New Social Movements and Social Networking Sites' Uses: Mexicans' Mobilization for Peace in Mexico

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Copyright Statement

Declaration

I, hereby, declare that this dissertation has not been submitted in part or in whole as paperwork for a degree at any other university. I hereby declare that this dissertation is entirely my own work and that all parts and thoughts which have been taken from other persons are marked and identified by reference.

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ABSTRACT

The recent political protests around the globe since the uprising in the Arab World, the Indignados movement in Spain, and the Occupy Movement in United States, were broadcast to the world through both the global mainstream and alternative media using many images and reports produced by people on the ground using internet, mobile phones, and social media. These events have triggered a discussion not only about the political changes taking place in the region but have also opened up an academic debate about what changes and transformations may have occurred in the nature of citizens' political actions and the use of social media to communicate with people around the world. In turn, these political events have also reignited the discussion on social media as transnational public spheres beyond government control and opened to question the ethos of existing attempts at Internet governance by western nation-states.

The aim of this thesis is to engage in a theoretical discussion of this political phenomenon through a case study of New Social Movements and social networking sites' Uses: Mexicans' mobilization for peace in Mexico, an important element in the development of citizen participation on the Internet focused on in the thesis. In this process, this thesis examines how theoretically social movements have been transformed with the goal of contributing to the debate on the role of new communication technologies in redefining social movements and their potential to transform traditional political practices, such as opening up space to develop temporary alliances with the government, widening political participation in government structures, and/or exercising more influence on the policy-making process.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, who through all these years has encouraged me in the pursuit of this doctorate outside Mexico, to my husband Eduardo, who has supported me through all the difficult times during this journey and, particularly, to the all innocent children, women, mothers, young people, activists, journalists, immigrants and men that have suffered the injustices of this most unnecessary war on drugs.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to develop the existing understanding of how social movements for peace in Mexico use the Internet and social networking sites and to examine the central role of the Internet in enabling new public spheres of protest. The spread of the use of social networking sites and Internet have unleashed the potential for new dynamics of encounter and the formation of communities to communicate and contest power. The recent demonstrations and debates on the potential of social media for social movements show the significance of the contribution in this area. Social movements have been organized by ordinary people in Mexico to show their discontent with the violence generated in the context of the war on drugs that is affecting their daily life as well as to foster citizen participation in the country's political life. In recent mobilizations around the world, including Mexico, the widespread use of social media has enabled the organization of demonstrations, communicative activities such as the distribution of information from newspapers and television through the use of videos, announcements for coming events and collecting money, to mention just some of communication strategies for collective action.

My interest in social movements is the result of a series of experiences that shaped my attention and a deep commitment to learn from them in an academic way. I will summarize those experiences in three events: The first experience, was in high school around the age of sixteen, when the Mexican Literature teacher introduced to the class the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska with her book 'La noche de Tlatelolco'. This comprises a chronicle of eye-witness accounts of the massacre of students on October 2, 1968 in the Plaza of the Three Cultures, also known as the Tlatelolco housing complex in Mexico City. The book collected a series of testimonies that reflect the thoughts and feelings of people both in favour and against the student movement. That was my first literary contact with social movements and it motivated me to learn more about the Mexican social justice social movements, not to mention, the historical background to the information learnt since the primary school on important mobilisations such as the Mexican Independent Movement in 1810 and Mexican Revolution in 1910.

The second experience happened when I had the opportunity to observe a demonstration, around October-November 2004, by attending a sit-in with a friend from my master's course. The sit-in was organised a Jesuit, Fr. Pablo Martínez, from the Western Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESO) in the city centre of Guadalajara, in

support of the release of political prisoners from the anti-globalization march on May 24, 2004 against the third Latin American, the Caribbean and the European Union Summit. That experience impressed me emotionally because it was the first time in my life that I realised vividly how attending a demonstration could be so risky for the protesters and the potential injustices that could occur, as well as the human compassion that moves people to protest those injustices publicly.

The third experience was on March 26, 2011, when I was London, walking near Tavistock square. I began to hear helicopters flying around the zone, and some hours later I arrived in central London where an anti-cuts protests had taken place. I had the opportunity to see broken glass doors of shops, African groups dancing, young people with a big banner saying: 'Take off your hands off Egypt', and banners against the cuts. I recognised that a demonstration can comprehend a wide range of collective actions, from the most violent expressions to the happiest, such as dancing and playing music in the streets as if it were a carnival.

My interest in social movements for peace in Mexico is rooted in a different story. In December 2006, I read about the Mérida Initiative, a proposal for the mobilization of the army to support Mexico's security forces. At the beginning of 2007, I had the opportunity to go to Morelia, the capital of Michoacán, and the wide spread of military forces on the region was clearly visible. I remembered that at the end of the Vicente Fox's government in 2006, the mainstream media had already published an estimate of the number of casualties related to organized crime. The statistics showed no more than two thousand deaths. More recent statistics now claim more than 100,000 deaths. However, the numbers cannot express the scale of the humanitarian tragedy in Mexico and the complex social phenomena of which it was part..

In 2008, as a university lecturer, I conducted a seminar on Communication and Public Space, where topics such as the peace demonstrations in Mexico in 2008 and information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social movements, were at the centre of the debate in the classroom. I can say that my interest in my thesis topic grew significantly in academic terms due to that experience.

In 2009, I was living in Mexico City, working with undergraduate students from wealthy backgrounds, who commonly attended university with body guards. I began to see how the securitization of ordinary life in this sector was peculiar in a country where the gap between the rich and the poor is extremely visible and I could not see it as 'normal'. During

that same year, I started to notice more military personnel in the streets and I had the opportunity to be in situations where President Felipe Calderón was attending and how hundreds of the military and federal police forces participated in operations to ensure his safety. In those moments I started to feel fear on seeing those massive deployments of security forces, seeing how striking their weapons were and realizing how much damage they were capable of. Also, the social environment changed. My students had increasingly common stories of extortion, homicides, and social fear in cities such as Monterrey, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua and Michoacán. Then, in March 2010, my students invited me to a conference in the city of Monterrey at the Monterrey Technological Institute of Higher Studies (ITESM). During those days, two students were killed on the campus. We were literally in a state of war, but the mainstream media were portraying it as a battle between drug cartels and military forces.

A few days later, the father of one of my students was killed in the street; apparently it was a mugging. There followed afternoons of dialogue with my student, listening to him and trying to persuade him to transform those feelings of hatred against the perpetrators into a motivation to become the man that his father dreamt of and to fight for it. Currently, he has become a successful cultural community manager and photographer, who has refused to let the hope of a better future in Mexico die.

Later on, in October 2010, I had the experience of visiting Bogotá, Colombia to attend a conference, where the people I met, showed me the transition they were living through after decades of their war on drugs. Unexpectedly, I heard the story of former Colombian military soldier who told me his stories of the forced disappearances and the graves they had found. In a tone of clairvoyance, he said: 'In Mexico, they will discover mass graves.' That expression shocked me; his experience seems like a fatal prophecy for my country. He also expressed his thoughts on what produced the Colombian war on drugs, suggesting strongly that lack of education is the reason for humanity's evils.

In January 2011, I started my PhD at Nottingham Trent University, and I left my country with an image of a military soldier in the airport reviewing my luggage. When I arrived in Nottingham, I felt less like a postgraduate student and more like an exile from a war based on fear, but feeling morally in debt to Mexico for sponsoring my studies with resources from the Mexican citizen's taxes. 2011 was one of the most violent years since the war on drugs started. People that I knew personally were killed. Then my commitment got strength to understand the social movements for peace since 2011 to understand in depth this social

phenomena, and as a tribute to all the people that were strengthened, both with dignity to live their lives with unity and integrity through this dark period in Mexican history.

My commitment to my topic of study was my form of expressing my intellectual willingness to go beyond the misinformation of the mainstream media, my humble concern for a profoundly wounded part of Mexico and, and, through this demonstration of empathy, my humanity as a scholar and citizen anxious for a Mexico in peace with justice and dignity.

One of the most crucial events that hinted at what would be coming in 2011 in Mexico regarding social movements for peace came from an observation made during my last week in Mexico before travelling to Nottingham in 2011. On January 10th, I was in riding a taxi in Mexico City when I saw the front page of a newspaper called: 'La Jornada' with a headline demanding: 'No more Blood'. What caught my attention was the fact that this image had already been circulating on Facebook and Twitter over the last few days as a campaign calling for a massive citizen mobilization to demand a halt to the growing urban violence in the country. This initiative came from one of the country's best-known political cartoonists, Eduardo del Rio 'Rius'. The editorial in that day's newspaper demanded that the Mexican authorities change the existing, failed strategy to deal with the progression of violence by considering the social and economic aspects that have caused them. A few months later, massive mobilizations extended throughout Mexican following the death of the son of one of Mexico's most prominent intellectuals, the poet Javier Sicilia, who called for a change of strategy in the so-called 'war on drugs'. It had happened four years after the launch of the 'war on drugs', in 2011, when the first massive voices of contention, publicly expressed their rejection of Calderon's war on drugs, in various places in Mexico and internationally in countries such as Canada, England, Germany, Spain, France and Switzerland, whose demonstrations of solidarity gained for the first time widespread media coverage.

These events suggested to me the potential importance of online social networks to new forms of social movements and/or civil society mobilizations. This thesis explores how social movements in Mexico use online social networking sites and mainstream media to make visible the issue of urban violence caused by organized crime. It also investigates how these social movements are challenging the status quo of Mexican politics through the mobilization of citizens by using communications strategies.

The theoretical framework for this thesis combines a critical analysis of the debates on the power of social media with a review of the literature on the nature of contemporary social

movements: interaction, shared beliefs, solidarity, collective identity and action, transnational nature, both outside and inside of the institutional sphere (Diani, 1992; Tilly 1999, della Porta and Tarrow, 2005) 'in order to better understand the continuities and changes across different waves of activism in late modernity' (Feixa et. al, 2009:423).

These contemporary movements, often abbreviated to NSMs (New Social Movements), have in the latter decades of the 20th Century become an increasingly important source of political change as well as allowing people to organise politics in processes that have re-conceptualised the limits of time, space, identity, and ideology. This thesis works with the approach to new social movements suggested by Lee (2007:1) as 'a movement oriented by citizens and varied communities towards a specific social issue demanding social recognition'. García (2010) has pointed out that social media in social movements have an important role in pushing the local cultures' social issues agenda through citizen participation in the global sphere.

The usefulness of communication and information technologies for social movements has been recognised by academics and commentators alike. For example, della Porta and Tarrow point out that:

> In face-to-face experiences such as organising, meeting, talking with friends, scheduling future protests, remembering and learning from past events, coordinating local protest actions in real time as they happen, and reporting them back through digital media channels so they can be recognised by activists themselves, as part of larger-scale developments. (della Porta, and Tarrow 2005:206).

The thesis aims to provide an original contribution to Internet studies and social movement theory by addressing the critical discussion regarding the role of civil participation on the Internet and social media for collective action. This thesis uses a combination of traditional and innovative theoretical approaches, including the new transformations of the network society as it engages with the mainstream media (Castells, 2012, Dahlgren, 2014, Mattoni et al., 2010, Tilly, 2004) and aims to explore how this media ecology has been transformed through all the modifications and challenges that arise in this new scenario for mobilisations for peace in Mexico.

This thesis consists of a pioneering study which attempts to understand the mass-media dynamics in which social movements are rooted, and to acknowledge the complexities of the interaction of the social moment for peace in Mexico with the Internet and social network sites.

The thesis analyses the use of digital technologies of communication which enable social mobilisations to contest the dominant discourses of the war on drugs in their pursuit of social change for peace in Mexico. This is accomplished by the construction of online communicationstrategiestopromotevisibilityothisissue.

This thesis examines the advantages and limitations of the New Social Movement approach (Melucci, 1988,1989, Habermas, 1987) and also considers a critical review of the theoretical model within the context of Latin America movements (Davis, 1999, Canclini, 2010, Alonso, 2012, Stahler-Sholk et. al, 2007). This discussion is situated within the broad transformations brought about by the process of globalisation, which foster the creation of new social movements that collaborate and create temporary political alliances. To develop this political process new communication technologies are adopted that might facilitate civic participation and strengthen Mexican democracy.

The thesis offers a pioneering discussion based on original empirical work on the war on drugs and examines how the MPJD and collectives for peace in Mexico gave visibility to the victims, through the narratives mediated via mass media and Internet about who they are and counteracted the media coverage imposing a discourse of fear that paralysed the civil society.

This thesis provides an analysis of the social media comments on Facebook and YouTube video within the context of the social movements for peace, portraying a polarisation of views as the cause of the social movement that has arisen because of the violent conflict where the civil society is embedded. The thesis focuses especially on the Movements for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD) that were formed at the end of April 2011 in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico, when the son of the poet and a recognised Mexican intellectual Javier Sicilia, made a call for a national demonstration to stop the violence. The study acknowledges the vision of the MPJD as an expression of the multitudes that were all simultaneously wanting peace, which means that the figure of Javier Sicilia was simply an enabler of the widespread complex reality. This thesis aims in an original way to highlight how the social media content of social movements for peace in Mexico can be used by traditional media as a source of information, thereby interweaving these two spheres of communication.

Finally, this thesis makes an original contribution in further developing the understanding of methodology for online studies by combining qualitative methodology including–online interviews, online non- participation and user comment analysis, as well as providing a

contribution to the online studies for social movements, to analyse data collected on online social networks sites and social media.

This thesis examines respecting the Mexican social movements for peace through the use of online social media, taking into account the features that drive the development of forms of citizen participation on the Internet and the role it has played in the recent Mexican mobilizations for peace. In this manner, this study theoretically debates social movement theories and contributes to the discussion on the role of social media in redefining social movements and their potential to transform the status quo of Mexican politics.

This thesis explores in depth the shifts in the process of autonomous communication (Castells, 2012) that allow potential mobilizations to act independently from media channels to spread their messages freely. A key central point considered in this thesis is how these social movements for peace in Mexico have a strong self-reflective awareness of themselves in the form these social movements have been constructed their communication strategies in a more effective form, dismantling the dominant discourse around the war on drugs. This has possibilities to debate from massive demonstrations bringing to analysis the views from activists, journalists and experts, which contribute to the academic discussion, because of the massive media coverage in its greatest period of their cycle of contention. Gaining as a result a complex understanding that was veiled by the monolithic agenda of the war on drugs, whose central axis is the militarization of Mexican territory with the support of the Mérida Initiative promoted by United States.

This thesis examines firstly the perspective in favour of the uses of Internet and social network sites for online mobilization. The focus varies from decentralized channel network formations and networking dynamics (Feixa et al., 2009; Juris 2005, Fuchs, 2006; Castells, 2011), to the construction of new forms of online demonstration activities (Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2010:3) characterised by fluidity and flexibility (Bimber, et al., 2005), to the global connectivity provided by the use of digital technologies of communication (Wall, 2007; Shirky, 2011; Cammaerts,2005; Garret, 2006; Rheingold, 2002), to the speed of the dissemination of news of collective actions by the use of social media (Ayres, 1999), to the potential of the Internet to support 'democratic contestation and mobilization'. (Bailey, et al., 2008:118), for creating alternatives points of view, contest 'mainstream and dominant discourses' at the same time these practices play a role of a 'space of socialization' (Mattoni, et al., 2010:2).

On the negative side, scholars have questioned, among other issues: the power of social media to intervene as the architecture of the Internet has increasingly become privatized and controlled by media conglomerates which have no interest in promoting democracy (Mejías, 2011); the technological determinism implicit in many approaches, discussing the wonders of social media as fundamentally connecting and liberating people (Hands, 2011); the fragility of some of the political alliances constructed online; and the failure of the technology to protect net activists from government surveillance (Zuckerman, 2011, Gladwell, 2010, Morozov, 2009), the illusion of not on the benefits of these digital platforms that consider a position to the individuals as consumers and spectators than as political agents of change. (Dahlgren, 2014).

Moreover, the acceptance of all these new communications technologies has given rise to questions that allow the academic debates from different positions to focus in on the political issues and effectiveness within the new media (Poster, 2006, Wall, 2007, Kellner 2003) having resulted from the potential to reconfigure communicative power relations. Social media platforms constitute a key central point for the encounter of unconnected individuals who can share mutual visions. All these communication practices go beyond virtual spaces into physical spaces, increasing the potential for involvement into the organization debate. Authors such as Gerbaudo have explored how social media are just supplementing existing forms of getting together.

My thesis also considers the debates on the central role of the mainstream media in attempts to give potential to the political mobilization and its interaction with social networking sites used by activists contributing to broadcast frequently with news posts, images or opinions on their websites (della Porta, 2011, Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). In addition, this thesis explores the debates on the limitations relying on mainstream media imposes on mobilization, by portraying the social movements in the wrong tone, possibly as superfluous, selecting group issues, and actions under their own criteria and simplifying and homogenizing their demands (Tufekci, 2013, Rucht 2014, Atton 2013).

