THE MANOSPHERE

PICK UP ARTISTS

ANTIFEMINIST YOUTUBERS

MEN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

BUSSINES/ CRYPTOS

FIT/GYMBROS

INVOLUNTARY CELIBATES

MEN GOING THEIR OWN WAY

GAMERS

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how we define the boundaries between radicalised communities and mainstream digital culture?

In this study, we mapped the Spanish manosphere as it appears in the everyday digital lives of teenage boys

Research on the manosphere has focused on its communities →→→ **little information on how young people interact with this content**

1 To understand how teenagers use, interact with, and make sense of spaces in the manosphere based on their experiences and interests.

2 To map the Spanish manosphere, including its spaces, platforms, communication models, and the actors involved, as well as the content, environments, and motivations for interacting with it.

method

'Transmedia & LGBTI Literacy' (TRANSGELIT)

Research project on how young people experience and learn about gender and sexuality through the media, with the aim of creating educational materials.

Short-term ethnography (Pink & Morgan, 2013) ⟶ *useful on educational centres*

+ Participatory Action Research

3 educational centres from Barcelona, Catalonia

N=59 participants from 14-18 years old ⟶ In this specific study, we worked exclusively with data from participants who identified as male, since during the fieldwork we identified that they are the users who interact with spaces in the manosphere.

Tabla 1. Map of the characteristics and dynamics of the Manosphere Spaces (MS) detected

| MS	Platforms	Communication		Contents and Settings		Media Uses and Motivations	
Open Hard Spaces	TikTok YouTube Instagram Twitch	**Model**		**Topics**		**Uses**	
		One to many: from influencers to the users		Anti-feminism (cancel culture; gender quotas; anti sexual freedom law; male discrimination); anti-LGBTIQ+ (against trans law; queerphobia; woke culture)		Watching, listening and reading; following an aspirational model; reacting to content (commenting and liking); learning	
		Actors		**Environments**		**Motivations**	
		MostopapiTV, Naim Darrechi; Jose Nogales; Jordi Wild; Wild Frank; Ricky Edit; Roma Gallardo; El Xokas; Andrew Tate		Sexual issues (recommendations for flirting and dating girls; only fans; tinder); sexual violence; male gaze; rape culture; LGBTIQ+phobia; transphobia; male discrimination; hegemonic masculinities; reinforcement of male gender roles		Male complicity; entertainment; liking the content; joking; enjoying; being part of a community; aspirational rise; learning; staying informed	
Open Soft Spaces	TikTok YouTube Instagram Twitch	**Model**		**Topics**		**Uses**	
		One to many: from influencers to the users		Male topics: crypto; business and money; gaming; sports; wealth porn; poverty porn; humour; challenges; Kings League; video games		Watching, listening and reading; following an aspirational model; reacting to content (commenting and giving like); gaming; learning; networking and professionalization; media production	
		Actors		**Environments**		**Motivations**	
		Dolar dorado; Ibai Llanos, Auronplay, Illojuan, TheGreft; YoSoyPlex; HolaSoyGerman (Germán Garmendia); DJ Mario; Nil Ojeda; Zazza el italiano; El Xokas; Amadeo Llados; Elon Musk; Gerard Piqué		Aspirational models of life and business; neoliberalism; aporophobia; competition		Male complicity; being part of a community; aspirational rise; entertainment; liking the content; enjoying; learning; staying informed	
Close Peripheral Spaces	Discord WhatsApp Instagram X (Former Twitter) Tinder Omegle PlayStation	**Model**		**Topics**		**Uses**	
		One to one and many to many: between male friends		Mainstream pornography; sexual and erotic content (memes, stickers of nudes of known people, sexual violence); contents extracted from the open hard and open soft spaces		Watching, listening and reading; commenting and interacting with content; sharing content from other platforms, accounts or users; co-viewing; group masturbation; gaming; creating a Tinder profile; flirting	
		Actors		**Environments**		**Motivations**	
		Male friends; colleagues; male parents; digital friends or contacts		Rape culture; male gaze; sexpreading; heteronormativity; victim blaming; LGBTIQ+phobia; racism; social experimentation		Male complicity; joking; entertainment; enjoying; sexual pleasure; social experimentation	

Source: Own creation

three interconnected spaces

focusing on…

spaces
platforms
communication models and actors
contents and settings (topics and environments)
media uses and motivations

on each space

1. **Open Hard Spaces**, which host the central narratives of the manosphere, encapsulating anti-feminist, anti-LGBTIQ+ and reactionary content.

