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Mobilising diplomacy. The Catalan and Scottish referendums in network diplomacy

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Abstract

Introduction. Social movements of a political nature have innovated in the field of international political communication. Non-state actors have occupied the sphere of public diplomacy, previously limited to the nation state. **Method.** The study is based on the analysis of the social media campaigns, actors, messages, and political activities of Catalan and Scottish pro-independence movements in relation to the referendum. **Results.** The Catalan pro-independence movement has based its results on the defence of the Catalan identity and the epistemic community. Scottish movements that promote the creation of a new state oriented their strategy of protest to parliamentary politics. **Discussion.** The article examines mobilising diplomacy, as well as the use of social networks in the international promotion of political messages and the reinforcement of a nation's language and culture. **Conclusions.** Mobilising diplomacy is still in an expansive phase. More actors are incorporated into the international arena through the production and dissemination of messages in social networks.

Keywords

Public diplomacy; Catalonia; Scotland; social networks; innovation.

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1. Introduction

International political communication has reached a new impulse thanks to the social movements that have led the debate on the identities and the political agenda, away from conventional institutions (unions, parties) and structures (nation states). The use of media and social networks has affected the forms of organisation, the tools of communication and participation, the capacity to influence large audiences and the validation of the demands.

Social movements use political communication for the establishment of a counter-hegemonic political and media agenda (Carroll and Hackett, 2006). Digital activities have increased the capacity of collective action insofar as they “have influenced the public agenda, activism and political participation in the international arena” (Manfredi, 2014: 343). The particularity of the network society has transformed diplomacy, which “is becoming an activity concerned with the creation of networks, embracing a wide range of state and non-state actors focusing on the management of issues that demand resources over which no single participant possesses a monopoly” (Hocking, 2006: 13). The concept of network diplomacy indicates that non-conventional actors generate messages, participate in decision-making processes and influence the international opinion public. This concept includes social movements as a benchmark of non-state actors that influence the international scene.

Technologies have increased the capabilities of media action. Therefore, the activity on social networks is essential to transform the discourse and action. Due to their nature, social networks do not have geographical borders, and can be used to disseminate message across the communities of languages and ideas. English is the preferred language for international communication, even when it comes to political movements that advocate an identity status based on language and culture. However, we must flee from this technological fascination. Presence in social networks and the management of the digital footprint are not instantly transformed into political influence. This hypothesis is not defended here because it is a poor and insufficient criterion isolated from political

science. Media exposure can increase the recognition or notoriety, but it is not enough to achieve action by itself.

This article aims to prove the two following hypotheses. 1) social movements of a political nature have innovated in the use of public diplomacy for the reinforcement of identities and the influencing of the international public opinion. The economic dimension has been relegated to one minor activity, linked to the creation of a certain country-brand as a tourist destination. The use of public diplomacy strategies confirms that this is no longer a monopoly of the nation states and that it has become integrated into the political action of non-state actors. 2) social movements have confirmed the development of network diplomacy through the creation of a sort of “mobilising diplomacy”, whose asset is the participation in networks and screens as a means to achieve their political objectives.

This study aims to explore how these social movements base their results on specific political events, which can be a referendum, the creation of a new state or the creation of an agenda disassociated from the conventional powers. In future research, it would be interesting to know how other international players, which are not states nor traditional political entities, use this knowledge for the promotion of their political interests.

2. Methods

The realist school of international relations focuses on the management of capabilities and resources related to safety issues. Military capabilities, geographical position and access to power are decisive. Social movements lack these capabilities in most cases, given that their legitimacy and capacity to act are linked to the collective will and action. For Melucci, the creation of symbols and social relations has replaced the material production of the protest, eliminating the borders between activism and media activism (1989:45). These capabilities are articulated around the management of symbols.

Power is dispersed across different levels of action and communication, which are structured around the creation of conceptual frames that defend an ideological positioning and a specific identity discourse. Social movements are based on the asymmetry of relationships with the media system, while the conventional powers (established states and international organisations) pursue the control of conversation frames and the imposition of the rules of the game in the political arena (Krasner, 1985). In reality, the foundation of the agenda setting theory is validated: to achieve certain political objectives, the conventional journalistic system must be dismantled.

