

## The televised goodbye to D10s: from the Casa Rosada to our homes

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### Abstract

A few hours after the announcement of his death, Argentina started a long goodbye to the 'Pibe de Oro' (Golden Boy), covered in resignation and sadness. A farewell was organised at the Casa Rosada (presidential house), where citizens could go to bid their last farewell despite Covid restrictions. This article aims to analyse its live TV coverage by the Telenoche program, applying 'media events' theory. Such a focus was developed by Dayan and Katz in the communication field and analyses events broadcast as a narrative genre. Organised outside the media, events are planned, previously announced and broadcasted live as an interruption of daily life, against routine TV shows, which have been broadly studied in the academy.

Maradona's funeral, applying a functionalist paradigm, could serve as a ritual to guarantee social integration and the conciliatory function, at the same time that farewells make us wonder about our past, present, and future as a community.

**Keywords:** Media Studies; Media Events Theory; Television Broadcasting

*Los jugadores del las divisionales del ascenso se doblan del dolor, en silencio.  
Toda Nápoles se deja caer.  
Las paredes de chapa de los ranchos con tu imagen remachada tiemblan.  
Los lobos de Ensenada y Berisso aúllan de tristeza.  
Mozo cobremé, hoy garpo con lágrimas.  
Si yo era vos y vos eras yo, aunque sea por un rato y de mentira.  
¿Dónde rajó la alegría?  
¿Y ahora quién podrá defendernos? (Lutman, 2020)*

### Introduction

Diego Maradona passed away alone, after a life of excess and being surrounded by multitudes. Although he died, a legend was born. His mythical figure was created by television in the 1980s and 1990s. His achievements were broadcast by national TV: both his performances in World Cups and his failures off the pitch that ended up humanising him. In this final step, at the Casa Rosada, where the Argentinian national team had been

crowned after winning the tournament in 1986, he received a last goodbye from fans and family.

In this article I shall analyse the four-hour special broadcast on November 26th 2020 on Canal 13. From the closing of the doors where his body rested to the final ceremony in Bella Vista cemetery, a qualitative approach is applied using 'Media event' theory.

Media-event transmissions have been underestimated by critical perspectives. Fostering a sense of community, of sharing common values, beyond ideological approaches, is seen as a way of distracting inhabitants from important issues. For Marxism and the Frankfurt School, Such broadcasting serves as a mere way of keeping the working class distracted from engaging in revolution. Even in uncritical administrative research, which accepts reverence to the *status quo*, possible revulsive effects are put down to an adverse retransmission or lack of control of the audience's interpretation.

In both cases, these are reductive views, taking for granted that only one kind of event is transmitted and that it has a single interpretation by its audience. But what happens when a revolutionary or, more broadly, non-establishment act is the one shown? In the last few decades, moreover, with the spread of mobile devices and social media (mainly Twitter), media has been seen as a revolutionary tool. Academics from around the globe emphasise (in an optimistic way informed by technological determinism) its emancipatory potential in the Arab Spring, Indignados (15-M) and Occupy Wall Street movements, among others.

In fact, the role of the mass media as a social catalyst has been studied for a long time, as well as its role as a tool for the elites to preserve their power. The nostalgic view of the liberal press at the beginning of the industrial age in the United Kingdom, by which it contributed to widening the rational political participation of the masses, has been questioned (Curran, 2011). More recently, in the television age, it is true that contestative movements have had visibility, but mainly by the media focusing on its more radical members and their violence to persuade audiences not to empathise with or support their demands (Gitlin, 1980).

Within the ambiguity offered by the media, Maradona's funeral also allows two kinds of interpretation. On the one hand, a way of keeping the masses entertained (especially taking in account the spread of the pandemic and economic crisis). But on the other hand, in opposition, the veneration of an out-of-the-box hero known for his lack of politeness, sympathy towards Cuba and Venezuela, and notable activism against particular free-trade agreements.

The broadcasted edition should not be explained in terms of positive or negative coverage, but with regards to resignation, consternation and vindication. The classical classification of the three main types of media events put forward by Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1994) consists of 'contests', 'conquests' and 'coronations' (while the authors accept there are others that do not fit these groups). In this article, in contrast to the aforementioned categorisations, I identify three momentums within the same event: 'football match', 'procession' and 'intimacy', in a sequential order, from beginning to end.