A central aspect explored in this thesis is the participation in social movements through social media. I considered the mechanisms that potentially link participation with technology, firstly by reducing the cost of participation, and secondly by promoting a collective identity and creating a community (Garret, 2006). Online participation could frequently move individuals to action offline (Fenton, 2008). In consequence, social movements in

contemporary societies have been examined by theorists in relation to the transformation of participation: the use of the Internet and social media creates a sense of being together, as a source of empowerment, cooperation and solidarity, without the necessity of leaders (Castells, 2012:225, Enjolras et al., 2012:2-3, della Porta, 2011:50).

The analysis of conceptualisations created to understand the role of new communication technologies in social movements suggests that there is not a single model that explains the complex relationships amongst them. However, there has been a considerable development of conceptualisations to grasp a deep understanding of this relation, concepts such as: 'logic of aggregation' (Juris, 2012), 'choreography of assembly' (Gerbaudo, 2013), 'information cascades' (Enjolras et al., 2012), 'connective action networks' (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013), 'citizens' media' (Rodríguez, 2011), 'nanomedia' (Downing, 2009), 'dissident networks' (Coopman, 2011) and 'cyberprotest' (Fuchs, 2006). As can be observed, the study of the relationship between social movements and social media is clearly quite new; my case study represents a contribution to the literature.

Another aspect that this thesis explores is the transformation of collective action, with the emergence of self-organised protests, new types of mobilising structures that have a propensity to be less organised, and networks that are more open to participation with a wide-ranging diversity of issues. In consequence, a diverse group of actors, organisational forms, and repertoires has emerged, as has a process of individualisation which exists without weakening the collective identities (Roggeband and Duyvendank, 2013, Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013, Flanagin, Stohl and Bimber, 2006).

A central concept in the analysis of social movement formation is the collective identity. Authors have claimed that the more coherent the collective identity is, the more media prominence will be received (Rotes, 2013). The formation of a collective identity requires essentially a cultural dimension of networks that supply the themes, worldviews, ideologies, and practices used to articulate a movement's goals successfully (Taylor, 2013).

Framing the issues of the social movements plays a fundamental role in the formation of a movement, resonating with potential recruits by connecting participants to influence public opinion (Carty and Onyett, 2006, Snow and Benford, 1992, Benford,

1993). The frames used to present the issues often contain elements of injustice, identity and agency.

This thesis uses new social movements (NSM) theory, which is based on the production and circulation of culture, including media culture and information technologies. The NSM theorists believe that the characterisation of contemporary social movements is fundamentally shaped by new forms of collective action, with new goals, values, and constituents. NSM theorists argue that recent social movements represent an entirely new form of social protest and reflect specific properties of advanced industrial societies. The shared characteristics of these new movements can be divided into four general areas: goal orientation, forms, participants, and values. (D'Aneri, Ernst and Kier, 1990, Cohen, 1985, Melucci, 1989, Lee, 2007).

This research has used a qualitative approach based on online nonparticipant observations, online interviews and user comment analysis, based on the analysis of the online discourses of users in relation to the social movements for peace. It also includes a qualitative analysis of the comments made by users of their perceptions of the violence in Mexico in the context of the war on drugs, and online interviews with activists, experts, and journalists to explore the uses of the Internet for mobilisations, the causes of the social movements for peace, how they frame their grievances, who are their opponents, the challenges and risks of online activism, and the things the social movement would like to change. The empirical research is based on data collected and analysed over three years. In this sense, these social networking sites facilitated the collection of all the data necessary in relation to the social movements for peace. I conducted 26 online interviews with activists, experts, digital content producers and journalists to comprehend social media communication practices. Also, I analysed 4,446 conversations and messages in relation to the mobilisations for peace in Mexico. I selected ten profile groups on Facebook related to social movements for peace in Mexico, to map the main discussions in their publications, and 17 news stories published on the Facebook profile pages of the political magazine *Proceso*. In addition, I analysed 557 messages published on the website of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD), 470 new stories from Mexican national newspapers in relation to the MPJD and 1,040 tweets from one of the Twitter accounts of the MPJD.

In the pursuit of understanding the complexities of the socio-political context, this thesis explores the visions of the authors who have conducted a deep review on the causes that brought about the spread of violence in Mexico in the context of the war on drugs. These authors (Solis, 2001, Watts and Zepeda, 2012, Alonso, 2012) revealed that the perception among the population of the fraudulent nature of the presidential election of July 2006, and the pressure on the US government to add to its drug policy to fight the drug cartels away from their borders in the Mexican territory itself and 'protect' themselves against so-called 'narco-terrorism', were used as a justification to develop a military apparatus. In this scenario, the dominant media discourse stated that the president devoted himself to announcing the actions that marked his victory in that fight (Aguilar, 2012). These actions have produced a silenced imposed by a lack of recognition of the voices of the victims that were suffering the consequences of this violence, with the narrative saying that the accused deserved their punishment because of how they had lived, and media exposure of the killings occurred without a proper ethical treatment of the thousands of victims (Villanueva et al., 2013). In this context the social movements for peace in Mexico emerged to contest the prevailing forms of discourse that enforced a one-dimensional vision in the battle against organised crime, and the violence it has produced around Mexico.

This thesis analyses the social movements for peace which have been using social network sites, from the 'No more Blood' movement that in parallel used Facebook, blogs, and Twitter, and the newspaper *La Jornada* to spread their message. A few months later, the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD) used the media to bring together the population, but also used social networks to assess public opinion, establish demands and proposals, and organise marches and caravans. The MPJD websites on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have created courses and workshops on, among others, digital journalism and resistance (Treré and Cargnelutti, 2014). For the purpose of this thesis, I examined the Dialogue for Peace because it established an event that made it possible to visualize the dignity of the victims and claim the moral consequences of the war on drugs. The MPJD and Dialogue for Peace have helped put in the public sphere a speech claiming the rights of victims, and takes the Mexican state to account in this regard (Monsiváis et al., 2013).

The thesis considered a series of statistics provided by the Human Rights Report (2013 online) that stated that 'security forces have committed widespread human rights

violations in the war on drugs', underlining the critical situation that none of these abuses have been properly investigated. Another aspect is that Mexico's National Human Rights Commission has reported 7,350 complaints of military abuses from 2007-2012.[1] The most vulnerable groups of victims of the enforced disappearances are focussed on: journalists, human rights defenders, migrants, young people, and women. In the first group alone, 82 journalists have been killed from 2000-2012, while 16 have disappeared.[2]

This thesis examines the relationship between the social movements for peace in Mexico that have gained visibility from 2011, the media and the Internet. Using the perspective of della Porta (2013) I explored how the media play a key role through the control of symbolic production. Mosca (2010) and Earl (2015) posit that the relationship of the media with the Internet allows it to amplify stories, and that traditional media have been trying to engage themselves with social media. Moreover, I analysed how the ideologies and practices of social movements for peace in Mexico turn out to be simplified and homogenised by the mainstream media (Atton, 2013). This study also analyses the use of the Internet in social movements for peace in Mexico, and how it has made citizen empowerment possible and provided a counterbalance to the prevailing discourses by sharing alternative points of view and by distributing their own opinions (della Porta, 2011). As well, this thesis explores how collective identity can be promoted by the Internet (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013), how the issue of identity is central to any comprehension of the connection between social media and mass protests, and the key point of understanding the role of emotions in the construction of the collective identity, in order to understand the motivations behind mobilisation (Taylor, 2013).

For this thesis I analysed the discourses of activists, journalists and experts to evaluate the 'levels of the opportunities' for and 'constraints' on attempts to get attention in the mainstream media with new media technology. In this, I used the analysis proposed by Cammaerts (2012) that states that 'the first level of analysis' refers to the media opportunity structures and relates to the mainstream media representation of protest, engaged on the different forms that activists utilise to create interest in the media. The second level is related to the discursive opportunity structure and strategies of self-mediation in the direction of producing counter-narratives and

[1] Human Rights Watch denuncia abusos y tortura de las autoridades mexicanas (31 January 2013) *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2013/01/31/human-rights-watch-denuncia-abusos-y-tortura-de-las-autoridades-mexicanas (Accessed 15 May 2014)
[2] La CNDH reporta 82 periodistas asesinados desde 2005 (4 November 2012) *El Informador*. Retrieved from http://www.informador.com.mx/mexico/2012/426063/6/la-cndh-reporta-82-periodistas-asesinados-desde-2005.htm (Accessed 20 June 2014)

disseminating them independently from the mainstream media organisations. The third level, relates to the networked opportunity structure and the resistance practices mediated through technology.

A critical aspect that was taken into consideration in the construction of this thesis is that social media are part of commercial platforms that could censor activist communications, and can be under surveillance or infiltrated by police (Fuchs, 2014b). Social media is inherently exposed to infiltration by opponents or police, and the social networks, including webpages, e-mails, and social networks, are monitored by intelligence officers (Rotes, 2013). A risk that faces the use of Internet and the use of digital tools is that they do not reduce the capability of the state to fight against leaders and disrupt social organising (Loader and Mercea, 2011, Etling et al., 2010).

My findings suggest that the use of social media for social movements for peace in Mexico has found a restricted socio-political context, one that does not contribute to the aim of obtaining justice for the victims through the pursuit of the transformation of the status quo and their claims for justice. The repercussion of the national and international normative structure in relation to the issue of drugs has profoundly obstructed the possibilities of peace in Mexico, because of the strategy implemented that mainly attempts to deal with the problem of drug trafficking through punishment dealt out under a militarized strategy that causes more violence and death.

This thesis aims to make an original contribution to the studies regarding how social movements for peace in Mexico use online social networks and social media to counterbalance the dominant discourses of the drug of war in Mexico, and how the collectives use online social media to try to effect a transformation in the status quo of Mexican politics.

THE CHAPTERS OF THIS THESIS

This thesis comprises five chapters. The first two set out the theoretical framework behind the study. The third looks at the methodology applied to this study, and the fourth and the fifth constitute the core analytical chapters of the thesis.

The thesis considers the use of the Internet and social networking sites in social movements for peace in Mexico, how online social media is implemented as a key tool in the creation of a communication strategy to make visible the consequences of the violence in Mexico produced by the war on drugs, and how social movements using social networks could represent a powerful force to contest the predominant postures that justify the militarized strategy with outcomes that do not resolve the issue of violence. To this end, the first chapter emphasises the role of Internet technologies in relation to the effectiveness for mobilisation through the use of the Internet and social networking sites. It also explores issues related to recent conceptualisations of social movements' wireless communication in the context of the network society. Castells' conceptions of the social movement and the information age are analysed, as are the perspectives of Mattoni et al. (2012) on how social media practices allow new spaces for mobilisations. These theories are used in this thesis in order to help understand the significance of the role of the Internet for mobilisation, how these communication technologies can allow the expansion and reconstruction of public discourse (Carty, 2010, Van Zoonen, 1992), and how the diffusion of these discourses and their tactics permeate civic commitment (Earl and Schussman, 2008). In addition, this chapter analyses how new technologies of communication have been used for organising and demanding through their actions a reconstruction of communication power relations, confronting the messages produced by the mainstream media and the state (Loader and Mercea, 2011, Etling et al., 2010).

This chapter also considers how the control of symbolic production by the media is a key point in the efforts of political mobilisation. It explores the relation between mainstream media and social networking sites, how the use of both can reach a massive audience, and how the professionalism of the media strategies of a social movement can influence mobilisation. In addition, this chapter examines Cammaert's (2012:122) analysis on the three 'interlinked levels of analysis regarding the opportunities and constraints in terms of mediation' to determine the logic of action'.

This chapter also explores how new technologies of communication help to identify who is in the organisation and how these communication technologies complement the existing forms of face-to-face gatherings (Gerbaudo, 2013, Diani, 2000), and considers whether the Internet could replace face to face communication, instead of complementing it (Mosca, 2010). A key point in this chapter is on the debate about the role of participation on the Internet and social media; this kind of participation is characterised as being more collaborative, having self-configurable communications (Castells, 2012), both elements having an effect on the

organisation by making it less hierarchical. This thesis chapter further considers the mechanisms that enable participation through new technologies of communication, relying on the reduction of participation costs, the promotion of a collective identity, and the creation of a community (Garret, 2006). This chapter takes into account the critical position that exhorts the avoidance of the ignorance of the media context which diminishes contextual human relations, having as a result a superficial interpretation – such as technological determinism – that obscures the complexity of the issues, politics and dynamics (Rodríguez et al., 2014).

The second chapter of this thesis examines the analysis within the academic field of social movement theory, with a focus on new social movement theory. Firstly, the chapter examines the definition of a social movement given by della Porta (2006), which conceptualises it as an instrument in which actors participate to engage in antagonistic relations with an identified opponent. For Melucci (1989), the involvement of solidarity in these conflicted relations disrupts the limits of compatibility with the rules established by the status quo. In addition, this continuous position of conflict with an adversary that is in power allows the actors to maintain campaigns involving displays of public performances, repeated public displays of worthiness, unity and commitment, and the presentation of specific claims (McAdam et al., 2007).

Another key component that this chapter analyses is the function of collective action within the social movements, being an element of connectedness surrounded by the identification of social problems as potential objects of mobilisation (Koopmans, 2004, Milan, 2013). The collective action can be combined with new communication technologies and relies on particular procedures, motivations, and voluntary production of informational goods for the public, such as the creation of online content to be communicated. All in all, collective action is an essential part of social movements and their communicative processes (Flanagin et al., 2006).

An additional central element of social movement theory is the collective identity that this chapter examines as a precondition for action, within the context of identity strategies which have aimed at social change (Stekelenburg and Roggeband, 2013, Diani, 1992). This chapter also examines the role of emotions in the politicisation of the collective identity, including the awareness of shared grievances within a group (Doorns et al., 2013), and how it helps potential recruits (Carty and Onyett, 2006, Pickerill, 2009). Finally, chapter two examines NSMs theory characterised by how communication networks

that rapidly spread are receptive to novel ideas for the purposes of mobilisation (Freeman, 1990). The NSM theorists (D'Aneri et al., 1990), argue that contemporary social movements are characterised fundamentally by new forms of collective action, with new goals, values, and constituents. In this view, social movements such as the civil rights movements and peace movements of the sixties represent an entirely new form of social protest and reflect specific properties of advanced industrial societies.

The third chapter addresses the methodology applied to this research, as well as the associated challenges. In this chapter it is established that the methodological approach used is qualitative, based on online interviews, online nonparticipant observation and user comment analysis. In the context of a qualitative study of social movements, social networking sites can be useful because they provide massive amounts of material on the subject of even the most peripheral social movements or groups (Murthy, 2008). Carrying out observation of online nonparticipants enables the researcher to trace potential participants with whom to conduct the online interviews. In this chapter I analyse different characteristics of the use of Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNSs) which allow activists, journalists and experts to create visibility of the social movement's causes, and explore the complexities that challenge the pursuit for peace in Mexico. Additional subjects are covered in this chapter such as the challenges and risks involved in digital activism, the importance of the construction of a social movement's identity online, the goals that the social movement would like to reach, and the construction of relations with the mainstream media, to mention some of the most important aspects. The final part of this chapter emphasises ethical issues which require consideration when conducting research online and how to manage the personal data of participants.

Chapter four of this thesis analyses the context of the war on drugs, which gave rise to the social movements for peace in 2011. For the analysis I conducted a revision of the socio-political factors that have caused the rise in violence in Mexico since 2006 (Solis, 2013, Watts and Zepeda, 2012, Alonso, 2012). In addition, this chapter analyses how the war on drugs was publicised in the media (Aguilar, 2012), positioned, as it was, as a monolithic issue on the media agenda. This chapter argues that the violence of the war on drugs is not solely a domestic issue, but instead is related to the high levels of drug consumption in the United States (Shirk and Rodríguez, 2013). Moreover, this chapter includes an analysis of the elements of the strategy put in place by the Mexican president Calderón in 2006 to battle against the drug cartels. In this context certain US-Mexican policies – such as the Mérida Initiative – have

played a key role in the support of Calderón's war on drugs (Watts and Zepeda, 2012, González, 2012, Wolf, 2011). This chapter also addresses how the stories of violence produced withing this socio-political context, were not published in the mainstream media and did not portray the issue of an expansive violence in Mexican territory. While news on the war on drugs was part of the media agenda, it has been published without portraying the complexity of the issue, and has been key in disseminating a message that signifies that the higher the body count, the more successful the war has been (Reguillo 2013, Villanueva et al., 2013). This chapter also explores the way in which human casualties and damages arising from Calderón's war on drugs, which were devastating (Solis, 2013, Esquivel, 2012), have been treated, with the death of people minimized as 'collateral damage'. Having explored the reasons and complexities that brought about the war on drugs in 2006-2012, I analyse the events which have arisen that gained the attention of the citizens and organisations, and which produced a shift in their demands for civil and political rights (Gallagher, 2012).

