the European Debt Crisis, that has been taking place in the European Union since the end of 2009, Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel has gained the power of deciding, so to say, on the fate of the debtor nations, but she neither stands for binding German commitments, nor refuses assistance. A debate on whether Merkel’s hesitation has been deliberated and used as a means of coercion has arisen on international print media, and the Portuguese Press has been no exception. This study, which was conducted by using news reporting, opinion articles, interviews and editorials, published in the Portuguese weekly *Expresso* and the daily *Público*, from 2008 to 2015, tries to show how Merkel’s hesitation, depicted in the press by the term “Merkiavelli”, was perceived in Portugal, a country that had to embrace the austerity measures, imposed by the European Central Bank, but defined under Angela Merkel’s leading role.

Keywords : Euro crisis, “Merkiavelli”, cultural studies, Portuguese quality press

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