## The media-events theory

It has been three decades since Dayan and Katz elaborated their theory, in 1994, yet it has preserved its strength and validity, although major changes have taken place. After a long time when television was the prominent media, the era of «enchantment with the modern technology of broadcasting, of confidence in the national culture, and of willingness to bear witness to the happy marriage between national broadcasters and establishments has been on the decline in some parts of the world» (Sun, 2014, p. 457). But new forms of disruptive, unexpected and unplanned events, such as 9/11 and Arab Spring, were added to the repertoire, at the same time that certain iconic mediated events became templates for symbolic re-enactment in similar contexts. Paul Frosh and Amit Pinchevski consider, from a different perspective and assuming a risk of oversimplification, that «event-temporalities can be identified through a distinction between ‘eventfulness’ and ‘eventness’» (2018, p. 136).

More recently we could observe a burst of groundbreaking popular cultural works, some of them also covering social media and instant messaging as a complement to television (Mitu and Poulakidakos, 2016). Media events are focused on a specific thematic core, straddle different media products and aim to reach a wide and diverse multiplicity of audiences and participants. In a wider definition, «media events are certain situated, thickened, centering performances mediated communication» (Hepp and Couldry, 2010, p. 12).

The emergence of social media platforms diversified consumption. The proliferation of mobile devices and multi-attention stole television monopoly in media events narratives. However, media events as media practice continue to be valid and have been renewed by this new scenario. Nowadays, an event is considered a media event only if it takes place across a wide variety of digital media. We shall consider them as a media event if they take part undertaking cross-media coverage, where they did not only thicken the produced media of television, radio and newspaper mainstream (Couldry and Hepp, 2018).

Media influence on society, not just through its agenda – selecting what is going to be shown and thus given visibility – but through its framing or treatment, is crucial to its reception. Framing an issue determines its acceptance or rejection:

The empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping. Framing in all four locations includes similar functions: selection and highlighting, and use of the highlighted elements to construct an argument about problems and their causation, evaluation, and/or solution (Entman, 1993, p. 53). In media events, the highlighting process exceeds its technical achievement. It diminishes the role of exhortations and announcements emanating from the organisers (Dayan and Katz, 1994).

Media events, from an anthropological angle, are considered as a form of ritualised mass communication. They offer the opportunity to integrate citizens into rituals and celebrations, thus building national identities. In recent years, they have renewed the

relevance of many existing studies and inspired a stream of research in relation to the grand narratives of national interest and collective memory (Lee and Li, 2018). Academic research that focuses on senders, traditionally, tends to underestimate the active role of audiences. In this sense, Sabina Mihelj (2008) managed to solve this gap by analysing fragmented audiences, avoiding to take spectators as a whole.

Audiences conceive media events as an invitation to stop their daily routines and take part in a monopolistic live happening organised outside studio settings, paying reverence and ceremony, fulfilling a pre-planned arrangement between an organisers committee and broadcast by media partners (Dayan and Katz, 1994). It consists of an authentic media-communication 'genre'. Such events form an interruption in spectators' daily routines. They monopolise the antenna space across different channels and shows. They are broadcast live although they are planned and organised previously (with the exception of spontaneous acts) outside the media.

The broadcasting of Diego Maradona's funeral can be situated in a 'grey zone', where the limits between media events and news are blurred, where each event can be treated as a news item and at the same time as a media event. A situation can be addressed through different formats simultaneously, lending itself to a whole array of discursive statements that enter in dialogue or debate against each other (Dayan, 2008). In the post-modern age, when multiple narratives get in the act, events become part of a conversation involving competing versions, from local roots to foreign echo, instead of being spoken by a single, monolithic voice.

The event broadcast highlights the communal nature of the experience; the unanimous adhesion to the values and symbols being celebrated. But, most importantly, what is stressed is not just unanimity but unity within diversity (Dayan and Kutz, 1994). In the football world, it means fraternity over rivalry, putting Diego first. Newell's Old Boys, Argentinos Juniors and Boca fans showing affection and camaraderie with their local-derby opponents were shown by the cameras. It means, moreover, paying homage to an enemy idol, to someone who, to some extent, has hurt you.

### **Telenoche and Canal 13**

The amount of free-to-air television stations is relatively low in Argentina (in relation to the number of inhabitants). In 2014, there were nearly 50 active channels for a population of 41 million. Absence of such an offer has been compensated by the abundant and vast presence of pay television. In 2014, open-access TV had 48.43% of the audio-visual-consumption share, before experiencing the impact of diversification through platform consumption (Becerra and Mastrini, 2017). This situation, however, has been dramatically changed in recent years thanks to the prominent emergence and rise of Netflix, YouTube, PrimeVideo, HBO and, lately, Disney+.