The second part of this chapter explores the emergence of several social organisations, the spread of public demonstrations and protests, all trying to bring about a change in the strategy employed to fight the drug cartels. Moreover, in this chapter the context of the emergence of social movements for peace – such as 'No more Blood' and the MPJD – in 2011 is analysed, and how they were created with the purpose of spreading and making visible the narratives, allowing a break in the silence imposed by the media and the government. These efforts generated information to counterbalance the monolithic discourse of the Mexican authorities. The chapter looks at the achievements of the MPJD in relation to the construction of the identity of the victims of violence, empowering and legitimising a discursive shift as this practice functioned as a generator of symbolic meaning in the media and in public spaces. The analysis of the dialogues for peace allowed the visualization of the victims created by the government's agenda (Monsiváis et al., 2013). At the end of this chapter I present a summary of the state of affairs in relation to human rights violations in Mexico and proposals to solve the issue of the violence in the context of the war on drugs (Amnesty International, 2013, Americas Program for International Policy, 2014).

In chapter five I analyse the voices of the activists, journalists, experts and users in the social networking sites, as they relate to the causes of the emergence of the social movement for peace in Mexico. In addition, this chapter examines the process that allowed the initial phases of the mobilisations that helped to define the processes of grievance definition, collective identity formation, and joint action, and what role was played by the Internet and

social networking sites to facilitate the formation and mobilisation of activist groups. Using the research of della Porta (2013), I analyse how the media plays a key role in the control and the symbolic production of the social movement's message. Mosca (2010) and Earl (2015) argue that the relation of the media with the Internet allows an amplification of the stories because traditional media have put a stress on engaging with social media. This chapter explores how the ideologies and practices of social movements for peace in Mexico are simplified and homogenised by the mainstream media (Atton, 2013).

This chapter scrutinises the use of the Internet in social movements for peace in Mexico and the series of issues arising from the use of this platform: how it has made possible the citizens' empowerment that provides a counterbalance to the prevailing discourses by sharing alternative points of view and by distributing their own opinions (della Porta, 2011); how collective identity can be promoted by the Internet (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013); how the issue of identity is central to a comprehension of the connection between social media and mass protests, and how the role of emotions in the construction of a collective identity is a key point to understand the motivations for mobilisation (Taylor, 2013). The final section of the analysis of the uses of the Internet by social movements for peace in Mexico examines through a quantitative and qualitative approach the user comments on YouTube videos in relation to the MPJD and the uses of the Facebook profiles of ten collective groups involved in social movements for peace in Mexico. These are coupled with an analysis of the user comments on news stories from the political magazine *Proceso*, the use of the webpage of the MPJD, an analysis of the main issues of the Mexican national newspaper in relation to the MPJD and the use of Twitter by the MPJD.

These chapters are followed by a final conclusion which summarizes the arguments developed throughout this work. This conclusion proposes further analysis of the various elements discussed herein in relation to the use of social networking sites for social movements for peace in Mexico.

CHAPTER ONE

INTERNET, SOCIAL NETWORK SITES AND THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

1.1   Introduction

This thesis examines how social movements for peace in Mexico use online social networks and emphasises the role of Internet technologies in relation to the potential for mobilisation through the use of the Internet and social networking sites. It also explores issues related to recent conceptualisations of social movements' wireless communication in the context of the network society. This chapter explores the importance of the mainstream media, Internet and social network sites (SNSs), and the debates which provide a key context for analysis of the approaches taken by studies on social movement media within the new landscape of the Internet and SNSs. This chapter considers the new transformations of the network society as it engages with the mainstream media (Castells, 2012, Dahlgren, 2014, Mattoni et al., 2010, Tilly, 2004) and how this media ecology has been transformed by all the modifications and challenges that arise in this new scenario.

This chapter also explores the relevance of participation, specifically the debate on the role that it plays within the use of the Internet and social media (Castells, 2012, Gerbaudo, 2012, Bennett, 2012, Baringhorst, 2008) and how researchers into social movements in contemporary society have explored the transformation of participation through the use of these digital platforms (Castells, 2012, Enjolras et al., 2012, della Porta, 2011). Finally, this chapter explores the participatory media that allow people to organise in decentred ways, through the use of different forms of communication such as social media.

In the final section of this chapter I analyse a wide variety of new concepts existing in the relevant literature in order to understand the role of social media in social movements, such as 'Logic of aggregation' (Juris, 2012), 'Choreography of assembly' (Gerbaudo, 2013), 'Citizens' media' (Rodríguez, 2011), 'Information cascades' (Enjolras et al., 2012), 'Nanomedia' (Downing, 2011) and 'Dissent networks' (Coopman, 2011). As Fuchs (2012)

suggests, to comprehend the role of social media in social movements it is necessary to establish a theoretical model of mediated communication which avoids a 'communication centric position'.

1.2   Social Movements, the Mainstream Media and the Internet

The aim of this study is to examine the role of the mainstream media and the Internet in mobilisation, and how both nowadays play a central part in the understanding of social movements in contemporary societies. The modes of communication for social movements have been transformed through new communication technologies, beginning new debates which seek to understand the shift towards collective action. The most recent conceptualisation of social movements from Castell's perspective (2012:9) highlights the 'process of autonomous communication' in social movements allowed by the Internet and wireless communication in the context of the network society. This communication process implies independence from the traditional mainstream-media channels and governments, and the chance to communicate openly without restrictions to a wider public through the Internet. A specific element of these social movements is the point that they are 'highly self-reflective movements', frequently auto-examining as movements and individuals about what they are looking to change and to accomplish (Castells, 2012:225-226).

This new scenario needs to be contextualized. Dahlgren (2014) expresses the necessity of recognising that these movements are active in several parts of the world, where people have been challenging authoritarian regimes with varying degrees of success. In all of these movements, a key point has been that media plays a central role in them. While traditional mass media is still playing an important role, even within the new landscape of digital media, at the same time citizens are increasingly making use of the Internet in general, and social media in particular, for their political purposes. Dahlgren's critique of the use of the Internet and social network sites rests on the idea that there is an overemphasised illusion of the effectiveness of these digital platforms, specifically stating that 'we are much more strongly offered subject positions as consumers and spectators than as political agents' (Dahlgren, 2014: 198), meaning that users are much more likely to be passive than to be critical producers of digital content. He argues that the frontiers between politics and consumption are porous, requiring more

analytical reflection on the normative limits of the fluidity that in some cases undermines democratic political agency.

Social media can be used effectively for political participation, as in the case of the Arab protests. Howard and Hussain (2011:48) suggest that social mobilisations have flowed from country to country because digital media have permitted communities to unite around shared grievances and nurture transportable strategies for mobilising against dictators. People have used digital media to construct a political answer to local experiences of injustice. Howard and Hussain remarked that 'they were not inspired by Facebook; they were inspired by the real tragedies documented on Facebook' (Howard and Hussain, 2011:48). New information technologies give activists opportunities that they did not have before: 'information networks not easily controlled by the state and coordination tools [...] are already embedded in trusted networks of family and friends'. Gharbia (2010 online) has undertaken a deep analysis on the complexity embedded in the Arab-world revolutions comprehending nine agents that operate over interconnected spheres that empowered several actors who played a substantial role in contemporary digital activism:

> 1) "Neutral" circumvention tools (both open and close source: such as Tor, Piphon, Ultraseurf, Hotspotshiled), 2) U.S private sector companies such as Google, Twitter and Yahoo, 3) Governments: Governmental initiatives providing financial support to various Internet freedom programs & circumvention technologies 4) Open source movements & techies, such as OpenStreetMap, frontlineSMS, Ushahidi 5) Grassroots and independent digital activists and bloggers, 6) Ideological circumvention tools, such as Haystack and Freegate. 7) Research centers and universities, such as the Beckman Center, the ONI, the citizen labs. 8) International NGOs 2nd category funded mostly by US and other governments, 9) International NGOs 1st category receive the majority of its funding from independent donors.

The social-media practices of activists have allowed a level of self-reflection about themselves, by creating alternative points of view, contesting 'mainstream and dominant discourses'. At the same time these practices play the role of a 'space of socialization' (Mattoni et al., 2010:2). The attention garnered in the mainstream media might have an effect on public discourses and the public's wider comprehension of social problems (Kenneth and Caren, 2010:842) and 'decolonize public opinion by expanding and reconstructing public discourse' (Carty, 2010:156, 159, Van Zoonen, 1992:454). These extraordinary levels of diffusion of social movement discourses and tactics, 'begin to pervade civic engagement and seemingly

apolitical areas of life' (Earl and Schussman, 2008:74). In the same form, 'stories and sentiments are now vividly captured via social media and media monitoring' such as television, and are acknowledged by radio, press, Internet and news agency sources worldwide (Cottle, 2011:655).

Tilly (2004) has expressed the idea that at the beginning of the twenty-first century social movement activists have embraced new technologies of communication in their organisations and in their activities. Tilly has posed a number of questions:

> Are new technologies transforming social movements? In what ways? [...] How do they produce their effects? How do new tactics and new forms of organisation interact in twenty-first-century social movements? [...] To what extent and how do recent alterations in social movements result from the changes in international connectedness that people loosely call globalisation? (2004:97-98)

All these questions are currently under debate by different theorists, especially those concerning political issues and the effectiveness allowed by the new media (Poster, 2006, Wall, 2007, Kellner, 2003). In other words, the new media technologies have 'the potential to reconfigure communicative power relations', challenging the monopoly control of media production and dissemination by state and commercial institutions (Loader and Mercea, 2011:1, Etling et al., 2010:45).

However, the use of digital tools does not diminish the ability of the state to fight back against leaders and disrupt social organisation, using tactics such as denying access to the Internet, or software-based surveillance of the social network sites. It has been revealed that Mexico, during Calderón's government from 2006-2012, invested €5,808,875 to spy on activists, journalists and others whom the government considers an enemy.[3] Even against the obstacles imposed by the government, however, citizens are still empowered to contest discourse, share alternative viewpoints and disseminate their own opinions (Loader and Mercea, 2011:3), and can undertake 'the development of multiple critical public spheres' (della Porta, 2011:44).

It is important to remark that social movements can be part of the creation of new complex spaces as a result of the mixture of urban spaces and social network sites, in what Castells (2012:11) has called a 'hybrid space', where both spaces are connected to create

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[3] Cabrera, Á. (15 July 2015) Lidera México compra de sistemas de espionaje, *24 Horas*. Retrieved from http://www.24-horas.mx/lidera-mexico-compra-de-sistemas-de-espionaje/ (Accessed 30 August 2015)

'interaction, constituting, technologically and culturally, instant communities of transformative practice'. Chadwick (2006) calls it 'organizational hybrity', saying that 'a growing number of contemporary social movements and interest groups are integrating both online and real-world tactics into their organizational models'. As Fuchs (2014b:158) puts it, 'online communication and face-to-face communication for these purposes tend to mutually reinforce each other'. This implies that neither form of communication operates separately, instead they complement each other, although their dynamics function with their own particularities, for example the speed at which information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to spread a message, or the massive audiences that an online message can reach.

Academics are debating the political opportunities fostered by the new media ecology for 'dissenting voices and views from around the world', noting that 'these are communicated globally through complex networks linking alternative and mainstream news media and other communication flows' (Cottle, 2008:859). This idea has arisen as a result of the addition of 'new communicative ingredients into the media ecology mix as well as the possibilities for new forms of politics and protests' (Cottle, 2008:860). The author further express the idea that this media ecology includes different channels of communication that overlap, both horizontal and vertical communication flows with new international capabilities, oriented towards local, national, international and global audiences. As a consequence, the demonstrations and protests can be seen to be distinct in relation to their specific geographical scopes, from the local to the global.

Authors such as Mejías (2012) offer an alternative view, suggesting that there is a dense structure in these new communication technologies that does not allow people to liberate themselves from the forms in which capitalism operates, expressing the view that:

> [By presenting] these technologies as nothing less than the agents of liberation, a critique
> of the capitalist institutions and superstructures in which these technologies operate is
> obscured, and this critique is necessary for understanding the relationship between
> capitalism and ICTs, as well as for opening up new frontiers of liberation.

Cammaerts (2008:372) argues that new technologies always come with high expectations and strong claims about their potential to foster democracy and emancipation. This was the case with radio, television, video, and is now also the case with the Internet.

The relevance of media corporations is a key point for della Porta (2011:806), who suggests that the 'control of the media and of symbolic production [...] becomes both an

essential premise for any attempt at political mobilisation and an autonomous source of conflict'. For the author, mass media play a central role for social movements because they provide a context that can influence and shape public opinion; for this reason the amount of media attention that a social movement receives has an impact on the success of a protest action. Social movements can sometimes have a limited capacity to influence mass media, because they can be biased against such movements.

Garret (2006:207) emphasises another viewpoint, looking at the significance of the acceleration of media access across large geographic areas, and how it makes possible the communication of social movements' information and protests. The author argues that 'news coverage of protest activity in one location can increase issue salience across a much broader region, potentially motivating future actions elsewhere'. Mainstream media are interacting with the social networks used by the activists, notably by encouraging observers or even the activists themselves to contribute to the newscast and to continually post news, images or opinions on their websites (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). The success of collective protest action still depends on a mass-media logic that requires a more centralist approach to politics, aiming at a mass-media audience based on the mobilising power of large, professionalized and well-known civil society organisations (Baringhorst, 2008:78).

Pleyers (2014:1) expresses the opinion that 'the social networks and the Internet have not replaced mass media', and that alternative and activist media have grasped massive audiences only when they gain the attention of and coverage from mainstream media. These statements do not decrease the value of new technologies and social networks for contemporary actors and societies; instead, they suggest 'that attention should be directed towards the intersection and interplay of online and offline actions; towards the intersection and interplay between the Internet and *in situ*'.

Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993:115-116, 121) highlight the importance of the specific culture of the social movements and how this culture could clash with the 'political culture of the mainstream media'. In this view, social movements depend significantly on the greater power of the media system because it gives them the role of central actor in any mobilisation. The nonexistence of media coverage of a demonstration renders the demonstration as an event that effectively never happened, taking into account that media coverage would be helpful to mobilise followers and obtain the activists' aims. The authors point out the importance of having 'influential resources, organisation, professionalism, coordination, and organisation

strategy' to garner enthusiastic media coverage of significant events and issues. One of the aspects of greater interest to the media, especially television, is to emphasise 'spectacle and confrontation'. 'Spectacle means drama and confrontation, emotional events involving people who have fire in the belly, who are extravagant and unpredictable' (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993:124). This kind of media coverage, however, could portray the complexity of the social movement in a diminished fashion, for example, their aims could be presented in a misunderstood fashion or with prejudices.

From the same perspective, for Tufekci (2013:854) mobilisation through mass media is likely to generate struggles because of the 'mainstreaming' of content required to reach different audiences outside of the social movement: 'mobilising messages can strike the wrong tone for mass media or may seem superfluous'.

For Rucht (2004:45), the relation between protests and mass media is 'breakable and unequal'. The mainstream media selects 'groups, issues, and actions according to their own criteria' (Rucht, 2004:45), as such social movements could be ignored when they do not follow these criteria, and as a result be exposed to damaging coverage or no coverage at all.

Atton (2003:8) suggests that the 'ideologies and practices of social movement actors become simplified' and homogenised by the mainstream media, which tends not to explore the 'complex, unstable and 'structurally undetermined' components of these protests'; as such, mainstream framing devices render profounder explorations of social movement activity unavailable. By homogenising varieties of dissent, the mass media reify protest and limit the richness of ideologies and actions, often through an inexact simplification.

Another level of complexity in any understanding of the relationship between the mainstream media and social movements is the overlapping of the social media practices that are developed in parallel with the mainstream media at several levels, such as local, national, and transnational. In this form, activists become the 'producers of media content and messages' (Kavada, 2013:65), contributing with their own identifications in the struggles that the journalists published allowing them to have agency in the social movements. However, Reguillo (2015) in an interview made by Bernardo Gutiérrez, stresses that in some recent social movements, such as the Mexican youth mobilisation #YoSoy132, the activists become their own writers and journalists. These actions are novel, and by becoming their own producers of messaging, they interrupt the monopoly of the mainstream media.

From an opposite position, Milan (2013:1) points out that these platforms are influenced and restrained by 'media and telecoms corporations' because their objectives relate to profits and joint interests, not to the support of 'participation, empowerment, and social justice'. However, within this scenario the activists have confronted 'media corporations and state-owned broadcasters on their own terrain', by creating other possibilities to the current 'communication infrastructures' by using a broad variety of alternative media. Youmans and York (2012:317) affirm that 'changes in platform architecture may introduce new or expand previous constraints for activist users, thus affecting the risks and effectiveness of their efforts': suggesting that platforms are not designed to provide the communication and information needs of the activist users as a direct consequence of the impact of the political economy of media corporations.