As Melucci points out, “in contemporary societies signs become interchangeable and power operates through the language and codes which organise the flow of information” (1996:6). The exchange of messages and the information flow reflects the asymmetry of power relations. The audiences of conventional and digital media differ in terms of perception and of the framing of international politics (Qin, 2015). Asymmetry, in political communication, is reflected in media activism

(Valenzuela, 2013), in the creation of alternative media, in the democratisation of journalistic companies and in the promotion of diversity and pluralism.

Political movements structure their messages in different levels of asymmetry and pursue specific goals. Thus, international political communication creates contexts and meanings that serve as the basis to the knowledge of the cause (independence, referendum, human rights) and, at the same time, as the foundation for political and social institutions, procedures and the agenda. The external projection, the internationalisation of a cause, reinforces the ideas of the internal or local audience. Conventional and new media have become the social space where meanings and the dynamics and scope of power are negotiated. This is the axis of Manuel Castells' work: "power relations, that is the relationships that constitute the foundations of all societies, as well as the processes challenging institutionalized power relations, are increasingly shaped and decided in the communication field" (2008: 13). Susan Strange believes that power is the aggregate result of four variables: security, economic production, finance and knowledge (1988). In relation to political economy, Cox argues that the power of ideas is explained because the theory is always created by someone with a certain purpose (1987).

In short, social movements need communication to expand new meanings and influence the agenda setting. Fels indicates the value of the creation of meanings in the international arena: "Although there are different ways to categorise the various means relevant in international relations, the most important are probably symbolic, economic, diplomatic and military means [...] Power comes only from influence and therefore the capabilities must be seen as a means to achieve this influence" (2012: 8).

Social movements have promoted their ideas in social media, through which their messages are published, promoted and shared with different communities of interest. Therein lies the interest of this research and the degree of innovation. The results are counter-intuitive: emotional proximity and the community generated by the connectivity and network matter more than the investment in advertising or institutional messages. Success does not depend on the capacity of leadership of conventional institutions (parliament, government), but on the capacity to bring people together around a feeling of epistemic community. Thus, social networks act as accelerators of behaviours and as a resonance chamber for political communication and facilitates the individualised consumption of propagandistic content.

This study is a descriptive analysis of how two social movements of a political nature have employed the digital dimension of public diplomacy to achieve their political goals. The study does not examine the political content of the movements, but their use of tools and their participation in the design of the network diplomacy. The study of the digital activity has one advantage: the digital activity is public and allows the development of the exploratory study without the need to require authorisation or to rate actions out of this focus. There are negotiations and influence outside the digital realm, but they are not the object of this work.

The research is structured in the following way. First of all, it explores the relationship between social movements and international communication, with a focus on the development of the

communicative actions whose objective is to influence the political sphere. In the network society, the value of communication as instrument for the achievement of political objectives has increased. Conventional and new media have become the social space where meanings, dynamics and the scope of power are negotiated. Afterwards, the article defines public diplomacy, discusses the relevance of its use for political movements and not states, the ones in charge of external action.

The article concludes with a sample of the main practical contributions implemented by the movement advocating for the independence of Catalonia and the action of the promoters of the “Yes” campaign in the Scottish referendum.

3. State of the art review

In the field of the media, the nation state maintains a strategy of conventional public diplomacy, based on educational, cultural and informational instruments. The powers have designed their strategy of international communication based on international audiovisual broadcasting (Samuel-Azran, 2013), on events of different nature (Entman, 2008) and on major sporting and cultural events (Imperiale, 2014), as well as on the production and distribution of the signals of eight major international television networks (Manfredi, 2014).

Social movements of political nature cannot compete in these media dimensions. They lack the human and financial resources to launch an international television network capable of influencing the public agenda. This structural weakness has resulted in media activism that organises low-budget activities that pursue the creation of new communicative practices that seek to influence the dominant discourse or diminish the power of mainstream media (Carroll & Hackett, 2006: 84). Media activism now promotes the use social media and networks, digital platforms and other technologies of recent creation. There is extensive literature that shows the correlation between civic activities of political nature and the intensive use of social media (Earl and Kimport, 2011).

The use of social media has three objectives: the mobilisation of activists, the opening of new spaces of communication and presentation, and the creation of alternative sources of information. The uses of social media do not create new demands, but amplify the demands of political nature. This is where the added value of the technologies resides. According to Shirky (2011), individuals acquire more opportunities of participation in collective action through the consumption and creation of digital contents that reduce the costs of opportunity of the action e increase the feeling of participation in a community of specific interests.