2. **Open Soft Spaces**, where content aligned with the OHS is subtly mixed with dominant or traditionally masculine themes, such as sports, fitness, money making or videogames.

3. **Close Peripheral Spaces**, characterised by intimate interactions between male peers. These spaces connect the online and offline worlds.

Figure 1. Map of the Manosphere Spaces detected
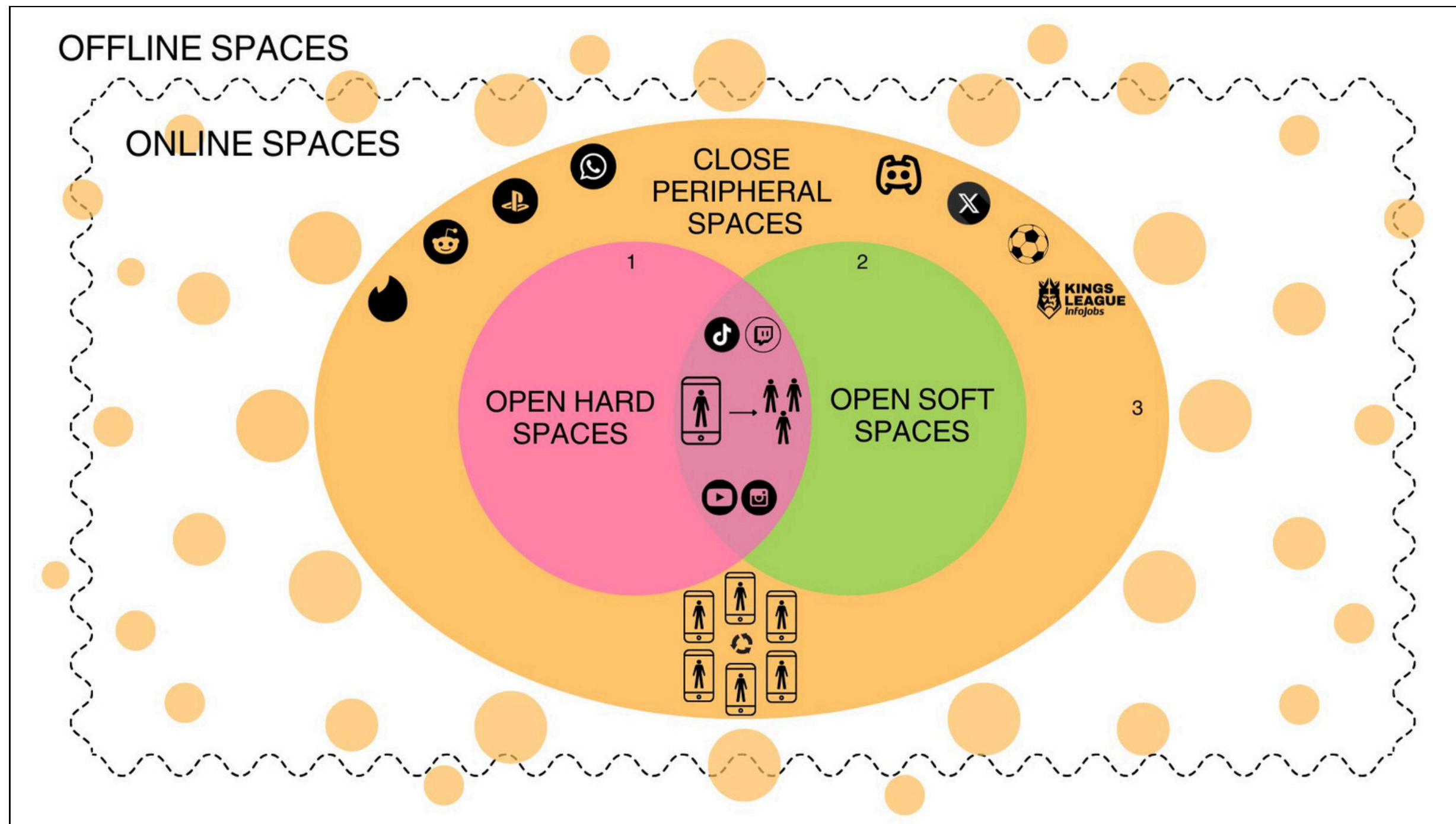
'Open Hard Spaces' (OHS)