Conceptually, for Cammaerts (2006:220a), to understand the density of the exhibition of civil society actors and their strategies and aims, concepts such as 'online/offline, alternative media/mainstream media, new media/old media, need to be overcome'. To have successful activities, it is important that activists have their 'own means of communication and self-representation', while still being aware of when it is sensible to use 'the mainstream media in order to communicate beyond the cosy circle of likeminded sympathizers'.

Nevertheless, the author states that 'media and communication usually feature as one of the peripheral factors that influence the degree of political opportunity for a social movement to succeed' (Cammaerts, 2012:139). From a mediation perspective, an ultra-saturated media and communication environment provides a wide range of opportunities for activists to counteract with their own narratives, to exercise their agency, to self-represent themselves in the terms they choose and to confront the structural limitations (Cammaerts, 2012).

Cammaerts (2012:122) analyses 'the opportunities and constraints in terms of mediation' on 'three interlinked levels of analysis' to determine the logics of action. The first level of analysis refers to the media opportunity structure and relates to the mainstream media representation of protest, concentrating on the different forms that activists use to create interest in the media by 'producing spectacle through a show of numbers, through inflicting damage or through bearing witness to injustice'. The second level focuses its attention on 'the discursive opportunity structure and focuses on strategies of self-mediation geared towards producing counter-narratives and disseminating them independently from the mainstream media organizations'. The third level relates to the 'networked opportunity structure and addresses

resistance practices mediated through technology'. This is relevant to my thesis because it explains the availability of mainstream media and digital media opportunity structures for the creation of counter narratives, the attraction of coverage by the mainstream media and the potential for network activism to counteract the dominant media narratives to empower the collective identity to mobilise.

Rheingold (2008) affirms that the most significant problem about the upcoming regarding the augmentation of 'collective action through the use of the Internet and mobile communications is the degree to which trustworthy and accurate information can be distinguished and screened from misleading or false information', or information without a reliable source. The techno-social progress towards increasing the trustworthiness of information through many-to-many media could magnify the positive potential of populations using these technologies to achieve their ends in democratic, cooperative, or at least nonviolent ways. To the extent that accuracy of information cannot be determined, the positive potential of these powerful technologies may be blunted if not turned against itself.

In the same discursive area, Dean (2005:55) uses the term 'communicative capitalism' to designate 'a form of late capitalism in which values heralded as central to democracy take material form in networked communications technologies' (Dean, 2002a; 2002b). The author explains that this communicative capitalism coexists with the idea that 'access, inclusion, discussion and participation' are possible by expanding, intensifying and interconnecting global telecommunications, but she stresses that these communication practices, far from equally enabling different modes of living and practices of freedom, instead '[undermine] political opportunity and efficacy for most of the world's peoples'.

Dean (2005:58, 60) further states that the publishing or sharing of information by individuals on digital platforms positions the flow of messages as a type of 'communicative action'. The author suggests that people can perceive 'that they are active and making a transformation by merely 'clicking on a button, adding their name to a petition or commenting on a blog', having as a result a passive activism that does not progress further into other kinds of action offline. This passive form of activism can lead to the attribution to the new communication technologies powers that they do not have. As the author expresses it:

> The frantic activity of the fetish works to prevent actual action, to prevent something from
> really happening. This suggests to me the way activity on the Net, frantic contributing
> and content circulation, may well involve a profound passivity, one that is interconnected,

linked, but passive nonetheless (Dean, 2005:58, 60).

In this manner, social media content can be published on the Internet with influence on collective action, just by creating expectations, and as a result information that could well be false can produce, for example, many 'likes' on Facebook. Dean (2005:58, 60) refers to the 'frantic activity of the fetish' as imbuing new communication technologies with magical features that they do not have. An example of this can be seen in the case of the 'Kony 2012' video, a video campaign produced by a non-profit organisation called Invisible Children. This video went viral, and came under criticism for the simplification of events in the region of Africa, and was accused of deliberately producing a sense of engagement in the campaign from the donation of money, or other similar actions that had little or no effect beyond making people contribute to the cause. In consequence, the potential uses of social media for collective action might in some cases be an illusion rather than a reality.

Another critical perspective of social media capabilities comes from Fuchs (2014b:158-159), who argues that alternative social media afford independence by allowing critical voices, 'but often suffer from a lack of public attention visibility. They are confronted with a structural form of censorship and discrimination immanent in capitalism that benefits large, resourceful, profitable, visible corporate media at the expense of alternative media'. He goes on to remark on the need of 'non-commercial alternative media platforms in order to make activists independent from corporate and state control'. Fuchs (2014b:158) also points out that '[there] is a fundamental contradiction between commercial social media's potential that activists can use for reaching out to a broad public on the one hand and the risks that commercial platforms deliberately or algorithmically censor activists' communications and that the police monitors or infiltrates social movements on these platforms.' These ideas relate to the perspective of Hands (2011) concerning the inexistence social media miracles as fundamentally connecting and liberating people. It can be seen that there is a fragility to some of the political alliances constructed online, and authors have examined the failure of the available technology to protect some Internet activists from government surveillance (Zuckerman, 2010, Gladwell, 2010, Morozov, 2009).

Morozov (2011) defines 'cyber-utopianism' as an optimistic vision about the of the effectiveness Internet for collective action, one that believes that new communication technologies help the oppressed rather than the authoritarians. For the author, this concept of cyber-utopianism is understood as 'a naïve belief in the emancipatory nature of online

communication that rests on a stubborn refusal to acknowledge its downside'. Morozov (2011:19) observes that 'cyber-utopians did not predict how useful the Internet would prove for propaganda purposes, how masterfully dictators would use it for surveillance, and how sophisticated modern forms of Internet censorship would become'. While for the author this 'cyber-utopianism' is an illusion, he notes that '[it] would be very misleading to suggest that all the connections forged by these activists are virtual. Revolution is much more about building human networks' (Morozov, 2011:21). For Pickerill (2006:276), activists are progressively recognising that they essentially need to be intelligent to gain attention for their online actions (e.g. through encryption), keep their data safe and develop novel strategies to ensure their privacy is protected and there is controlled disclosure of personal information. .

From another perspective, Tilly (2004:97-98) suggests the avoidance of technological determinism and the recognition that 'most new features in social movements result from alterations in their social and political contexts rather than from technical innovations as such'. He also observes that in other centuries before the twenty-first, 'communications innovations' operated in two-sided forms, on the one hand, reducing the costs of coordination between activists who are already connected and on the other excluding people who lack access to the new means of communications, furthering communications inequality (Fenton, 2008: 238). Another aspect that affects and limits the use of social network sites for collective action arises from the observation that the 'actual consequences of these functions depend on various features of the actual context (political regime, nature of the issues, spread of media usage etc.)' (García et al., 2013:10).The majority of the world is still excluded from cyberspace and hence depends on a real-world elite. In 2014, the population of the Internet was estimated at 2,925,249,355 (elaboration of data by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Population Division), representing an access rate of 40%. In the case of Mexico, the Internet population is estimated at 50,923,060, or 41.13% of the population. All in all, a vast part of the population has no access to the Internet, representing a limitation of its potential for advocating for social change. In addition, another restriction on the use of social software and digital networks for political protest or participation can potentially be found in the ideologies, cultural and political contexts of its users and developers (Neumayer and Raffl, 2008:11, Faris et al., 2008:72).Fuchs (2013:207) stresses that social media are not the source of revolutions or protests, because they are rooted in ambiguities and the power structures of contemporary society, meaning that 'they do not necessarily and automatically support/amplify or dampen/limit rebellions, but rather pose contradictory potentials that stand

in contradiction with influences by the state, ideology, capitalism and other media'.Boyd (2008:115-116) highlights the idea that instead of idealizing the notion that 'social network sites will be a cultural and democratic panacea', it is more important 'to focus on the causes of alienation and disillusionment that stop people from participating in communal and civic life'.

According to Carty (2010:160), even though there are pros and cons to new technology and communication systems, there is enough indication that the Internet has resulted in a significant shift in 'communication capacity and potential for political organizing'. The multiplying of mass-media and ICTs has intensely altered the way information is sent, received, and accessed, and this has at least compromised 'the ability of the media, cultural, and political institutions to ensure hegemony'.

1.3 Transformations of Social Movements in the Era of the Internet and Social Media

This section discusses the theoretical background concerning transformations of social movements through the use of the Internet and social media, bringing to the debate the different modes in which people nowadays can be connected, making possible new ideas of how public space is related to the use of new communication technologies and how people can engage in social movements as a result of those changes, and how the building of identity is renovated. In addition, social movement organisations confront new challenges for their communication strategies, because of the modifications in the fast speed of the flow of online messages.

Social media platforms do connect unrelated people who have common ideas. For Lim (2014:51), the key point of transformation is located in the 'social media spaces' wherein she says 'the movements themselves took form, materialised and claimed power far outside digital social networks. They appeared in public urban spaces, on the streets and in the squares'. Lim suggests that the social media is not in itself an end, instead it offers a 'new layer of space where (communication and information based) non-corporeal activities can take place'. Another relevant aspect that has changed the dynamics of social movements, according to Gerbaudo (2012:138), is that 'the liquid character of the information flow' affects the long-term maintenance of it. The author took Bauman's (2000) concept of 'liquidity' and applied it to the ephemeral nature of social media messages. Gerbaudo (2012) gives as an example of this phenomena the Al-Jazeera English TV programme on social media and activism. The messages on the programme are circulating, in that they appear for a few moments and flow

across the screen constantly. Such short-lived messaging is the reason for Gerbaudo's (2012) questioning of the long-term potential for contemporary social movements.

For Diani (2000:393-394), new technologies of communication might increase the usefulness of communication to ordinary supporters, and maybe reinforce their sympathy by proposing some opening 'for a modest involvement in the organisational debate, but have no major impact in terms of identity building and maintenance'. Continuous collective action is not possible to initiate from only 'virtual ties if they are not sustained by previous interaction' – as many suggest to be the case most of the time.

Enjolras et al. (2012:2-3) highlight a differentiation between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0, suggesting that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have another structure that allows particular properties and functionalities, while the studies on Web 1.0 have focussed their attention on the 'impact of traditional Internet websites on political engagement'. This is relevant because the effectiveness of the study of online communication practices of social movements can be expanded by an extensive variety of forms to be explored and researched.

However, for Stein (2009:764), social movement organisations might have doubts about the efficacy of the Internet as a communication instrument, selecting in its place face-to-face communication contact, print material or other forms of communication. For Van Aelst and Walgrave (2004), there were few opportunities for interaction and dialogue through digital media. Additionally, Stein (2009) analysed social movement organisations' websites, and indicated that, with the exception of providing information, the greater part of SMOs exhibited low interactivity.

For Gerbaudo (2013:9), social media tools are useful for 'complementing existing forms of face-to-face gatherings [...] and as a vehicle for the creation of new forms of proximity and face-to-face interaction'. For Mosca (2010:16), 'sometimes the capacity of the Internet to inform and mobilise people in the streets is overestimated'. In his findings of the research *From the Streets to the Net? The Political Use of the Internet by Social Movements*, he noticed that 'nobody thought that the Internet could replace face-to-face communication' even though it increases the possibility and frequency of communication among isolated individuals.

An additional relevant transformation of social movement organisation is that 'personal identity narratives' are replacing 'collective social scripts' and group identities as the centre for social organisation (Poell and Borra, 2011:701). One of the most well-known forms for promoting collective action in online spaces is through publishing 'reports, photographs or

video images online', by which 'a whole new range of people can share in the excitement in the run-up of an action or after a protest event took place as a result of which support may develop' (Van Laer, 2007:7).

In addition, every type of network organisation may engage with technologies in a different way dependent on 'opportunity structures, ideological mixes of activists and organizations on the ground, presence of technology developers, and levels of state repression, among other factors' (Bennet and Segerberg, 2013:41). The way in which an organisation makes use of the Internet and digital media depends on the composition of the organisation. Specifically, organisations that are 'older, larger, resource-rich, and strategically linked to party and government politics may rely on Internet-based communications mostly to amplify and reduce the costs of pre-existing communication routines', while 'newer, resource-poor organizations that tend to reject conventional politics may be defined in important ways by their Internet presence' (Bennet, 2003:5).

There is scepticism towards the idea that unconsolidated 'multi-issue networks that are easy to opt in and out of generate the commitment, coherence, and persistence of action required to produce political change' (Bennet and Segerberg, 2012:773). One of the reasons is because 'online consensus is harder to attain' (Pickerill, 2006:273), for example in the offline space the use of expressions and gestures in face-to-face discussions during the decision-making process might be helpful to support reaching a consensus, while in the online environment these signs are tougher to measure and communicate. Another disadvantage to online discussions is that they might be faster to generate conflicts than face-to-face contact. Kavada (2010:111) states that ' [interaction] on e-mail lists often involves the exchange of insults rather than opinions—a phenomenon called "flaming" [which] can disrupt group communication and dissolve relationships of trust'.

Loong Wong (2001:387) discusses the capability of activists to independently transmit information without having to rely on traditional media channels, and the extent to which such a capacity could magnify 'political agency'. It is important to note that even when the Internet becomes a tool for contacting audiences, it does not change the audience-generation process itself: 'none of the cost reductions, accelerated speed, or broad distribution leads to qualitative changes in the processes underlying activism' (Earl, 2011:25). It should further be noted that these capabilities are not intrinsic to online tools but depend on the skills, attitudes, and culture of the activists employing them (Kavada, 2010:118).

The process of organising social movements is still understood according to the same processes detailed in the literature concerning organisation that takes place entirely offline (Earl, 2011:26). Technologies do not inevitably lead to specific social or political changes. Instead, people's uses of communication technology lead to different types of social and political changes (Earl, 2011). Research thus far has concluded that it has been rare that online information alone has triggered the participation of those who had no other links to activism (Pickerill, 2006:272).

1.4   Participation in Social Movements and Social Media

Participation in social movements is a key concept considered by theorists in the debate on the role played by the Internet and social media in social movements. For Tobias (2011:10-11, 15), 'participation has become a key concept used to frame the emerging media practice'. This signifies that people have become 'active participants and agents of cultural production on the Internet'. For the author, participation is 'a rhetoric of progress employed for promoting computer technology and the Internet'. Tobias (2011:16) defines participation by considering three essential elements:

> Looking at participation in its various forms in the domain of digital media in light of the dispositif means to describe a variety of formations of different relations between three domains, namely the domain of discourses (popular, scholarly, bureaucratic, legal...), technology (basic features and design) and people and social use (what users actually do with the new technologies).

The author expresses the view that participation is 'used for promoting the new technology and explaining alleged beneficial effects to large audiences' (Tobias, 2011:30), saying that as a result the concept has created a 'promise imaginary' that signifies the form that 'opinion leaders' use to 'communicate about new media to their audiences' and affects 'the way engineers design technology'. In addition, the idea of participation as a promise signifies for the author a 'discourse inherent in the implementation of the Internet and the World Wide Web, and it is also inherent in the developers' culture and the many design decisions they make while constructing these technologies' (Tobias, 2011:30). This conception implies a social development and the decrease of inequality. For the decade from 1990-2001 participation was defined as 'access and connectivity'. All in all, participation was presented as 'a major rhetorical trope in promoting the information revolution' (Tobias, 2011:31). It was not until

the appearance of the Web 2.0 that 'the narrative of participation shifted from emphasizing access to emphasizing collaboration and collective action' (Tobias, 2011:35).

For social movements, participation is considered 'a key concept to democratization and the balancing of inequalities in society, dating back to the civil revolutions and rebellions of the 18th century' (Tobias, 2011:41). In addition, for Castells (2012:15), the increase of participation is related to the availability of 'more interactive and self-configurable communication' that allows less hierarchical organisation. In contrast, Gerbaudo (2012:26) points out that this definition of 'self-generating and self-organizing' participation is similar to 'the journalistic cliché of the Facebook (or Twitter) revolution', that is, a techno-visionary position that does not capture 'the contemporary forms of collective action'. All in all, participation is significantly 'channelled through often dense social networks over which people can share their own stories and concerns—the pervasive use of social technology enables individuals to become important catalysts of collective action processes as they activate their own social networks' (Bennett, 2012:22).

Baringhorst (2008:78, 81) argues that although the Internet could be used by anyone who would like to take part in politically participatory activities, not all civil society organisations and action networks make use of it in the same way. For example, sometimes protest organisers have to plan actions secretly and cannot discuss them on Internet forums, mailing lists or social network sites as these are already covered by the everyday observation procedure of big companies and the government. One of the most common uses for the Internet by the activist campaigners is spreading critical background information on scandals. .