In the first case, activism in social media is the epitome of low-budget and high-impact campaigns in political communication (grassroots). This type of campaign is characterised by the mobilisation of individuals who are not professionals in the political field. This voluntary, spontaneous and grassroots nature is weaved through the digital media, networks and platforms, which have exponentially increased the dissemination of messages and the capacity of organisation of groups. Spontaneity is organised for the improvement of results. The costs of collective action are reduced

and the identification of a digital community in tune with a real, neighbouring, community is facilitated.

In relation to the opening of new communicative spaces, the techniques of mobilisation are directed to the publics already persuaded by a cause. However, the popularisation of social networks, the multiplication of screens and the atomisation of audiences has allowed the reaching of massive audiences, beyond the initial public. The rupture of the first audience circle creates a domino effect, since the official channels echo its messages and makes the relevant politicians respond to these messages. This response is part of the strategy of social protest and validates, to its own audience, the demands of those participating in the protest.

Finally, the sources that have been created break the centralised structure of messages and offers an alternative to the conventional journalistic structure with new narrative that mix information, entertainment, propaganda and audiovisual leisure. The division of journalistic and audiovisual genres is eroded, while the media of reference lose the monopoly of the agenda. The participation in the creation of messages increases their effectiveness (Pingree, 2007).

Social networks have increased the efficiency of activism because they integrate three axes of information in a single device or environment. Following the typology of Lemmert (1981), informative mobilisation encompasses the dimension of the identity of individuals (social media accounts, devices employed, types of connection [Wi-Fi or Ethernet], schedules of activity, preferences in terms of types of social networks), the location (time and space of the protest or demand, the waterfall effect of the different political protests, the weight of the ideas over physical geography) and particular tactics (passivity or activity of the participant in the kind of protest through the use of a tweet, a strike or a public protest). The type of social network and individual participation normalise the activity. The unification of channel and message reduces the costs of production given that there are no differences between senders and receivers. All participants have the same level of access to networks, so they become potential creators of messages or re-sender of viral contents. The instruments used are different and include newsletters and emails, social networks, and digital media and platforms. They are tools that individualise messages and avoid the mass media (radio or television). Those social movements become promoters of the information consumed by citizens through campaigns. The journalistic quality of the videos and contents is debatable, because the combative nature, committed to the cause, takes precedence. The social and political agitation uses a language of conflict, that is distant from the conventional journalistic model.

The digital activism of the social movement is based on two results. The first is the electoral or political mobilisation, which aims to influence an electoral decision (elections), a process (referendum), or a concrete political activity (the renunciation of a politician). The second consists of the capacity to influence the process of political decision making, i.e., the alteration of the agenda. Here, social movements have expanded the number and types of political demands, whose transversal nature has been used to capture the interest of different audiences. Some examples are the actions against climate change and the demands of transparency in public institutions and finances. In the first case, the call to vote in one direction or another requires a certain prior consensus. In contrast, in the second case the defence of the general interest extends the range of action.

It is here where the international political communication of social movements learns and occupies the space of public diplomacy, which becomes an asset of the mobilisation for or against a particular political cause. The international informational ecosystem is characterised by the dissolution of the oligopoly in the field of distribution and programming, production and dissemination of news, journalistic and persuasive contents. Technological change goes hand in hand with demographic and social change: more than 45% of the world's population has less than 25 years of age. The new digital paradigm allows the reduction of the impact of conventional media in the agendas and gives way to new operators that operate in the internet and social networks. This reduction in the costs of the production and distribution of audiovisual and informative content has triggered the appearance of new media and has allowed the chosen channel (YouTube, Twitter and others) to become the direct source.

The theory is categorical: public diplomacy corresponds to nation states (Manheim, 1994; Gonesh and Melissen, 2005; Laporte, 2007; Manfredi, 2011). On the other hand, the practice has led to a new type of international political communication that employs tools and exploits the advantages of public diplomacy. The academic literature has termed this phenomenon “grassroots diplomacy”, which moves away from classical theory and expands the scope of action to other actors. “Public diplomacy is nongovernmental, does not depend on the foreign policy of any elected government, and is more focused on the mobilisation of individuals, projects and people-to-people activities” (Payne, 2009: 487). This approach explains the boom of corporate diplomacy (Ordeix and Duarte, 2009), the diplomacy of cities (Laporte, 2012), the cultural diplomacy of the stateless nations (San Eugenio Vela and Xifra, 2014) and the study of new media in the diplomatic practice (Archetti, 2012).