Sectoral concentration is very high, where the two leading channels (Telefé – belonging to ViacomBBS – and Canal 13 – to the Grupo Clarín) exceed 65% of the share. Their programming is, furthermore, replicated by free-to-air channels from the rest of the country (Becerra and Mastrini, 2017). This means that what is broadcast in the

capital city, Buenos Aires, is replicated and watched by spectators all over the country. Symbolically speaking, it constructs the same identity, that in a land of more than 2,500,000 km<sup>2</sup> helps people feel as if they shared the same space, and the same interests and goals.

The owner of Canal 13, for which Telenoche is recorded, is the Grupo Clarín. They started in the communication business with a newspaper that gave the holding its name: Clarín, the main daily in Argentina and one of the most-read Spanish-language publications. Nowadays, they are also Internet distributors, publishers, film producers and cable-TV operators. They have radio stations and open-access TV channels, one of them being Canal 13. In 2000, they sold an 18% share of their entire group for 500 million dollars to the US vulture fund Goldman Sachs (Becerra and Mastrini, 2017).

Clarín maintained constant confrontation against Argentina's authorities until the end of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's second term, in December 2015. That government had sponsored a new audiovisual-communication law in 2009 that limited the concentration of media ownership. However, six years after being passed, Clarín maintained its structure and dominance in the Argentine media market. With an annual revenue of around 2,500 million dollars, they are among the medal-winning Latin American media groups, although a distance behind Globo and Televisa (Becerra and Mastrini, 2017). Now Fernández de Kirchner is the country's vice-president and Alberto Fernández is in charge, but open conflict persists.

At the same time, the clash takes place from the flag newspaper across the whole media group. Canal 13 and Telenoche are very active in this sense. In the mid-1960s, Canal 13 launched a renowned news program called Telenoche. In the 1990s, after two decades of existence and the rise of cable channels dedicated 24/7 to news coverage, Telenoche was revitalised. The newscast, led by Mónica Cahen D'Anvers and César Mascetti, became a powerful information machine, surging due to investigative reports on corruption cases during the Menem government, simultaneously earning it audience and prestige (Pelitti, Mársico, and Casazza Herrera, 2008).

The Telenoche news program is clearly identified with liberal-conservative party ruling in Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires – Argentina's capital and largest metropolis. They stayed silent over Diego's activism in favour of the current Government and the support he gave to the wave of leftist leaders in Latin America, such as Evo Morales, Fidel Castro, Rafael Correa, Lula da Silva, Hugo Chávez and José Mujica. The program campaigns against the progressive party currently in the national government. During the funeral broadcast, news anchors repeatedly exonerated Buenos Aires police from the riots and blamed federal agents for lack of organisation. The capital city is governed by Horacio Rodríguez Larreta of the conservative Propuesta Republicana party.



Image 1: Fans outside Casa Rosada (Screenshot).

### From the Casa Rosada to Bella Vista cemetery

The more than four hours analysed can be divided into three different stages: a first one, at the beginning, similar to a football match atmosphere; a second, the journey from the Casa Rosada to the cemetery; and a final third, with the intimacy of a family ceremony.

The multitude congregated were not representative in terms of socio-economic, age and gender categories. They were football supporters or, at least, they behaved as if they were in a stadium. They turned up as football fans, failing to abide by the strict dress code. During the Maradona funeral analysis, there weren't close-ups or interviews with the fans. The sense of an out-of-control crowd was highlighted by the director. Usually, people's reactions were underlined by television, which selected the most relevant of them (Dayan and Katz, 1994).

They cheered, bowing their arms to pay honour and tribute as they know. Fans also sang the Argentinian national anthem, as if the 'Albiceleste' (Sky-blue and Whites) team were about to play. But, although in recent decades there has been a surge in women's football and in women attending stadiums, the farewell failed to represent such diversity, being mainly a middle-age working-class men's event.

A second stage could be identified in the march that crossed the city to the final destination by highway. A last trip from homage to eternity. If until then the corpse had been static and the crowd in procession, now the roles reversed and it was Maradona's corpse in a hearse that was the one moving thing. Meanwhile local neighbours

(identifiable as non-hooligans) who had approached spontaneously to pay tribute were the ones who were still. The stage had the attraction of uncertainty, tension and the desire to know if the coffin would finally arrive as envisaged.