One of the ways in which the Internet supports political participation in digital activism is directly related to the collective identity. Garret (2006) suggests three potential mechanisms concerning technologies of communication and participation in the promotion of collective identity. The first of these is the 'reduction of participation costs' (Garret, 2006:4-7), against which Bimber (2001:205) argues that 'having access to more information at lower costs, will not significantly influence participation levels', because people have a restricted ability to absorb information analytically.

The second mechanism Garret presents relates to the perception among individuals that they are members of a larger community by virtue of the grievances they share. ICTs may be able to foster collective identity across a dispersed population, which organisers can then mobilise in support of collective action. The third mechanism identified by the author is the

facilitation of community creation by ICTs. The author stresses that 'online community members report that their experiences with these groups significantly reinforce existing social networks, while simultaneously allowing them to connect with those who hold different views' (Garret, 2006:206). This suggests that the Internet can strengthen the possibility of activists and sympathizers joining a given cause.

The opportunity, then, to contribute on the Internet allows people to organise via the decentred ties of social media, creating 'a kaleidoscopic collage of social worlds across a vast array of millions of public screens' (DeLuca et al., 2012:501). Social media do not promise magically the possibility to influence others, but rather the opportunity of creating new social worlds (DeLuca et al., 2012).

Gaby and Caren (2012:6) consider that the mixture of an extensive, dense network of potential supporters and a medium that supports 'contributions and sharing makes dominant social networking sites', for example Facebook and Twitter, 'unique and powerful resources for movements'. Participation can be both online and offline, but the online participation is often about moving people to action offline. It is about building relationships and forging community rather than simply providing information (Fenton, 2008:236, 238). Many of the high-profile protests take place at distant locations – only those protesters with funds for travel can get to them, and as these protests are often organised on the Internet, the economic and cultural resources involved in the use of this technology also exclude many potential participants (Juris, 2005:196). As such, 'complex planning, political discussions, and relationship building often took place within physical settings'. As observed by Loader (2008:1930-1931):

> There is little evidence to suggest totally new forms of separate online or virtual social movements. Rather, we may say that new media are becoming a constituent part of the internal and external communications strategies of SMs (…) We are likely to witness more complementary online and offline SM activism.

The core activists closest to the organisational centre of a contentious event are more likely to use new technologies of communication for political reasons, and these same people are disproportionally engaged in other movement organisations and committed to other protest issues. They can adaptably follow ongoing struggles and adopt other issues (Walgrave et al., 2011). Some activists rely on new technologies of communication to manage their diverse commitments, reinforcing the idea that digital media are important for both internal and

external linkage. As for peripheral members and outsiders, the Internet removes some restrictions to participation, which means that movements can sometimes be transformed by an influx of new members and sympathizers (Brunsting and Postmes, 2002:532).

Walgrave et al. (2011:36) suggest that the widespread adoption of new technologies of communication in the social movement sector may have profound consequences for how social movements and their constituents interact, pointing to a possible shift in the burden of mobilisation and activism from organisations towards individuals. For example, in the perspective of Brunsting and Postmes (2002), the Internet changes the nature of collective action, and, contrary to popular belief, the Internet would appear to be especially suited to persuasive collective action rather than confrontational action, for example actions such as 'letter writing, lobbying, and petitioning, whose primary purpose is to persuade others that certain viewpoints are worth considering' (Brunsting and Postmes, 2002:291), and also the strategies taken to solve issues within the internal groups of the collective. Confrontational actions are taken to include direct activities such as blockades or sabotage strategies.

Some theorists of social movements in contemporary societies (Castells, 2012:225, Enjolras et al., 2012:2-3, della Porta, 2011:50) have examined the idea that there has been a transformation of participation through the use of the Internet and social media. One issue relates to the lack of leadership, creating 'togetherness' as a source of empowerment, cooperation and solidarity without the necessity of leaders (Castells: 2012:225, della Porta, 2011:50). In Gerbaudo's (2013:144) interpretation of social media leadership, he argues that they give the impression of the absence of leaders because accounts are created with anonymous or collective names, but in fact are created and managed by a core group of organisers who communicate, interact, share and participate. When this leadership is present only in this way, while activists can 'select specific activities to reflect their individuality, it may also render social movements more fragile, contradictory and unstable' (Milan, 2015:9).

The idea of horizontality as presented by Gerbaudo (2013:25) creates 'an ideological obstacle for understanding the dynamics of the contemporary space of participation', arguing that there are people who control the communication flow, where a form of leadership is disclosed by the 'channelling and triggering of participant's emotionality' (Gerbaudo, 2013:135). Social media participation does not mean that the people have the same level of power on collective action. There is often a leadership presence in the early phases of a social movement, which operates the process of mobilisation (Gerbaudo, 2013:141).

García et al. (2013:8) point out that the extensive 'transmission of protest information and images' through social media, especially when they are 'emotionally charged', is particularly critical when it comes to the decision to participate for another purpose: it may help overwhelm the weakening effect of social isolation. Particularly in oppressive regimes where a lack of social action is enforced through fear, strengthening the awareness concerning what other people think about mutual injustices may, therefore, inspire people who are normally cautious to establish an opinion and to participate in debates or even actions.

However, for White (2010a), digital activism as a form of political engagement depends on people going beyond clicking a few links on social networking sites, seeing this practice as an illusion engendering the belief that such small actions could change the world. This has been termed 'clicktivism', where online campaigns have the objective of expanding and increasing participation by the numbers of clicks, but not to transform the status quo (White, 2010b). Real-world action for the author is the only way to achieve social change, the actions that create an impact are those that are made on the streets.

All in all, White (2010) does not take into account that participation through digital activism could be in a mixed form, combining online and offline participation. Mercea (2012) calls this hybrid form of participation 'digital prefigurative participation', defining it as 'the entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events', and more specifically as collaboration with content or individuals through computer-mediated communication which comes before engagement in offline protest (Mercea, 2012:155). This conceptualisation does not separate the two forms of participation but instead sees them enriched as a connected pair. Furthermore, Garret (2006:5) suggests that online tools have the potential to modify:

> [The] flow of political information, to reduce the cost of conventional forms of participation, and to create new low-cost forms of participation, ultimately contributing to an upsurge in participation. [By] lowering communication and coordination costs, ICTs facilitate group formation, recruitment, and retention while improving group efficiency, all of which contribute to increasing political participation.

Bimber (1998:155-156) criticises the theory of accelerated pluralism, stating that the 'increased communication and information flow brought by the Internet will not change the basic logic of pluralism', suggesting that the Internet does not change the fact that 'most people

are highly selective in their attention to political issues and their assimilation of information; they tend to care relatively intensely about a few issues while remaining disinterested and uninformed about most'. This suggests that the interest in a given political issue for people is not automatically affected by the flow and amount of information that is on the Internet.

A controversial point around participation that exposes its inequality is the potential for loss of freedom of speech and security. In the context of social movements for peace in Mexico, for example, Monroy-Hernández et al. (2013:8) have found that what 'Mexican citizens are experiencing is the type of information ecosystem that is normally felt by criminals in an environment where they might get caught/punished'. They further suggest that the designers of social media such as Twitter need to create spaces where it is safer to express valuable information, that permit 'free speech, rights, freedoms, and protections in a digital ecosystem' (Monroy-Hernández et al., 2013:8), with one specific issue being the need to protect the identity of authors who may otherwise be identified.

In the same manner, Mejías (2011) indicates that 'companies [...] are not obliged to guarantee any human rights, and their terms of use give them carte blanche to curtail the speech of certain users'. The author explains that even though the Internet's original architecture stimulated openness, it is becoming increasingly privatized and centralized. While it is true that an Internet controlled by a handful of media conglomerates can still be used to promote democracy (as people are doing in Tunisia, Egypt, and in other parts of the world), a reconsideration must be made of the role that social media corporations like Facebook and Twitter will play in these struggles.

In the end, as Kellner (2003:191) suggests, 'the political battles of the future may well be fought in the streets, factories, parliaments and other sites of past conflicts, but political struggle is now mediated by media, computer and information technologies, and increasingly will be so'. Politics and culture will play an essential role in computer-mediated techno politics, and collective action must be understood in the context of these two elements: physical spaces and virtual ones.

In contexts of social dissent and social change, collective uses of media technologies include a complex mesh of different modes of communication. During fieldwork, however, these notions of communication understood as simply 'information' or 'reporting' became too narrow and myopic and gave way to a much more complex understanding of communication. With media being designed in order to trigger or cultivate specific processes, community

communicators understand that they need to use the full battery of forms of communication: persuasive communication along with diffusion of information, participatory communication, communication that empowers, communication that mobilises, and citizens' journalism (Rodríguez et al., 2014:159-160).

Rodríguez et al. (2014:152) criticise the enthusiasm around 'the availability and effectiveness of Web 2.0 platforms' that does not take into account 'the risks of neglecting historical context'; these authors encourage researchers 'to take into account the political economy frameworks of ICTs' because the definitions of communication have become overly simplistic, and in order to avoid 're-inventing the wheel' stress the need for 'grounding research on social movements and ICTs in the field of Communication for Social Change in order to avoid 're-inventing the wheel'. The focus on the 'newness' of novel technologies of communication reduces the 'contextual human relations that surround media', leaving only superficial explanations and technological determinism. An example of this thinking is found with terms such as 'Twitter revolution' or 'the cell phone revolution', effectively removing 'historical contexts and passion(s) of politics as technology becomes equated with political action [...] Subsequently, human agency is rendered invisible. The speed and efficiency of new technologies overshadows more complex issues, politics, and dynamics' (Rodríguez et al., 2014:152-153).

In the same form, they suggest that social movements and their uses of ICTs have become a gold mine for researchers looking for big data. What is needed, they argue, is for research 'to recognize that this type of data is insufficient for answering complex research questions about the cultural negotiations, hegemonic forces, anti-hegemonic resistances, and political economy frameworks that traverse uses of media technologies'. They go on to suggest that 'we can never forget how ICTs are shaped and moulded by regulatory regimes, international trade, corporate greed, and intrusive surveillance practices on the parts of both financial and political powers' (Rodríguez et al., 2014:152-153).

1.5   New Conceptualisations to Understand the Role of Social Media in Social Movements

Recent conceptualisations have been constructed to explore the relation between social movements and new communication technologies. This part of the thesis aims to contribute to

an understanding of how contemporary constituted elements of social movements have evolved in their forms of organisation, and the way they make claims and construct the collective identity with the support of digital tools.

Fuchs (2012:780) emphasises that to comprehend the role of social media in social movements it is fundamental to have a 'general theoretical model of mediated communication in social movements' taking into account empirical studies that validate these models and avoiding a 'communication centric position' that lacks a wider context of society, specifically 'its political economy' (Fuchs, 2012:776). While there is no model that fully explains the role of social media in social movements, there have been some authors (Juris, 2012, Gerbaudo, 2013, Postill, 2014, Rodríguez, 2011, Downing, 2010) who have suggested concepts which might be helpful when examining the complexity of social movements and the role of technologies of communication.

For instance, Juris (2012:266) offers the concept of a 'logic of aggregation' which consists of the accumulation of multitudes of persons from varied experiences within physical spaces, and is based on the idea that networking technologies shape 'new political subjectivities' that create a convergence amongst 'network norms, forms, and technologies'. This logic of aggregation is an 'alternative cultural framework' through which to undertake interactions on social media, and produces 'particular patterns of social and political interaction that involve the viral flow of information'. As a consequence, individuals produce a collective subjectivity over the process of struggle, although this subjectivity is fragile as the networks are not solid in terms of the logic of aggregation, underscoring the relevance of community building and communication in physical spaces (Juris, 2012).

Gerbaudo (2013:40-41) conceives of the 'choreography of assembly' to explain that social media's uses in social movements cannot be understood only at the level of the distribution of information or the logistics of organising protest events, but instead as a 'cultural narrative that requires the construction of common collective identifications among participants'. In this form, social media offer to maintain a 'sense of emotional attraction to the mass sit-ins' (Gerbaudo, 2013:44). He affirms that Facebook pages, tweets and posts create an 'emotional texture' connecting the people in the public space, which is converted into a 'political passion' through all these online conversations with emotional elements, enabling collective action in public spaces.

Furthermore, Gerbaudo (2013:162, 168) points out that the role of social media rests in the construction of an emotional sense of togetherness between the participants; there is no software or social networking service that can explain what makes people empowered in a process of mobilisation. Gerbaudo concludes that the process of mobilisation always implies 'inequalities and asymmetries', these mean that there are people more involved in the process of collective action, different levels of engagement, leaders, and people who follow those leaders. This suggests that it is necessary to avoid the 'imaginary of horizontal networks'.

One more concept used by Enjolras et al. (2012:4) is that of 'information cascades'. The structures of social media can be seen to encourage this process because 'users can easily observe what their connections do, make inferences and decisions on the basis of these observations, which in turn are propagated further along the network'. One of the effectiveness of this concept is that through the information cascades, people can not only be motivated to communicate or distribute communication, but also be motivated towards collective action.

In addition, social media could be considered essentially as 'supplements' to the 'organizational establishment' and to the 'mainstream media' as information assemblages that support mobilisation. A key factor on posting into these information cascades is that when users notice that a story is commented on at a higher rate, they will have a tendency to comment on that story (Velásquez, 2012). Velásquez notices more generally that 'particular behaviour tend to converge towards that same behaviour, noticing the sequence of behaviour in the social network and following the norm of sharing contents established in the group' (Velásquez, 2012:1291).

An additional concept related to how collective action has been transformed is called 'connective action networks'. Such a network centres its focus on the individuals and how the individuals can create collective action processes without the necessity of collective identity (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013:32). Moreover, this concept involves 'the widespread adoption of digital media', which the authors note 'may be shifting the burden of mobilization from organizations to individuals' (Bennett and Segerberg, 2011:772).

Bennett and Segerberg (2011) and Walgrave et al. (2011:38) consider that personalised communications provide the opportunity for individuals to express issues from their own perspective for the purpose of networking their visions with others through social media, in search of '(a) the presence of cues and opportunities for customization of engagement with issues and actions; and (b) the relative absence of cues (including action frames) that signal

ideological and definitional unanimity'. As such, the benefits of this personalised communication are in 'terms of speed of mobilisation, scope of issues, and the ability to focus public attention on these issues in the short term', although the authors warn that they may also 'undermine conventional political capacity such as maintaining agenda focus and strong coalition relationships' (Bennet and Segerberg, 2012:772-773).

Rodríguez (2011:3) has created a concept dubbed the 'citizens' media', saying that it'[facilitates] communication processes in which civilians recreate traditional solidarities and form new ones, return to public places that have been abandoned in terror, and organize collective actions. ICTs trigger communal processes to bring civilians, one step at a time, out of the isolation and terror imposed by armed violence and back into the public sphere'. This concept of participatory media differentiates from any other kind of participatory media, because it focuses its attention specifically on a context of violence. Indeed, it was in the context of the violence of the Colombian drug war that the concept was coined.

Media can become powerful tools for empowering civilians to strengthen processes of governance, transparency, and accountability. These technologies have the potential to transform private political and institutional processes into public-sphere events, thereby solidifying people's trust in democratic institutions and the rule of the law (Rodríguez, 2011:3). Alternative media emphasise processes of individual and collective empowerment and connect with theories of communication and social change (Rodríguez, 2011:23).

Citizens' media are communication spaces where citizens can learn to manipulate their own languages, signs, and symbols, empowering them to name the world in their own terms. Citizens' media can trigger processes that allow citizens to recodify their contexts and selves. These processes ultimately give citizens the opportunity to restructure their identities into empowered subjectivities strongly connected to local cultures and driven by well-defined, achievable utopias. In short, citizens' media are the media citizens use to activate communication processes that shape their local communities (Rodríguez, 2011:24).

Another conceptualisation has been created to explain the participatory media beyond a focus just on social networking sites and social media. This concept is called 'nanomedia', and was created by Downing and Mojca Pajnik (2009, 2010) as an attempt to lessen the obsession with the power of the mainstream and to understand the power of nanotechnologies in recent times. The authors state that the concept of nanomedia effectively emerged some centuries ago, giving examples including such media as 'the flyers [...] of the Protestant

Reformation in Germany; the jokes, songs and ribaldry of François Rabelais' marketplace; the revolutionary pamphlets of the English Civil War of the mid-1600s, and of the American and French revolutions' (Downing, 2010:2). The authors argue that all these kinds of participatory media, though alike, have been named in different ways, such as alternative media, citizens' media, tactical media, independent media, counter-information media, participatory media and third sector media.