The network creates unique advantages for social mobilisation such as the simple management of applications and social networks, the access to a global audience, the reduction of legal obligations to operate, the reduction of costs of content production and fund raising.

Mobilising diplomacy takes advantage of these opportunities in three areas of innovation. The first is the simplification of the processes of organisation. In contrast to hierarchy, the horizontal structure fosters the exchange of messages, increases speed and affects decision-making process. The mechanisms of association and relationship are de-virtualised, reducing costs. At the same time, it allows the substantial increase in the level, variety and complexity of the information available. People's enlistment to the causes of social movements through networks is much simpler: just one click away. Digital contact extends commitment: information request, participation in forums or meetings, advocacy, exchange of images and texts, among others. The network does not replace personal contact, but facilitates the organisation by increasing the reach, amount and flow of information. The gradual innovation consists of the articulation of virtual communities around common values, based on the strength of informal ties.

On a second point, mobilising diplomacy uses international financing mechanisms to raise funds, carry out international campaigns and engage diasporas. The emergence of financing mechanisms

alternative to traditional banking is an aspect to consider in future research. Platforms like PayPal and Bitcoin may be relevant.

Finally, mobilising diplomacy promotes informative, persuasive and propagandistic contents. In origin, these contents are designed for and consumed in digital screens and devices. They are not by-products of conventional media, but of the native media. Likewise, due to their nature, videos and contents are reproduced and consumed without limit or added costs. In relation to the political activity, often, the consumption and distribution of digital content becomes the first and main experience of epistemic community. The control of the communication, the source and the message eliminates intermediaries, allowing the construction of an imaginary and social perception *ad hoc*.

Nicholas J. Cull extends the range of activities of public diplomacy when he defines it as “an international actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public” (2009:12). For our study, this last point is significant: the capacity to influence the international arena and the foreign public matters more than the political nature of a nation state. The practice has blurred the differences between international policy, diplomacy, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy. The action of public diplomacy is the result of the combination of five tactical decisions: Listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchanges and international broadcasting (Cull, 2008).

The phenomenon relies on three advantages. The first is the absence of geographical or administrative borders that can regulate messages in the field of communication. Due to their singular nature, digital content cannot be blocked or censored with ease. This rupture of the geographical logical allows mobilisation and the orchestration of global campaigns, in time real. The speed to share content, the interactivity of messages and the opening of new communicative spaces that are not led by the elites increases the impact of the campaigns. In view of the weak borders, citizens can participate in global campaigns from their screens.

The second quality is the reinforcement of the idea and the feeling of participation in an epistemic community. According to Haas (1992: 3), this type of communities shares a set of norms and beliefs, which give a global meaning to the social activity of the community. The community shares the social production of meaning, the type of socialisation practices and information consumption, thinks in a similar way and shares discursive practices. Social movements respond to this communicative structure and practice so that it reinforces the homogeneity of the discourse. Moreover, it connects the diaspora with the local resident public. For this reason, social movements have expanded the range of communicative activities. They do not seek the transformation of conventional media, but creates an integral communicative strategy (audiovisual contents, text message, newsletters) out of the circuit controlled by the authorities. For Hackett and Carroll (2006:93), the success of the media activism consists of the creation of communities, of circles of connection between different affinities. Identity is not a closed list of attributes, but a general condition of participants, which is activated when they connect with any of the attributes.

The last attribute is the power to act over the real possibilities and capabilities. They are the dividends of the Internet. It diminishes the relevance of physical geography, distances or positions on

the ground. This defies the closure of borders and represents a huge cost saving to the defence of an ideological position or the design of a campaign. This attribution allows a social movement to project more power than it actually has, allows the broadcasting of persuasive and propagandistic contents. In particular, the success of the mobilisation is observed on social media. Some examples are well known: participation in a campaign, the acquisition of some notoriety in the agenda, the organisation of an event at the local level, micro-patronage and the use of unregulated coins (Bitcoin and similar).

The reduction of the production costs of the global campaigns focuses on other assets. The money for campaigns is less relevant than the capacity to create symbolic capital (slogans, hashtags, viral videos, digital leaders), the articulation of continuity as axis of the memory distributed in time (icons, ideas, institutional memory) in view of the instantaneity of campaigns in social media and the leveraging of results (the achievement of specific objectives linked to the success of a process of protest and social demand).