Influencers who popularise anti-feminist and anti-LGBTIQ+ discourses among young people

Platforms: TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Twitch

Communication model:

Topics:

Anti-feminism (cancel culture; gender quotas; anti sexual freedom law; male discrimination); anti-LGBTIQ+ (against trans law; queerphobia; woke culture)

Environments:

Sexual issues (recommendations for flirting and dating girls; only fans; tinder); sexual violence; male gaze; rape culture; LGBTIQ+phobia; transphobia; male discrimination; hegemonic masculinities; reinforcement of male gender roles

Actors:

Andrew Tate   Jordi Wild   Roma Gallardo   El Xokas   Naïm Darrechi

Uses:
Watching, listening and reading; following an aspirational model; reacting to content (commenting and giving like); learning

Motivations:

Male complicity; entertainment; liking the content; joking; enjoying; being part of a community; aspirational rise; learning; staying informed

'Open Soft Spaces' (OSS)

Hegemonic male stereotypes that construct neo-masculinity in a crisis environment

Platforms: TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Twitch

Communication model:

Topics:
Male topics: crypto; business and money; gaming; sports; wealth porn; humour; challenges; pornification of poverty and vulnerability; Kings League; video games

Environments:
Aspirational models of life and business; neoliberalism; aporophobia; competition

Actors:

| Amadeo Llados | Zazza el italiano | Dolar Dorado | Elon Musk | Nil Ojeda |

Uses:
Watching, listening and reading; following an aspirational model; reacting to content (commenting and giving like); gaming; learning; networking and professionalization; media production
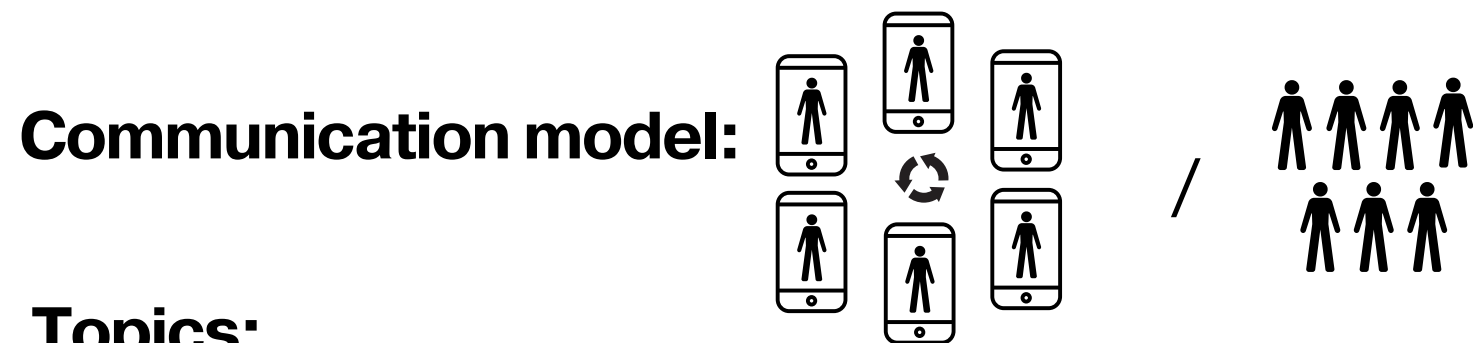
Motivations:
Male complicity; being part of a community; being aspirational rise; entertainment; liking the content; enjoying; learning; staying informed

'Close Peripheral Spaces' (CPS)

Peer relationships and homosociality that fluctuates between online and offline

Platforms: Discord, WhatsApp, Instagram, X, Tinder, Omegle, Play Station

Communication model:

Topics:

Mainstream pornography; sexual and erotic content (memes, stickers of nudes from known people, sexual violence); contents extracted from the OHS and OSS.

Environments:

Rape culture; male gaze; sexpreading; heteronormativity; victim blaming; LGBTIQ+phobia; racism; social experimentation

Uses:

Watching, listening and reading; commenting and interacting with content; sharing content from other platforms, accounts or users; co-viewing; group masturbation; gaming; creating a Tinder profile; flirting

Actors:

Motivations:

Male complicity; joking; entertainment; enjoying; sexual pleasure; social experimentation

'the study of communication processes is the study, not of elements, but of elements in relationships"

(Postman,1974: 4)