A final third momentum was characterised by the intimacy of the Catholic ceremony. The family made a short guest list with relatives and friends. The press remained outside the door, but drones were flying in the sky. A mutual family-press agreement was reached and the latter kept a prudent distance to respect privacy. On the one hand, they showed what was going on inside the walls with spectacular aerial frames; but on the other, the roof of the tent protected their intimacy.

Here, a journalist highlighted the role of Claudia Villafaña, Diego's former wife:

Claudia was, once again, the organiser, the person who achieved unity among all the internal contradictions that the family continues to have. Claudia, once again until the end, occupied that place that she occupied all her life and that she resumed yesterday from the first minute. Her daughter Gianinna had taken that job from the moment that Diego had begun to be in poor health and Claudia, as her mother, took charge of all this since yesterday and was the one who guaranteed that everything would turn out (María Laura Santillán)<sup>1</sup>.

This reminds us of the relevance of family, of close ties, the importance of fidelity and unconditional love. Although Maradona had had a lot of affairs, the moment he died the attribution of companion was given to Claudia, who had known Diego since childhood. They did not mention the gender violence and sexual harassment affairs.

As a national hero, Maradona's wake took place in la Casa Rosada, a palatial mansion that serves as the government headquarters, as happened with several former presidents. As captain, and conqueror, he and the rest of the national team that had won the México '86 World Cup was received there. On its balcony the trophy was offered to the multitude that attended Plaza de Mayo square, celebrating what can be likened to a coronation event. He was there a second time, after the defeat in Italy '90, under a framework of recognizing the team's effort and loyalty in the face of adversity. The third and final time Diego was in the Government house was to receive homage after his death.

Maradona's coffin was installed in the Salón de los Pueblos Originarios (Hall of Native Communities). Formerly called Columbus Hall, this was renamed after the postmodernist turn. In a country where white establishments had been in power since colonial times, Diego 'el pibe de oro' (the golden kid) was born in Villa Fiorito, at the bottom of the society, and with indigenous roots.

While most prominent brave men, like former presidents and Nobel prize winners, were buried in the cemetery in the Recoleta neighbourhood, Maradona was laid to rest in

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<sup>1</sup> «Claudia fue otra vez esa ordenadora, unificadora, la persona que lograba justamente entre todas las contradicciones las internas que la familia sigue teniendo, Claudia una vez más hasta el final ocupó ese lugar que ocupó toda su vida y que reasumió ayer desde el primer minuto porque su hija Gianinna un poco había tomado ese trabajo, lo había tomado ella desde el momento en el que el Diego había empezado a estar mal de salud y Claudia como su mamá se hizo cargo desde ayer de todo esto y fue un poco la que garantizó que todo salga como salió» (Santillán, M. L. (Anchorwoman). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Arctear; Todo Noticias.)

Bella Vista, alongside his parents 'Don Diego' and 'Doña Tota'. La Recoleta is the most affluent neighbourhood in the capital and Bella Vista is in poor suburbs. There, The Fuzz (Pelusa) bought his first country house when he started to earn money as a footballer.

### The rejection in an 'Elvis is alive' effect

From the moment his death was announced, there was a feeling of disbelief, as if it had not really happened. It seemed impossible that no one could save him. During his transfer to the cemetery, one reporter said «They are carrying Maradona to his funeral»<sup>2</sup>, as if he were alive and merely a guest watching the celebration taking place to pay tribute to himself. We tend to think that our heroes are invincible, that they do not belong to the human species. During the broadcast it was announced that the circumstances of his death were being investigated, and details were provided on the medicines he took and the attention he received on his last day.



Image 2: Bella Vista cemetery ceremony (Screenshot).

Journalists left the door open to negligence and mistreatment having taken place. They put the focus on the doctor and his team, saying that they did not monitor him like he deserved or that he did not receive the appropriate care. Someone had to be guilty. Diego died alone shut in a room in which he had been suffering from depression and withdrawal. It makes us remember that we'll face death alone, and that success, fame and all liberal economic goals finish at that moment. It reminds us we are vulnerable, as much as the Golden Boy himself.

<sup>2</sup> «Están llevando a Maradona a su entierro» (Wiemeyer, F. (Reporter). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.).