Downing (2011a) suggests that we should see 'media' such as newspapers, magazines, cinema, radio, television, the Internet and cell phones, 'anthropologically', as socio-technical institutions instead of a 'thing'. The author stresses the importance of recognising the human body and its forms of communication, for example speaking, dancing, singing, banners, public art, etc., all of which it is possible to display in this range of technological devices. In this way, nanomedia as a device could have multiple meanings, depending on the form of human expression registered by it. He argues that seeing media as a thing is a conceptual 'prison'. The author recommends calling off the conceptualisations of alternative media, citizens' media, tactical media, and so on, due to the appearance in the middle of the last decade of the social networking of the Internet, such as YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, and hi5.

There have been several studies on how technologies of communication – specifically as used by bloggers – have had an impact on the struggles of the composition of digital democracy in the Arab world (Howard, 2010, Gholam, 2010)

Downing and Shirky's approaches emphasise the importance of digital technologies to empower people. Thus 'the more promising way to think about social media is as long-term tools that can strengthen civil society and the public sphere' (Shirky, 2010). From Downing's perspective, social movements need to be recognised and considered in the short term as 'collective intelligences' a term created from (Rheingold, 2002), while over the long term, given that social movements are formed to achieve certain goals, Downing suggests to scholars a new agenda of studies within these new elements.

Coopman (2011:6-7) called the participatory media 'dissent networks', in which dissent occurs over the exclusion of agreement to the existing mainstream media system, and the creation/adoption of an alternative system through the abandonment of the existing regime. Participants no longer consent to the confines of the existing regime's control. Specifically, a dissent network is an action-oriented, relational, heterogeneous network comprised of

homogeneous networks/nodes (individuals, groups, or organizations). These emerge via an unofficial consensus on the failure of existing institutions (state or private) or regimes of control to meet community needs, enabled and magnified by digital technology. A dissent network focuses on the creation or utilization of new repertoires of action and organisation to meet immediate community needs outside the bounds of existing regimes. These systems provide alternatives for participants and simultaneously challenge existing regimes merely by demonstrating that 'another world is possible.' This style of collective action that is based on the development of communication infrastructure to facilitate (intentionally or not) social change is seeping into commerce, through the use of Web 2.0 platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, but also into traditional politics, as in the 2008 US presidential campaign of Barack Obama.

Fuchs (2006:279) conceptualises the protest movements as 'self-organizing systems'. They are part of the system of civil society, but by producing alternative topics and demands they guarantee the dynamic of the political system. Protest movements are dynamic communication systems that permanently react to political and societal events with self-organized protest practices and protest communications that result in the emergence and differentiation (production and reproduction) of protest structures (events, oppositional topics, alternative values, regularized patterns of interaction and organization). The dynamic of social movements is based on the permanent emergence and mutual production of protest practices and protest structures. The self-organization of a social movement is a vivid process, it is based on the permanent movement and differentiation of actors and structures that communicate public protest; a social movement is only a movement as long as it communicates protest and moves itself. Postill (2013:6, 17) creates a conceptualisation on the new protest movements that is:

> [Summed] up with the acronym 3MP. The numeral '3' stands for the three leading categories of technology expert that I suggest are spearheading the global struggle for greater digital and democratic freedoms, namely (1) geeks and hackers, (2) copyleft lawyers and (3) technology journalists. Despite their obvious differences, these specialists all share a passion for the emancipatory potential of new and emergent digital technologies.

This strategy allows the identification of three main sectors of the new protest movements, namely (1) a techno-libertarian sector dominated by hackers, lawyers and journalists, (2) a middle sector made up of other knowledge specialists (both tech and non-

tech), and (3) the general populations of those countries in which, to use Mason's (2012) pertinent phrase, 'it all kicked off'.

It is important to mention that the studies that have been made on the relation of the social movements to social network sites and/or the Internet have been narrowly focussed on 'only one of the many online technological manifestations of social movements', which 'can risk overlooking important aspects such as the role and evolution of different platforms within a movement and the connections between multiple technologies, actors, and their practices' (Mattoni and Treré, 2014:255). This means that the studies used in this review only paid attention to one medium, whether websites, mailing lists, bulletin boards, Facebook or Twitter. As such, one of this thesis's contributions is to consider different platforms together, such as websites, Facebook, Twitter, and online newspapers.

The literature review made above had the purpose of discussing critically the conceptualisations of participatory media and social movements, seeking to comprehend the complexity of the key roles played by the mainstream media, social networking sites and social media, while preventing an overestimation of the media's power upon human agency. It is the vision of Fuchs (2011) that emphasises the necessity of approaching the study of social movement media through a model that contemplates the role of the Internet and mainstream media without overemphasising its role in the mobilisations.

The model of the 'logic of aggregation' from Juris (2012) contributes to an understanding of the social movements for peace in Mexico through its explanation of the rise of new political subjectivities that come together with network norms, forms and technologies. It is the concept of the 'choreography of assembly' (Gerbaudo, 2013) that lets us comprehend the role of the emotions as an element of collective identification among participants maintaining a logic of togetherness in mass sit-ins. The concept of information cascades (Enjolras et al., 2012), is relevant in that it helps identify the online connection flows that could support the mobilisations and motivate them. Finally, the 'connective action networks' concept created by Bennet and Seberberg (2013) directs this thesis to stress the importance of how individuals can technologically organise collective actions.

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter established an understanding of how social movements have been transformed in the context of the network society and the ways in which

communication processes have become to some extent independent from the mainstream media channels (Castells, 2012). This chapter also recognises, however, that the traditional mass media still play a relevant role even when citizens are using the Internet for political purposes. It is important to recognise that social network sites and the Internet have not replaced mass media. All in all, activists' media have had the opportunity to reach their largest audiences when the social movements have impacted significantly on the media system, but activists must be wary of pursuing the attention of the mainstream media, as such actions could simplify and homogenise the ideologies and practices of social movements (Pleyers, 2014, Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993, Atton, 2003, Milan, 2013).

This chapter explored in depth the potentialities of the creation of alternative points of view and the possibilities of sharing stories aimed at contesting mainstream and dominant discourses (Mattoni et al., 2010), and how new media technologies have the potential to challenge the monopoly control of media production and diffusion by the state (Loader and Mercea, 2011, Etling et al., 2010). New technologies have come with high expectations on their potential to nurture democracy and participation, though as has been discussed these expectations are not always reasonable, and rarely met. Etling et al. (2010) remark that for the future of social movements and their use of new communication technology, human skills will essentially determine the success of the use of digital tools for mobilisation. For these authors, the key to a social movement achieving their goals is a combination of traditional forms of organising and mobilisation, and the Internet.

This chapter has highlighted the complementary nature of the social media tools and face-to-face gatherings, but has also observed the overestimation of the power of the Internet to massively inform and mobilise people into the streets (Mosca, 2010, Gerbaudo, 2013), and how the participation through a dense social network allows people organised by decentred ties to share their own stories and concerns (Bennett, 2012, De Luca et al., 2012).

The second chapter will examine the new social movement theory characterised by how communication networks that rapidly spread are receptive to novel ideas for mobilisation (Freeman, 1990). The NSM theorists (D'Aneri et al., 1990), debate whether contemporary social movements are fundamentally characterised by new forms of collective action, with new goals, values, and constituents.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY APPROACH TO RESEARCHING MOVEMENTS FOR PEACE IN MEXICO

2.1   Introduction

As argued in the previous chapter, the transformations of social movements are taking place in the globalisation era, characterised by its worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of life, and the creation of new economic, political and social circumstances that are helping to transform state powers and the context in which states operate. In this context, the explosion of the Internet allows people who might before have organised sorely at a local level to originate collective action with the possibility of making an impact in distant places, as a result of changes in the networks that have the tendency to be less structured and more open to participation with a diversity of issues confronted. In this way, the process of globalisation has raised issues concerning the 'transnational composition of mobilization potential' (Klandermans, 2013a).

The main aim of this chapter is to establish the theoretical background for the analytical sections of my research, specifically an understanding of social movement theory that contemplates all its elements, such as the process of demand formation and the subsequent evolution of demands to actions, to understand the significance of collective actions and the changes that have arisen, the different forms that collective action can take, the multiplicity of actors and repertoires of contention that have emerged, and the influence social media has had on the processes of individualisation without affecting collective identifications.

This chapter will establish a critical position in relation to the most relevant approaches in the study of the new social movements (NSMs) theory, an analytical discussion of the understanding of collective action, how the networks for mobilisation configure and an examination into the analysis of the theoretical frameworks of collective identity formation. In addition, this chapter will examine the origins of NSM theory, its definition and the critiques it has faced.

Following this, the chapter concludes with a consideration of the theoretical approaches to how new technologies of communication – most significantly the Internet – permit encouragement, new identities, complaints, incentives for protest, and new scenarios of contention and whether they are contributing not only to the supply of protest but also the demand for it.

2.2   Approaches for Understanding the Concept of Social Movements

In recent years the world has been surprised by protests, in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, the United States and Mexico. These protests have been seen as a consequence of social injustices, such as the intensifying growth of inequalities, high youth unemployment and the lack of opportunity to engage in societies restricted by decades of state police corruption and violence. These issues are particularly to be found at the heart of protests against largely authoritarian governments (Ortíz et al., 2013). At the heart of the mobilisations is the awareness of social injustice, which has a fundamental role in the formation of these movements (Gamson, 1992:50). In this landscape, for Klandermans (2013b) the understanding of what a social movement is involves its purpose:

> Seeking to understand the dynamics that produce those activities, and their consequences is what the studies of social movements is all about [...] there is still much to be learned even about the dynamics of mobilization especially regarding the rise and the impact of new information and communication technologies (Klandermans, 2013b:429-430).

One essential element for the existence of social movements and protest is the participation by individuals, which is becoming a crucial key for the comprehension of social movements (Walgrave, 2013:205). This participation is essential to share grievances and emotions, while a shared identity is essential for developing the potential for mobilisation. It is necessary that grievances become transformed into demands. Klandermans (2013a:4-8) in particular affirms that it is relevant for scholars to study the process from the formation of demands through their evolution into action.

With communication channels and multi-organisational fields, action repertoires can change depending on the composition of mobilisation potential, and it could happen that these activities are not always transformed into action. Special conditions can be necessary, as Klandermans (2013a:11) observes, and it has been suggested that 'people are more likely to

participate when they know that a critical mass of other people will also participate' (Polleta et al., 2013:21).

Taylor (2013:46-47) suggests that the aim of social movements is to generate new conceptions of 'previously stigmatized groups, replacing feelings of shame and loneliness with pride and solidarity'. Social movements organise in part through unique emotional cultures that stipulate 'feeling rules' and 'expression rules' that comprehend beliefs about how participants should 'feel about themselves and dominant groups as well as how they should manage and express feelings evoked by day-to-day encounters with dominant groups and targets they seek to influence'.

Social movements in the era of globalisation have been affected by the process of social change in three ways: by the emergence – due in large part to the explosion of the Internet – of communities that are easily formed without strong ties that make possible individualisation, by transformations in identity politics into light identities, and by the 'homogenisation of light communities', with the potential result of 'processes of exclusion and the reproduction of inequalities'(Roggeband and Duyvendank, 2013:95). The ways in which individuals engage with traditional networks and organisations have been changing: people are less interested in the creation and maintenance of significant groups such as associations. The modern communities are more expressive, created for the short-term, and focus on specific issues.

Individuals play a key role through their creation of loose networks based on the Internet such as online forums and blogs. The outcomes of self-organised protests and political action are inevitably affected by not having an interest group, central coordination or affiliation, and 'organisations are using varied methods to organise and mobilise, coming together through online and offline efforts, using virtual spaces, and crossing national boundaries' (Roggeband and Duyvendank, 2013:97).

Individuals in late modern societies prefer less rigid relationships with organisations and are increasingly connected as individuals rather than as members of a specific community or group; as such, they operate their own personal community networks. 'Traditional "greedy" institutions, such as trade unions and churches, which made significant demands on members' times, loyalty and energy are replaced by "light" groups and associations that are loose, easy to join, and easy to leave'. In this way, society is becoming organised around networked individuals rather than groups or local solidarities, and connections are loose and flexible rather than fixed (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi 2013:218).

For Diani (2013:169-170), a social movement is a 'collectivity acting with some continuity, not a short-lived collectivity like a crowd. Over its life span it must develop some sort of structures', specifically a structural basis and a supportive environment: an 'alliance structure' of an extensive 'multiorganizational field'. The term 'structure' is understood as 'a pattern of more or less stable relationships within and between various elements of a larger entity', implying a 'degree of regularity and predictability'. In addition, this definition of a social movement encompasses:

> An informal hierarchy within a group, a weekly or annual meeting, a steering committee composed of delegates, a mode of decision making, tacit or explicit rules that regulate communication, an umbrella organization composed of dozens of informal or formal organizations, or a set of different ideological strands.

Della Porta and Diani (2006:20) define social movements as a 'distinct social process' consisting of instruments whose actors participated in collective action and:

- are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents;
- are linked by dense informal networks;
- are a distinct collective identity.

The conflictual collective action means that social movement actors promote or oppose social change. Meanwhile, 'dense informal networks' imply the coordination of collective action through organisations in the pursuit of common goals. These organisations help the group by defining strategies and regulating the conduct of individual actors, and stronger opportunities can be given to individuals when they are organised within formal organisations. Finally, the 'collective identity' implies the recognition and togetherness of the group, with a clear objective and shared engagement for a cause. It is through the understanding of these three elements that social movements are differentiated from other kinds of collective action processes. From a different perspective, Melucci (1989) proposes a definition of social movements as a:

> Specific class of collective phenomena which contains three dimensions… [It] is a form of collective action which involves solidarity… [It] is engaged in conflict and thus in opposition to an adversary who lays claims on the same good or values… [It] breaks the limits of compatibility of the system that it can tolerate without altering its structure (Melucci, 1989:29).

According to Diani (1992:8), networks contribute both to creating the preconditions for mobilisation and to providing the proper setting for the elaboration of specific world-views. A social movement is a 'network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations. Actors must define themselves as part of a broader movement and, at the same time, be perceived as such, by those within the same movement'.

McAdam et al. (2007:19) suggest that social movements involve sustained challenges to power holders in the name of a population living under the jurisdiction of those power holders. Social movements combine:

> 1) sustained campaigns of claim making, 2) an array of public performances including marches, rallies, demonstrations, creation of specialized associations, public meetings, public statements, petitions, letter-writing, and lobbying, 3) repeated public displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment by such means as wearing colours, marching in disciplined ranks, sporting badges that advertise the cause, displaying signs, chanting slogans, and picketing public buildings.

Recently, Diani (2015) has made a critical review of the concept of social movements in the context of the mobilisations of 2011 such as the Occupy movement, the Indignants Movement and the Arab mobilisations, suggesting that these kinds of collective actions appeared to be more community actions than social movements, having as a result an effect upon the traditional social movement concept exposed above through the diverse group of authors. Diani (2015) remarks further that in the future organisations will still play a role as essential sources for social movements and individual networks of the Internet will not replace organisational alliances. For Diani (2015), it is important to continue to reflect on the concept of social movements.

2.3   Collective Action

Collective action has relevance to this study because it plays a central role in the analysis of social movements. The most significant connection between collective action and social movements is its 'connectedness, both historically and spatially, with other instances of collective action of a similar kind, and with the actions of different claim-makers such as authorities and counter movements' (Koopmans, 2004:19). A key element to take into consideration is to understand what becomes favourable for a political environment that allows the collective action, this signifies to take the opportunities to act in the right moment (Edwards,

2014). But at the same time the emergence of collective action focuses on the identification of social problems that potentially could allow for mobilisation.

In his book *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age,* Melucci (1996:20) defines collective action as 'a set of social practices (i) involving simultaneously a number of individuals or groups, (ii) exhibiting similar morphological characteristics in contiguity of time and space, (iii) implying a social field of relationships and (iv) the capacity of the people involved of making sense of what they are doing.'

Melucci also indicates a set of principles for the analysis of collective action, stating at first the necessity to differentiate between a reaction to a crisis and the expression of a conflict. The conflict involves a struggle on the same ground for the control of the same resources. Meanwhile, crises come from 'the processes of disaggregation of a system, having to do with dysfunctions in the mechanisms of adaptation, imbalances among parts or subsystems, paralyses or blockages in some of these [or] difficulties of integration' (Melucci, 1996:22).

The second element of analysis that needs to be differentiated is between different orientations of collective action. Collective action involve elements such as: solidarity, that is, the ability to recognise others and be recognised by others as a part of a unity; aggregation, which does not involve solidarity, but only expresses spatial and temporal closeness; and the breach of the limits of compatibility of the system of social relationships within which the action takes place. 'Other kinds of collective action have order-maintaining orientations, in that their effects remain within the limits of structural variability of the given system of social relations' (Melucci, 1996:24). The third element is that 'the analytical field of collective action depends on the system of relationships within which such action takes place and towards which it is directed'.