- These three spaces are interconnected, creating a fluid ecosystem where misogynistic and anti-LGBTIQ+ discourses can spread.
- What's dangerous is not just the radical content, but the way it is wrapped in humour, self-help, aspiration, and bro culture.
- Most importantly: boys don't necessarily identify with these spaces as political. For them, it's about having fun, bonding, "being a man". That's where the power lies.
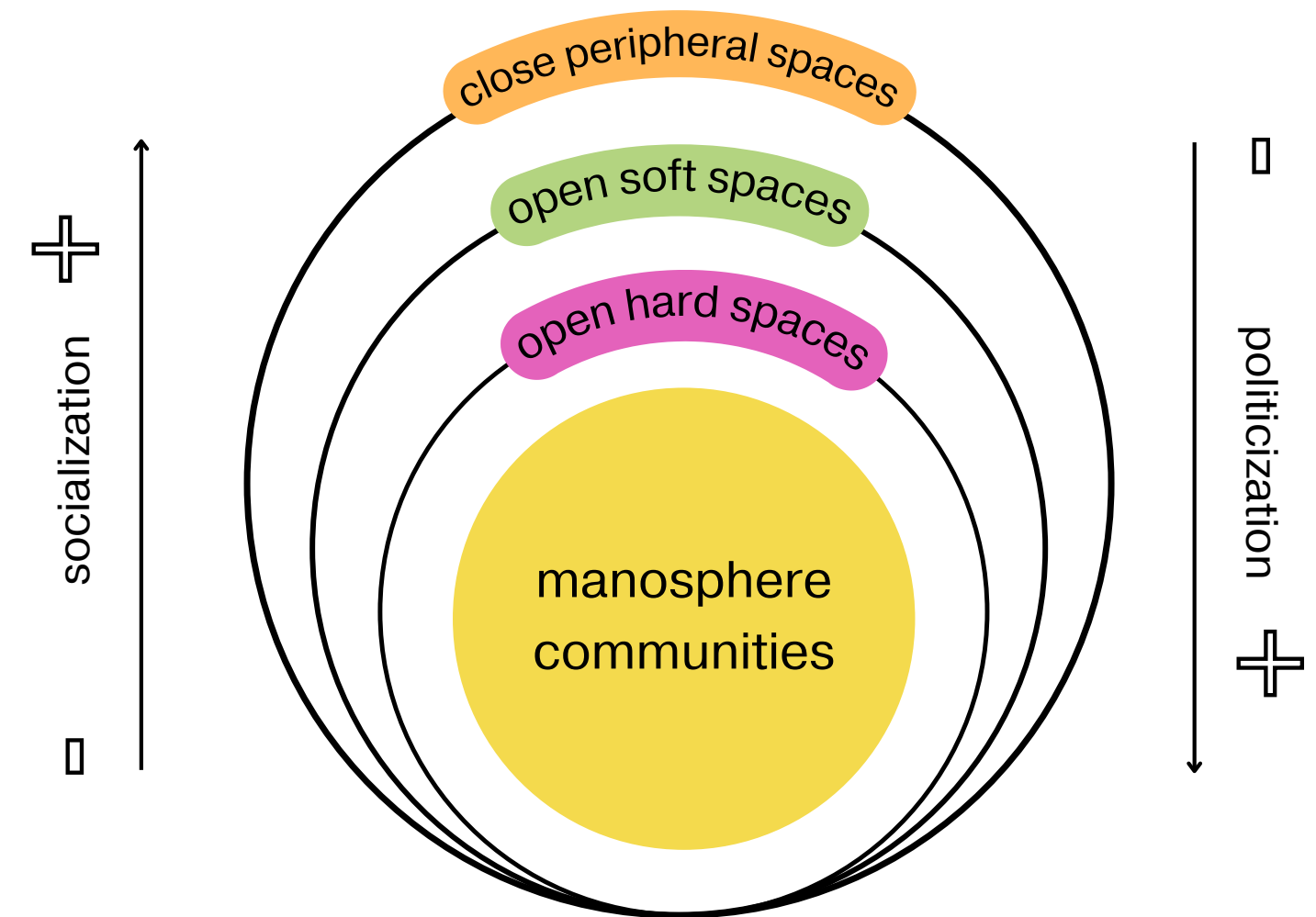
If you ask a teenager whether he follows manosphere content, he'll probably say no. But if you ask who he listens to on Twitch, who he jokes with in the WhatsApp group, or who taught him how to talk to girls… the manosphere is there. Subtle. Powerful.

And shaping the next generation of men.

thanks!

moltes gràcies!

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