4. Catalonia and Scotland, examples of mobilising diplomacy

4.1. Catalonia's secessionist galaxy

This title is taken from the work of Ordeix and Ginesta (2013: 6), who defined the set of 77 organisations that promote “the process of self-determination” through different strategies of political communication. The political objective is the creation of a new state, after the rupture with Spain. It is a social movement in so far as it lacks a concrete political matrix, but articulates a series of interests that pursue the constitution of a new political entity. In practice, it represents the aggregate of political parties, trade unions, neighbouring organisations, education centres, cultural associations, awareness-raising campaigns in defence of the language, among others.

Faced with the inability to articulate a political response based on traditional structure of parties and parliamentarian representatives, secessionism has practiced a public diplomacy based on the reinforcement of the identity among its people, the promotion of interests before the international audience and the development of campaigns in social networks. This confirms the unification between source and channel, whose barrier has been blurred.

The promotion of interests through social networks has been focused on the dissemination of hashtags in Twitter and other networks. They include the following: #CataloniaWins #9N #FreedomForCatalonia #CatalansForYes. In Catalan, #OmplimLesUrnes was used. Of particular interest is the use of #CataloniaWins whose promotion is attributed to the National Catalan Assembly for the dissemination of the idea of independence. The Assembly is the social movement that brings together the interests of the cause. It bets on the viralisation in social networks in English because its deployment allows the breaking of geographical barriers and the expansion of the audience in mobile devices. On the other hand, international broadcasting has hardly influenced the political agenda. It promotes the idea of the maintenance of an audiovisual network, but does not compete with the traditional large networks. The internationalisation of the public corporation is of no interest for this study.

As a result, the secessionist social movement has been able to base its political objectives into concrete action. The referendum of 9 November, 2014, was executed, although it did not obtain legal recognition.

The analysis of the results shows that it fits the definition of social movement in the era of mobilisation diplomacy. In the field of politics, the results of the vote did not lead to a change of status, nor to extraordinary decisions or measures in the political sphere. However, the supporters of the *Sí-Sí* (Yes to Catalonia as a new State and Yes to its independence) have reached 1.8 million votes, which is less than the 2.1 million votes obtained by the parties with representation in the Catalan Parliament (CiU, Esquerra, ICV and CUP). Success is not achieved in the traditional political arena.

On the other hand, “Yes” voters achieved two objectives. The first is the mobilisation of the Catalan identity oriented towards the secessionist cause. The detail of the political demand does not matter, given the ambiguous formulation of the question of the referendum. This has mobilised the people persuaded by the political cause and has managed to break the barrier of the political voter. The people who participated in the referendum constitute a high share of the population: about 37.02%.

The second is the internationalisation of the consultation, of the political demand. The mobilisation of around 1.8 million voters is news and cover in the major newspapers and mainstream media reference. It confirms our idea that the quality of the information (scrutiny, registration of voters and results) is debatable, but manages to respond to the strategy of the protest through the official circuit. It is a success of the counter-hegemonic public diplomacy.

4.2. The Scottish referendum

The referendum about the independence of Scotland, whose decision was approved by the Scottish Parliament was held on 18 September, 2014. The political consensus built around the process fits the international normative and favoured the formulation of a clear and concrete question (“Should Scotland be an independent country?”) and simple responses (“Yes” or “not”). The clarity of the question forced conventional political participants to express agreement or disagreement without ambiguities. This has contributed to social mobilisation, which resulted in the participation of 84.6% of the electorate. However, these were organised under the umbrella of wider social movements such as “Yes Scotland”, for the dissolution of the United Kingdom, and “Better Together”, for people in favour of Scotland remaining in the United Kingdom.

In the referendum the winners were the ‘no’ voters with 55.30% of the votes. On the other hand, the result of the campaign has had political impact of greater depth. In the elections of May 2015, Scottish voters opted for nationalist positions. The Scottish National Party has reached 56 of the 59 seats, while it only had 6 seats in 2011.

The Scottish social movement has leveraged its assets in parliamentary political results, which differs from the first case of study. So, “Yes Scotland” has been capable of adding traditional voters,

supporters of the independence, voters jaded by the crisis and other sensibilities to claim more territorial power.