For Milan (2013:50), it is through the understanding of the characteristics of collective action that the configuration of its networks can be comprehended. Baldassarri (2009:391) states that collective action consists of 'a broad range of social phenomena in which social actors engage in common activities for demanding and/or providing collective goods'. For della Porta and Diani (2006), leaders develop, adjust, and mix a variety of contentious forms through social movements. The organisation of collective action is necessary to obtain trust and cooperation between participants, with the creation of identities for the encouraging of collective action.

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For Flanagin et al. (2006), collective action includes a variety of forms and processes in combination with technological developments. These include self-organised protests and political actions in the absence of an interest group or other central coordinators, affiliation with a set of online organisations outside of formal 'membership' procedures and incentives, and considerable amounts of personal, voluntarily supplied informational goods for public use through the creation of Web content. Formal processes of organising rely on completely identified leaders, established roles, and material resources, though these are no longer the only factors in contemporary organising, because technological innovations permit different communication and coordination mechanisms. The authors stress that collective action is a communicative phenomenon because it includes: the identification and connection of people who have the common interest of a public good, communication through messages to these people and coordinated integration, or the synchronization of individuals' contributions.

The authors Postmes and Brunsting (2002:531) indicate that one of the most relevant changes that the Internet has brought to collective action is that 'online collective action rarely takes place in an explicit intergroup dynamic' this means that the online meeting could not bring successful results for the movement. In addition, the Internet strengthens the possibilities for collective action because it 'removes restrictions for peripheral members and outsiders to participate more fully, which means that movements can be transformed by the influx of new members and sympathizers' (Postmes and Brunsting, 2002:532).

In the view of Bimber et al. (2005:377), the dynamics of collective action have been changed in relation to the control over information. This is as a result of self-organising groups that employ new communication technologies and have stimulated new debates about theories of collective action. For example, Wilhoit and Kisselburgh (2015:575): 'newer forms of collective action begin to reconceptualise the concept by reducing the coordination between actors and increasing the intrinsic and personal benefits of participating.' These authors propose in this context a definition of collective action as 'similar aggregated actions (communicative or otherwise) which interact and overlap to create some result which would not be possible without the scale of many actors.' Wilhoit and Kisselburgh (2015:587) also propose a definition of collective action by stating: 'no organization, coordination, or communication are needed among participants for collective action to emerge. Instead, individual actors going about their lives can act and communicate in ways that add up and result in some change or effect through this aggregation'. This relates to the suggestion of Bimber et al. (2012:2) that of 'many interesting cases of collective action in recent years, those

that tend to attract the most attention are those not closely managed by any formal organization or central organizer', such as the cases of Facebook groups in the Middle East.

The focus of collective action has changed, then, 'toward the direction of enhanced individual agency' (Bimber et al., 2012:3). However, the authors state that formal organisations have not been replaced by self-organised groups, but rather 'activist networks and informal groups supplement formal organizations, enriching and adding complexity to the organizational forms rather than substituting the new for the old' (Bimber et al., 2012:6).

Milan and Hintz (2013:10) stress that new forms of collective action comprise a kind of cyberactivism that 'addresses network infrastructure or exploits the infrastructure's technical and ontological features for political or social change. Examples include the autonomous creation of infrastructure, electronic disturbance tactics, and online civil disobedience.' Characterised as informal, temporal, decentralized and networked forms of collective action, undertaken by individuals within a free collective framework, 'technology activism highlights current forms of interaction and association that differ from established modes of formal organization and representation' (Milan and Hintz, 2013:20-21).

Finally, Margetts et al. (2013:1) highlight that the 'use of the Internet for collective action increases the ratio of unsuccessful to successful collective initiatives'. The authors consider that for a successful collective action, a key point is an effective leadership and a coordination group that can sort out problems.

In summary, collective action is characterised by its connectedness as a communicative phenomenon, where solidarity plays a key role, but at the same time it could congregate people just by aggregation in a spatio-temporal closeness without solidarity. The emergence of new communication technologies have created new forms of collective action, allowing the creation of self-organising groups without leadership or coordinators and making collective action inclusive to a broadened audience. All in all, collective action provides a method for the analysis of social movements.

2.4   Collective Identity

The concept of collective identity is important for my work as it provides a way of addressing the question of how a collective identity is constructed in the social movements for peace in Mexico. Melucci (1996:71) writes that collective identity is needed to ensure the

continuity and permanence of a movement over time, and that it establishes the limits of the actor with respect to its social environment. It regulates the membership of individuals, it defines the requisites for joining the 'movement', and the criteria by which its members recognise themselves and are recognised.

Collective identity is also the process of building an action system. Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by a number of individuals or groups, in relation to their orientations for the action and the field of opportunities and limits in which such action is to take place. According to Melucci (1996:70): 'These elements are constructed and negotiated through a recurrent process of activation of the relations that bind actors together'. Three components of the collective identity are needed for the author:

1. Collective identity as a process involves cognitive definitions concerning the ends, means, and the field of action. These different elements, or axes, of collective action are defined within a language that is shared by a portion or the whole of society, or within one that is specific to a group; they are incorporated in a given set of rituals, practices, cultural artifacts; they are framed in different ways but they always allow some kind of calculation between means and ends, investments and rewards.

2. Collective identity as a process refers thus to a network of active relationships between actors who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions. Forms of organization and models of leadership, communicative channels and technologies of communication are constitutive parts of this network of relationship.

3. Finally, a certain degree of emotional investment is required in the definition of a collective identity, which enables individuals to feel themselves part of a common unity. (Melucci, 1996:71)

Stekelenburg and Roggeband (2013: XXII) argue that 'collective identity formation is a necessary precondition for action and that activists deploy identity strategies with the goal of changing individuals, culture, institutions, and the state'. Diani (1992:16) suggests that collective identity may provide a persistent, though latent, basis for a new upsurge of mobilisation campaigns: social movements often persist even when they are not active on the public stage, a 'latency' phase. It is important to mention that for Stekelenburg and Roggeband (2013), the more the organisations have a clear and coherent identity, the more they will receive media attention. Recent studies of activism on the Internet suggest that one of the main

functions of online tactical repertoires is to create solidarity and collective identity (McCaughey and Ayers, 2003).

Rotes (2013:307) argues that the potential of the Internet to create and maintain a variety of networks without any physical interaction offers great opportunities for activism to multiply:

> Activists' identities are less likely to be developed or reinforced as a consequence of participation [...] identities themselves will tend to be fluid and will require rather less negotiation to permit or encourage action than they might have done when identities and the interactional contexts that shaped them were more stable.

In the same manner, collective identity remains in construction, maintenance and renegotiation, affecting social movements from its 'emergence to outcomes'. Taylor (2013:38) affirms that it is relevant in the same way as 'the cultural dimension of networks that source the themes, worldviews, ideologies, and practices used to articulate collective identity.'

Collective identity has been defined by Taylor (2013:39) as the shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests and solidarity:

> Emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution [...] Processes that contribute to the formation of collective identity (1) boundaries that mark differences between a category of persons and dominant groups (2) consciousness of the criteria that explain a group's structural position and common interests, and (3) the politicization of a group's commonalities and differences through the negotiation and re-creation of new self-affirming identities.

Diani (1992:9) affirms that 'collective identity' does not imply homogeneity of ideas and orientations within social movement networks. A wide spectrum of different conceptions may be present, and factional conflicts may arise at any time. Therefore, the construction and preservation of a movement's identity implies a continuous process of 'realignment' and 'negotiation' between movement actors. The presence of shared beliefs and solidarities allows both actors and observers to assign a common meaning to specific collective events which otherwise could not be identified as a part of a common process.

Emotions are a key element in the construction of collective identity, and play a role 'in the politicization of collective identity disclosure, whether through organized forms of protest or everyday activism' (Taylor, 2013:49). For example, for supporters of nonviolent direct action, who became influential in the radical pacifist movement in the 1940s and the

civil rights movements in the 1950s, emotion management was a crucial feature of their collective identity (Goodwin, 2001:3).

Goodwin et al. (2001:11) consider that analysis of 'the emotions of protest seemed like a way to develop a more multifaceted image of political actors, with a broader range of goals and motivations, tastes and styles, pains and pleasures, than were commonly recognised in the academic literature'.

The authors consider as the emotional dynamics, what Durkheim called 'collective effervescence and moral density'. Goodwin et al. (2001) called it 'high ritual density'. The elements are:

1. The physical assembly of people, so there is bodily awareness of copresence.

2. A shared focus of attention. This may arise because participants are carrying out a stereotyped action (chanting, gesturing, etc.) which has become traditional because there is prior history of such participation; or it may develop spontaneously, as a first time occasion, because something in the circumstances has brought a common action.

3. The focus of attention becomes a mutual focus of attention. Each participant becomes aware of each other's awareness, and thus of each one's unity at this moment with each other (Collins, 2001:27-28).

Corresponding to the extent that these ingredients are present, there are a series of consequences:

1. Feelings of group solidarity.

2. Emotional energy, in individual participants, as they become pumped up with enthusiasm and confidence.

3. Symbols of the group, encapsulating the memory of collective participation. Contact with group emblems allows individuals to keep up their feelings of dedication when they are away from the group. Bringing forward such emblems helps the initiators of a new collective gathering to set off new occasions of focused attention. Behaviours toward emblems are tokens of respect for the group; hence the emblems are touchstones for loyalty and targets for external challenge, the focal points around which confrontations with opponents are most easily generated.

4. Feelings of morality. The emotionally solidary group generates its own standards of right and wrong. The highest good becomes commitment to the group and sacrifice

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of individual selfishness in its service; those who are outside the group, or worse yet, oppose it, are morally tagged as unworthy, evil, or inhuman (Collins, 2001:27-28).

An element that is necessary for the composition of the collective identity is called 'the politicized collective identity' that is defined as a 'form of collective identity that underlies group members explicit motivations to engage in [...] a power struggle' (Doorns et al., 2013:59). In addition, the politicisation begins with the awareness of shared grievances within the group and should be shared extensively between in-group members (Doorns et al., 2013).

Doorns et al. (2013:61) affirm that the theoretical frameworks of politicised collective identity implies boundaries, consciousness, and negotiation. (1) Boundaries consist of the recognition of similarities within the groups, and differentiations from other groups. (2) Consciousness involves the consciousness of the group membership and the comprehension of the group's position within society, in relation to other groups (Doorns et al., 2013). It is important to mention that consciousness is a 'critical step in the process of politicization of collective identity' and is a dynamic process. (3) Negotiation 'involves the process by which groups work to change symbolic meanings', meaning that the group needs to define its resistance to dominant groups. Negotiation takes place on two levels. The first level is the private setting, between members of the collective. The second level is the public setting, the negotiations between the collective and a larger audience (Doorns et al., 2013). The authors state that the politicisation of collective identities have multi-level processes, involving both intra- and inter-group dynamics. The first level of the politicisation process is the macro-level, where the macrosocial indicators such as class, gender, religion, ethnicity, and socio-economic positions which lead to unequal power relations between groups give increase to potential complaints of disadvantaged groups and give demands for compensation from a dominant out-group. The second level, the mesolevel, positions the organisers as 'the engineers of politicised collective identity'. The political leaders and organisers of protest try to influence the meaning of social scissions. According to Morris and Staggenborg (2006:171), this level places 'movement leaders as strategic decision-makers who inspire and organize others to participate in social movements'. The authors identify two functions of the leaders: the mobiliser inside looking into their group, and the articulator outside of the movement linking its cause to a broader audience. Leaders offer frames, tactics, and organisational vehicles that allow participants to construct a collective identity and participate in collective action at various levels. In doing so, leaders rely not only on their personal attractiveness and abilities, but also on previous experiences, cultural traditions, gender norms, social networks, and familiar

organising forms. Morris and Staggenborg (2006:180) remark that the microlevel is about 'meaning-making processes taking place in interpersonal interactions that strengthen or weaken the ties between group members' (Doorns et al., 2013:65).

The groups also need to share cultural elements, subjective understandings, ideals, and symbolic identifications in the pursuit for change. 'Politicized group members are mindful of their shared group membership, their common enemy or opponent, and especially the wider societal struggle that is affected by and this power struggle'. (Doorns et al., 2013:66).

The group's identity and claims to be made are debated, contested and negotiated among group members. For Carty and Onyett (2006:234), the key to forging collective identity is how organisers 'frame' their issues in a way that resonates with potential recruits by linking participants' grievances to mainstream beliefs and values in the hopes of influencing public opinion and events (Snow and Benford, 1992, Benford, 1993). To mobilise support, organisers must create simple and concise yet broad movement goals to attract diverse constituencies – an organising strategy characterised by a 'master frame' (Snow and Benford, 1992, Benford, 1993). Gamson (1992) argues that for a frame to go from understanding to motivating action it must have the elements of injustice, identity and agency.

Pickerill (2009:973) points out that the symbolic production by social movements is likely to have a direct impact upon individuals' experience of their processes of identity construction for two reasons. First, frames are explicitly used to create links between the activists' cause and an individual's ability to make sense of their world. In addition, symbolic elaboration must enable an individual to perceive the costs of taking action as surmountable and worthwhile. This is done in part by producing understandings of collective solidarity and collective experiences, which in turn change an individual's sense of self.

For Brown and Pickerill (2009:26), emotion is strategically deployed and fostered by organisers to engender sufficient commitment amongst activist collectives to maintain their ongoing participation. Emotions may not only inspire and sustain activism, but they may shape an individual's preferred organisational forms and movement tactics.

Chadwick (2007:285) suggests that the repertoires of collective action play a role in sustaining collective identity. They are not simply neutral tools to be adopted at will, but come to shape what it means to be a participant in a political organisation. Values shape repertoires of collective action, which in turn shape the adoption of specific organisational forms. Social movements typically eschew hierarchy, and depend upon mass mobilisation to achieve their

aims because they have usually been excluded from participation in mainstream channels or because they have deliberately sought to work outside the system to avoid co-option. Typically, participants in social movements have encouraged methods of organisation and decision making that are self-consciously non-hierarchical, consensual, and participatory.

2.5   New Social Movement Theory

The term 'social movement' was used firstly by the German sociologist Loren von Stein, according to Tilly (2004:5), in a book titled *History of the French Social Movement from 1789, to the present 1850* (1964) the concept of a 'movement', however, was most obviously applied to the civil rights movements. In the sixties, the word suggested an abundance of youth and radical activities that took place on campuses and encircled a large part of middle-class youth.

The historical origins of social movements can be found in Europe, in the consolidation of modern nation-states, and the transformation of masses of people from rural peasants to an urban proletariat (Buechler, 1995).

In addition, the growth of capitalism contributed the particularly modern form of collective action to the social movements, bringing a new dimension to collective action with participants who perceived the social order as contested and flexible rather than as natural and given. Hence: 'Social movements are genuinely modern phenomena. Only in modern society have social movements played a constitutive role in social development' (Eder, 1993:108).

The use of the term 'social movement' is a relatively recent phenomenon. It was in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with the emergence of increasingly visible forms of collective action in Europe and the United States that they began to be accepted as empirical objects of study. Four significant social movements prominent in the sixties and seventies were civil rights, student protests, welfare rights, and women's liberation. According to Freeman (1999), these movements involved certain key elements, such as a communications network, noting that a social movement could rapidly spread if a communications network already existed and was receptive and 'co-optable' to the novel ideas of the social movement.

Social movements in advanced industrial democracies were developed and largely institutionalised by the late 1970s, and had become part of the conventional repertoire of participation. Meyer and Tarrow (1998:4) express three main premises: 'social protest has

moved from being a sporadic [...] to a permanent element in modern life [...] protest behaviour is employed [...] to represent a wider range of claims than ever before [and] professionalization and institutionalisation may be changing the major vehicle of contentious claims [...] into an instrument within the reach of conventional politics'. The authors highlight that the movements of the 1960s were enthused by a democratic ethos that stimulated and legitimated participation by the masses of society.

The appearance of the New Social Movements (NSMs) theory grew partly from the New Left and related student movements of the 1960s (Calhoun, 1993), alongside well-educated professionals, often from middle class backgrounds and employed in the public service sector. Buechler (1995:441) suggests that the origin of NSM theory 'is rooted in continental European traditions of social theory and political philosophy'. NSM theory emerged to fill the perceived insufficiency of the Marxist perspective for analysis of social movements. Marxist theory implied that all social action has its roots in the economic logic of capitalist production and social actors are defined by class relationships embedded in the process of production, without providing sufficient relevant space for the key role of social identities in the generation of collective action (Buechler, 1995). NSM theory, on the other hand, defined a logic of action grounded on politics, ideology, and culture, beyond the old social movements of proletarian mobilisations that characterised the Marxist analysis. The author considers that NSM theory 'is a critical reaction to classical Marxism, some new social movement theorists seek to update and revise conventional Marxist assumptions while others seek to displace and transcend them' (Buechler, 1995:442).