The reporter put in this words:

The sadness, the sordidness of this end and how lonely he was until then. He did not want to see anyone. He was bad, he was sad, all day in his room. Not the legend but the man. He died like that, with a TV and nothing else. He only got up to bathe and hardly ate because he did not have the will. The biggest idol in our country and one of the biggest in the world, who was going to eat a little sandwich that remained untouched, tells us about the loneliness he felt. It is being investigated whether it was more abandonment than loneliness<sup>3</sup>.

Because he deserved something else, he was not just one of us, there was a need to render importance to his death. To paint the narration with a layer of poetry in order to avoid monotony. As human beings, we need to give a remarkable meaning to birth and death rituals. The sun and the ochre tones accompanying the evening helped in this sense, helping to build a mystical atmosphere:

Look at the sun. The sun is leading the cortege. It is not poetry. It is not a metaphor. This is what is happening. The light gives it a tone, a strong colouring. This sun begins to fade when dusk begins. It seems like a companion. If it were up to us, it is time not to speak, but to be calm and watch the sunset begin.<sup>4</sup>

Even when the funeral car chauffeur got confused and took a different route, it was interpreted as a signal from Diego that he wanted to delay the cemetery arrival: «There is a kind of magic in all this that we cannot explain. He does not want to get there. He did what he had to do»<sup>5</sup>. Near the end of the broadcast, the sun was also a diegetic tool that served to give cohesion to the storytelling:

And now, María, the sunset, as you said. Alongside the sun, the only light that remains is the artificial one mounted on one of the security structures. Without natural light, without anything else to say or do. That is the most difficult thing. The situation is something irreversible for the family because he will not be there, his presence will no longer be there. It is nice that you highlighted it, the sun

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<sup>3</sup> «Lo triste, lo sórdido de este último tramo y lo solo que estaba hasta el final. Él no quiso ver a nadie. Estaba mal, estaba triste, todo el día en su cuarto. No la leyenda, sí ese hombre, se fue muriendo así, con el televisor y nada más. Solo se levantaba para bañarse y casi no comía porque no tenía ánimo de comer. El ídolo más grande de nuestro país y uno de los más grandes del mundo, que iba a comer un sanguchito que ni lo tocó, nos habla de esta soledad que tenía. Se está investigando si no era más abandono que soledad» (Geuna, L. (Journalist). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.).

<sup>4</sup> «Fíjense en el sol, el sol está guiando el cortejo. No es poesía, no es metáfora. Es lo que está pasando. La luz le da un tono, un agregado fuerte. Este sol que se empieza a apagar, cuando empieza el atardecer. Que parece que acompañara. Si fuera por nosotros, es un momento para no hablar, para quedarnos callados y ver el principio del atardecer» (Santillán, M. L. (Anchorwoman). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.).

<sup>5</sup> «Hay algo de magia en todo esto que no podemos explicar. No quiere llegar, hizo de las suyas» (Santillán, M. L. (Anchorwoman). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.).

accompanied us until this moment. The sunset is the end. When the sun goes down, set the moment of burial, because of those magical things, perhaps from Diego<sup>6</sup>.

### «The world is watching us»

The press serves as a guide, providing interpretation, meaning and understanding of which an event is a carrier for this. It imposes a coherent narrative, an aim, by endowing it with a storyline. It obliges its organisers to conceive the event as a whole. Its participants, at the same time, are invested with roles and attributes that add depth to the identity of the event (Dayan and Kutz, 1994). By comparison, reporters gave Pelusa as much importance as a head of state, reminding us of Juan Perón and Raúl Alfonsín's funerals in Argentina, or others of cultural figures, such as the folk singer Mercedes Sosa and rock singer Sandro. During the cemetery transfer, a special motorbike division of the Federal Police were shown escorting the funeral car. Narrators explained that this was something normally reserved to diplomatic visits or to the head of state.



Image 3: Special motorbike division of the Federal Police escorting the hearse (Screenshot).