Following the three objectives of conventional public diplomacy, the supporters of the creation of a new state have opted for the influence and promotion of interests among third parties and have left in second place the defence of their identity. The sociological analysis of the “Yes” voter (Ashcroft, 2014) shows that decisions have to continue to be the principle of subsidiarity and proximity. Data are compelling. The disaffection towards the United Kingdom reaches 74%, towards the welfare system reaches 54%, while the public administration worries 33% of the population. In fourth place is the oil on the Scottish coast, with 20%.

These data confirm that supporters of the creation of the new state have political concerns, this is, they are capable of materialise the wishes of transformation in a conventional political activity. The political condition of a new state is capable of converting the social movement into action. In contrast, 27% of the “No” supporters mention the links with the United Kingdom, its history, culture and traditions as important reasons for the current *status quo*. Identity has not been used as a unifying thread of the independence, according to the data analysed. These data are consistent with the use of social networks by supporters of the new state.

According to the sample prepared by Policy Scotland (2014), the conversation around #indyref is led by the ‘Yes’ (@yesscotland), which has more posts (quantity) and a more active network (quality of the conversation). The diversity of the network coincides with the need to strengthen the epistemic community, which does not differ by language or culture, but by the ultimate goal of achieving more parliamentary influence. Likewise, the campaign is interested in the capacity of articulating those messages and reinforcing local identities. It is inferred that this articulation has benefited the electoral results, whose territorial organisation and political system give precedence to the local constituency. The management of the local traffic facilitates the organisation of events and allows the mobilisation of citizens for a close and concrete cause or activity. The conversion of the digital activity into citizen mobilisation has been a fact for ‘Yes’ campaign, which has been able to sponsor the conversation around the new political organisation of the country.

For this reason, the data of Policy Scotland demonstrate the ability of influence of other actors, catalogued as social movements, but not as political actors. @wearenational engaged artists and representatives of the world of culture, while @celebsforindy are famous and accredited professionals from different areas.

“No” supporters were brought together with @uk_together and #bettertogether. The conversation has lower quality and has not been able to be articulated through individuals or social movements independent of the conventional parties. The dissemination of messages and the official campaigns has diminished the ability of influence and mobilisation. The hierarchy of the messages fits with the idea of a campaign organised in line with the established powers and the conventional press. This model reduces spontaneity. The presence (number of followers) is not translated into influence (participation, quality of the conversation).

5. Conclusions

The article poses two hypotheses about the social movements of political nature that have innovated in the field of public diplomacy. The innovation resides in the capacity to use social networks to naturalise the messages among the actors, away from the policies of conventional institutions, parties and unions. This closeness of the message has made it easier for supporters to assume postulates as their own and not as slogans of the departments of political marketing. Likewise, innovation in digital media has shown the inability of the conventional powers to meet or respond to these mobilisation campaigns. When they act in networks, their activity is distorted or denaturalised. This approach to political action requires its own method of evaluation and analysis, which is a great challenge for research in public diplomacy (Pamment, 2014).

The Catalan movement has leveraged its results in the call for a referendum. Legality and scrutiny do not matter, given that the goal was not the unilateral independence. This confirms the first hypothesis given that the idea of the Catalan identity as differentiated political entity has been strengthened. The use of cultural diplomacy, language and culture has been decisive, even though content in English language was promoted to achieve international influence. There is no trace of the economic dimension of the conventional public diplomacy. Supporters of the Scottish independence have opted for a different strategy. Identity is not in the main corpus of the demand, but appears as a matter of second importance. The axis of the protest resides in the influence in mainstream politics that unfolds in parliament. The result has been leveraged in the subsequent elections with a scrutiny that was very favourable for the majority party.

The second hypothesis which proposes mobilising diplomacy. This idea guides the creation of digital propagandistic and informational content that promotes the creation of a counter-hegemonic symbolic production system. The two movements under analysis have not pursued the creation of a journalistic system or an audiovisual strategy that competes with those created by conventional nation states. On the contrary, they have focused their efforts on the creation of a network of interests bonded by a common purpose.

In short, the article confirms that social political movements cannot control the conventional media or political agendas, but are capable of creating an alternative for their own publics which in turn has an impact on the conventional agenda. The validation, that is, the fulfilment of the demands of the social movements in political life, is the subject for future research. This is part of the foundations of network diplomacy, which opens up to the participation of new actors in the international arena.

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