To highlight the universality of Diego, presenters proclaimed goodbyes from prominent global stars, like the Rolling Stones and former basketball player Magic Johnson. Also, they announced the presence in the private ceremony of the Italian

<sup>6</sup> «Y ahora sí final María, el ocaso como decías vos, haciendo el paralelismo con el sol la única luz que queda es la luz artificial que está montada en una de las estructuras de seguridad y ya sin luz natural sin nada más que decir sin nada más para hacer eso es lo más difícil es algo irreversible de esta situación para la familia; y porque no va a estar, ya no va a estar el cuerpo. Es lindo que lo marques, nos acompañó hasta esta hora el sol. El atardecer el final cuando el sol se va marca, por esas cosas de la magia, quizás de Diego, el momento del entierro» (Leuco, D. (Anchorman). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.)

ambassador in Argentina. This emphasis was provided, at the same time, through visual images. As Danial Dayan and Elihu Katz (1994, p. 88) observed «by displacing audience focus from explicit statements to visual clues, television ‘naturalises’ the event; it authenticates its inlaid message, transforming the performative aspects of ceremonies (utterances emanating from figures of power) into visual anecdotes».

Images were shown from the UEFA Europa League match taking place in Naples. The five hours separating night in Italy and afternoon in South America highlighted the big distance between them and the universality that Diego represented. Television, by itself, turns its voice of authority into exercises in seduction. It conquers by inviting audiences to an interpretation, by encouraging hermeneutic pleasure in the deciphering of indexes and the scrutiny of symbols (Dayan and Katz, 1994). As an event, reporters compared the funeral to a celebration after winning a world cup or a visit to the country by the Pope.

Journalists emphasised the farewell in Southern Italy: «What happened last night in Naples, with pagan altars and the Europa League qualifying match, was the loudest applause in history. At the level of San Gennaro»<sup>7</sup>.

## Conclusions

The broadcast, in general terms, presented the event as burning news with a historical perspective. All the open-air channels, with Canal 13 among them, transmitted the funeral live, prioritising it above the other shows programmed. By choosing to show it in the news show of *Telenoche* its news anchors sparked the framing of the event as breaking news. The first part of the show, with Maradona fans behaving as football hooligans, could not be explained as well by them as if covered by reporters from the sport section.

The political parallelism between political actors and press, as pointed out by Hallin and Mancini (2004), is very clear in the Argentinian media system. Canal 13, sharing the whole of the Grupo Clarín’s editorial line, acts as a partisan outlet in favour of the conservative party (ruling in Buenos Aires) and against the left (in charge of the national administration). They ambiguously put Diego above every dispute. They silenced his activist side and, at the same time, they created a dispute by blaming the national government for organisational failures.

In this regard, football fans did not fall short of the Golden Boy legend, unlike journalists’ short-sightedness. Newell’s Old Boys, Argentinos Juniors and Boca supporters embraced their rivals, displaying their different-coloured shirts and flags. They stopped being enemies for a while to sing together and share their sadness. Hooligans shared the same physical space but did not fight as a way of paying homage.

The chosen place for the funeral was the Casa Rosada, as Maradona was a hero of the nation. But he was buried, as the normal human being he was, alongside his parents in Bella Vista graveyard, not in La Recoleta with all the establishment people. The way he

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<sup>7</sup> «Lo que sucedió anoche en Napoli con altares paganos y la previa de la Europe League, el aplauso más fuerte en la historia que se dio. A la altura de San Gennaro» (Barbano, R. (Reporter). (2020, November 26). In C. De Elía (Director), *Telenoche*. Artear; Todo Noticias.).

passed away, alone, reminds us of the value of loyalty, of family roots and the human face behind success. His first wife, Claudia Villafañe, was allowed a leading role, although she had not been his partner for more than a decade. Reporters gave importance to her conciliatory role in relation to family disputes and did not mention the gender violence and sexual harassment affairs.

Rejection of Diego's death was notable. This was seen first, by delaying communicating the news, when the most common behaviour is to try to give a scoop. And, second, by digging into the causes, recreating his last moments, focusing on the medical team and his assistants. Echoing the judicial process started, they explained in detail how this evolved as a reaction to the incredulity of losing Pelusa.

Another way of giving sense to his departure was by using metaphysical and poetical frameworks to narrate the issues happening. The sun served as a metaphor and as a storytelling tool for this purpose. The use of drones in media coverage added not only spectacular images. From a narrative point of view, they reinforced the awe-inspiring character of the event, its epicness. Drones make this easier than helicopters.

The projection of Maradona as a universal figure was also driven by the journalists. In order to highlight his grandeur, they emphasised the large amount of participants on the day and the homage he received in Italy. The big difference in time zone helped to get across the global meaning of the images shown. Rather than television's reading is, thus, «more 'expositive' than interpretative» (Dayan and Katz, 1994, p. 83), TV proposes an interpretation to the audience based on what it shows or, more importantly, what it hides or, at least, fails to show.

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