For NSMs, civil society and the cultural sphere are the most important fields for collective action (Cohen, 1985, Melucci, 1989), and the goals are the promotion of autonomy and self-determination (Habermas, 1984-1987, Rucht, 1988), rather than the gaining of influence and power. In addition, it is a symbolic fight for the recognition of their own culture (Eder, 1985). NSMs are characterised as being 'more self-reflexive about the conditions informing their development' and 'identity formation and emotional insight form central goals of the movement' (Tucker, 1991:79). For the author, NSMs are responding to the penetration of the market and the state into an already modernized life-world (made up of the nuclear family, an egalitarian society, and a universalistic cultural tradition).

In addition, for NSMs, theorists have observed the role of post-materialist values in collective action, as opposed to conflicts over material resources (Inglehart, 1990, Dalton et

al., 1990). Brandt (1986:61) argues that NSMs 'criticise the boundaries and consequences of the productivistic model of industrial development; and it is they who highlight new lines of social conflict as well as alternative paths of social development'. As a consequence, various forms of emancipatory protest became part of the growing demands, 'for individual and social self-determination collide with traditional patterns of behaviour and authority and with the structures of power politics' (Brandt, 1986:61). NSMs, then, started to focus on issues such as the new feminist movement, the environmental and anti-nuclear movements, civil rights movements and the peace movement. Brandt (1986:62) puts stress on the elements that constituted the NSMs, they concentrated the attention on the cultural aspects that considered alternative paths of development:

> The characteristic forms of organisation and mobilization of the new movements have entailed decentralisation and "grassroots" democracy. Symbolic and expressive forms of action have become much more salient than in older forms of protest. Alternative forms of living and working, counter-cultural milieus, practical models for change, ranging from self-help projects in medical and social areas, through decentralised, "soft" forms of energy production, to biological farming, represent the socio-cultural ferment of these movements and gives them a dual, political-cultural impetus.

NSM theory focuses on contemporary social movements characterised fundamentally by the new forms of collective action. NSMs represent an entirely new form of social protest and reflect specific properties of advanced industrial societies (D'Aneri et al., 1990). The shared characteristics of these new movements can be divided into four general areas: goal orientation, forms, participants, and values. As the advanced industrial state increasingly regulates and invades everyday life, the goal orientations of the new social movements have shifted internally, in an attempt to re-appropriate the domain of their own lives from a system of supervisory institution.

Furthermore, NSMs diverge from past movements not only with respect to what or whom they direct their energies against, but also with respect to whose interests they represent. Whereas 'old' social movements were movements of a particular class, generally the working class, and articulated the interests or demands of that class, new social movements are interested in the provision of collective or intangible goods that would enhance the quality of life for all sectors of society.

The political driver of NSMs can be summarized as an intensified consciousness of the problems and risks of the process of industrial modernisation, environmental problems, the

dangers of the new technologies, and the disabling effects of bureaucratic regulation and control (Brandt, 1986:65).

In relation to the strategies that NSMs follow, for Lee (2007) they have usually used conventional strategies, within the borders of institutional norms, employing patterns of mobilisation characterised by non-violence and civil disobedience (Hunt et al., 1994), for example: collecting signatures, addressing local authorities, requesting press conferences, distributing fliers, holding public hearings, and contacting political representatives. NSMs might be seen as a basis for democratising community life or communal social relations embedded in shared responsibilities, obligations, and concerns for others. In addition, the participants of NSMs are committed to: 'the production and circulation of culture, including media culture and information technology' (Lievrouw, 2011:42).

Recruitment of participants in NSMs is often based on certain characteristics such as gender, race, or ethnicity. Divisions between labour and business and between left and right, typical of old social movements, dissolve as participants in NSMs converge on such universal, nonpartisan issues as ecology, 'life-chance' considerations, and disarmament. Given the importance that members of the NSMs place on participatory, spontaneous, and non-hierarchical organisation, it is hardly surprising that their strategies and tactics are not those characteristic of conventional politics.

Furthermore, NSMs imply the emergence of a new dimension of collective identities. This means that the mobilising factors are symbolic and cultural issues that are related to the identity instead of the economic factors that were characteristic of the working-class movements (Hunt et al., 1994, Johnston et al., 1994, Klandermans, 1994, Melucci, 1989, Stoecker, 1995). In addition, NSMs comprehend 'personal and intimate aspects of human life' (Hunt et al., 1994:8).

Johnston et al. (1994) and Klandermans (1992) recognise that NSM theory also stresses the socially constructed nature of grievances and ideology, rather than assuming that they can be deduced from a group's structural location. NSM theory recognises a variety of submerged latent and temporary networks that often strengthen collective action, rather than assuming that centralised organisational forms are prerequisites for successful mobilisation (Melucci, 1989, Gusfield, 1994, Mueller, 1994).

Roggeband and Duyvendank (2013:99) state that a culturalist NSM approach would claim that in a network society, political participation is increasingly rooted in everyday

networks of participants and that (potential) actors are likely to be involved in diffuse and decentralized networks rather than informal organisations; as such, organisations become looser, less formalized, and more dynamic.

The central NSM theorists were Manuel Castells, Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, and Jürgen Habermas (Buechler, 1995). Buechler (1995) discusses, like Castells, the possible impact of capitalist dynamics on the transformation of urban space and the role of urban social movements in this dynamic.The author notes that urban issues have become significant because of the increasing importance of collective consumption and the necessity of the state to intercede to uphold the production of non-profitable needed public goods. It is in this context that Castells sees the rise of urban social movements to reorganise urban social life, indicating two main issues. First, there are economic interests that aim to maintain urban space for capitalist commodification. Second, urban social movements aim to preserve popular interests, maintain political autonomy, and uphold cultural identity. The three main issues of NSMs according to Castells are the collective consumption provided by the state, the importance of cultural identity and community culture, and mobilisations that look for more decentralized forms of government that emphasise self-management and autonomous decision making.

Alain Touraine notes 'the growing capacity of social actors to construct both a system of knowledge and the technical tools that allow them to intervene [...] historicity makes possible the increasing self-production of society, which becomes the defining hallmark of post-industrial programmed society' (Buechler, 1995:444). For Touraine, the principal ground of struggle amongst classes is culture, and the main challenge concerns who controls society's ability for self-management. One of the contributions of Touraine in the study of social movements establishes an original method called 'sociological intervention'. This method was extensively used at the research centre for social movements (CADIS) in the 1970s and 1980s. Sociological intervention involved sociological researchers participating in the discussion and self-analysis of social movements by programming meetings between activists and researchers. The purpose of the meetings was to conduct a conversation between activists and researchers so that researchers could analyse the significance of the movement and how it relates to the central social conflict of society. This involvement was necessary, Touraine argues, because social movements comprehend many layers of 'meaning', and it is the work of the researcher to analyse what the movement means in relation to the society in which it arises. Touraine's researchers asked movement activists to deliberate who they think they are (identity), who they think they are against (opponents), and their understanding of the social field that gives rise to

this opposition. Using their analytic skills, the researchers use the knowledge produced by the interventions to distinguish the 'highest level' of meaning that the movement expresses (Edwards, 2014:135).

Habermas (1987) is one of the most representative authors of NSM theorists. He conceptualises NSMs as the main vehicle by which a non-instrumental rationality can be brought into public life, against the imposing agendas of the state and economy. NSMs arise, according to Habermas, around the conflict which they organise (Edwards, 2004). The working class is rejected as a democratising agent, and instead Habermas looks to broad-based, non-productivist movements for the implementation of the identified goals. NSMs raise questions about the meanings of the 'grammar of forms of life' that can only be resolved through communicative action, not through administrative manipulation. Edwards (2014:123) suggests that Habermas gives us a 'strain' theory of social movements in this respect, by arguing that the crises created by capitalism are now shifted from economic and political systems into cultural and personality systems, creating conflicts that are felt well beyond the workplace (Habermas, 1976). Habermas centres NSMs at the seams between system and lifeworld. This position leads him to identify two features of these movements that have shaped further debates within NSM theory. First, Habermas seems to imply that NSMs will have a purely defensive character: at best they can defend the lifeworld against the colonising intrusion of the system and sustain the role of normative consensus rooted in a communicative rationality that has been evolving within this sphere throughout the process of societal modernization. For this author, as for many others, the conflicts in which NSMs engage are less about material reproduction and more about cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialisation.

Finally, for Alberto Melucci (1988), as society has been increasingly shaped by information and signs, social movements have come to play an important role as messages that express oppositional tendencies and modalities. The attention to personal, spiritual, or expressive aspects of modem life typical of NSMs is an implicit repudiation of the instrumental rationality of the dominant society. The author argues that new social actors have to discover themselves, and they have to do so in the development of their everyday lives in which the new conflicts over cultural codes are encountered. In the 'submerged networks of everyday life', people fight to regain control over the symbolic resources of the information society, and they use them to invent themselves as new kinds of individuals. These new personal identities can also become the foundation for new collective identities which make clear the existence of a new 'we' who is in conflict with 'them' over 'this'. In other words, creating new collective

identities signifies the creation of NSMs to substitute for the class-based mobilisations of the past (Edwards, 2014:139-140). Melucci understands that constructing collective identities is not only what social movements do, it is what they are. Social movements in these positions can be conceptualised as the process by which new collective identities are constructed (Edwards, 2014:139-140).

NSMs can be viewed through a lens which places them as part of a continuing element of modern life, rooted in the European tradition of social theory and political philosophy. NSM theories arose in response to the Marxist model's capacity to analyse social movements only in terms of economic causes and class struggles. NSM theory focuses its analysis on symbolic action and the cultural sphere, characterising these movements for their autonomy, self-determination, self-reflexive informing of their development, identity formation and emotional insight.

2.5.1 Critique of the New Social Movement Approach

The NSM theory has been an object of critique mostly by Weir (1993), Pichardo (1997), and Barker and Dale (1998). Pichardo (1997) states that NSM theory has not taken into account social movements that have arisen from the right wing; the author stresses that social movements drawn from either political wing are linked to changes in social structure. The author further observes that for Marxists the working class was at the centre of the analysis, and suggests that NSM theory does not consider social movements that originate from the working class. In this manner, NSMs does not pay attention to the socialist politics in social movements, failing to recognise that 'socialism has signified diversely and with many competing programmatic aims and organizational practices over the course of its history' (Weir, 1993:96).

An additional key characteristic of NSMs is that participants belong to the middle class. Pichardo (1997) observes that middle-class protests have happened since the 1800s in Europe and the United States: 'The middle class is not a new site of social protest. This is another aspect of NSMs that has been severely criticised' (Pichardo, 1997:418). For Barker and Dale (1998), all social movements imply a class struggle from their creation and development, this means that not only does a class unequivocally represent a given social movement, including

NSMs, but that the rise of NSMs indicates that the class struggle within capitalism is not reduced, but rather that NSMs represent a transformation of the balance of forces, and an increasing of collective action.

Moreover, NSMs do not include contemporary conservative movements in their analysis. Conservative mobilisations are also reacting to the attempts of governments to control the civic sphere (Pichardo, 1997:426). Indeed, the social movements for Mexican Independence were lead by religious figures, and nowadays Catholic symbols are still in use for calls to mobilise people into the streets. Della Porta (1999:61) suggests that not all examples of collective action today are of a new type. 'The 1960s and 1970s have seen not only the rise of new political phenomena but also the revival of initiatives taken by "old" collective actors such as the working class and ethno-linguistic minorities'.

One of the key features of NSMs is their newness, although Plotke (1990) argues that NSM discourse tends to overemphasise their novelty, to selectively describe their goals as cultural, and to exaggerate their separation from conventional political life. Sidney Tarrow (1991) remarks that many NSMs are not definitively all that new, because they have often developed from pre-existing organisations and have long histories that are obscured by the NSM discourse (Buechler, 1995:447). In basically affirming the novelty of contemporary social movements without providing historical comparisons, 'NSM theorists engage in an invalid logic and seriously underestimate the complexity of social movement history' (Weir, 1993:74). The supporters seek to qualify the 'novelty' of the 'new movements', while the critics question or deny it, basing their argument on the similarities between contemporary and past forms of actions (Melucci, 1995:109). This is considered one of the strongest arguments against the NSM theoretical approach. In the same form, Brandt (1990) suggests that NSMs are the latest manifestation of a cyclical pattern that has been evident for well over a century (Buechler, 1995:448). All in all, old patterns of collective action certainly continue to exist. To establish the innovative character of post-1968 social movements, NSM discourse would need to contrast the present cycle with the previous social movement cycle in Western Europe and North America (1880-1930). In addition, the NSM perspective suppresses the long history of struggles between social movements and socialist/social democratic politics.

NSMs are defined as having a focus on post-materialistic values. Barker and Dale (1998) maintain that material and nonmaterial aspects cannot be disconnected. New and old movements are motivated by material and post-material needs. The authors mention a specific

example: 'The Green movement makes material demands for a world where beef does not rot the brain, where there is clean air for all, where fishing and pollution policies do not destroy the life of the sea, and so on' (Barker and Dale, 1998:76-77).

Furthermore, NSM theory is characterised by an analytical focus on identity. Pichardo (1997) highlights that few empirical works have studied the impact of identity claims through the NSM perspective, with the exception of the work of Klandemans (1994) that 'has examined, in the Dutch peace movement [...] the varying collective identities, as represented by the different organizational memberships' (Pichardo, 1997:414-415). Another criticism states that identity is as significant in old movements as the NSMs. Barker and Dale (1998) explore as an example the trade unions movements, specifically their negotiating, which they believe implies a contest for identity: 'Employers regularly appeal to workers, over the heads of union representatives, over identity questions' (Barker and Dale, 1998:79).

A central aspect of the participants of NSMs is that they are not defined by class boundaries but are marked by a common concern over social issues. Pichardo (1997:417) explains that the participants of NSMs correspond to an ideology, instead of an ethnic, religious, or class-based community.

While NSMs often stay separate from formal political channels, using disruptive tactics and mobilising public opinion, some NSMs have become longstanding, with some involving themselves in politics and some failing to evade convert institutionalisation (Pichardo, 1997). NSM theory states that such movements organise in a decentralised form, but it is observed that some NSMs 'employ more traditional centralized, hierarchical forms of organization' (Pichardo, 1997:416). Furthermore, NSMs tend to employ non-traditional tactics but also use those frequently employed by social movements of the past such as 'lobbying and getting out the vote' (Pichardo, 1997:418). It is important to analyse in which ways NSMs have contributed to innovation in the ways they create and use tactics.

NSM theory can with some difficulty be applied to Latin America because, 'these nations can hardly be described as capable of satisfying the basic needs for the economic and physical security of their people' (Pichardo, 1997:423). The different socio-political context in Latin America is not disputable, however there is a need to consider other elements which

would support the application of NSM theory. Downing (2011c:20) states that the studies of NSM have expressed no interest in any movement outside the global north, therefore generating a gap in the literature about social movements outside the developed world.

2.5.2 Latin American New Social Movements: Theoretical Approaches.

With regard to the NSM theory in a Latin American context a discussion has arisen as to what extent this theoretical model could help map socio-political change in Latin America and allow us to understand the progress of social movements in the case study of contemporary Mexican mobilisations

Davis (1999) describes the fact that in recent decades, Latin American students have enrolled at European universities with the focus of their doctoral studies in areas related to social sciences and philosophy, particularly in France. Davis (1999:588) indicates 'that many actually studied with the sociologists who first popularised the new social movement paradigms in the aftermath of the 1968 student rebellions'. Davis suggests that most of these studies took place with Alain Touraine in France or when he visited Latin America at the end of the 60s and during the course of the 70s. Davis (1999) argues that Alain Touraine's theoretical contributions from his theory on NMSs have had a profound influence on his Latin American students, and are deep-rooted in Latin American Sociology's view of how to understand social movements.

Davis (1999:629) mentions that most of the known Latin American intellectuals who received this 'cultural influence and philosophical guidance' within this NSMs theoretical perspective were: Octavio Paz (Mexico), Pablo Neruda (Chile), and Mario Vargas Llosa (Perú); highlighting that this identification with the French models of NSMs was publicly acknowledged and recognised within the Latin American universities.

In 1987, in his book written in Spanish: *Actores Sociales y Sistemas Políticos en América Latina* Alain Touraine mentioned that Latin America has a 'strong expressive ability' in the formation of social movements, but he notes that since the Mexican revolution, there has not been a solid revolutionary capability in the dependent societies to achieve social change.

In a similar position, prior to the global social movements of 2011, Canclini in his text *What are we talking about, when we talk of resistance?* (2010) states: 'What has been observed

in recent years are many forms of resistance: They only look at the ecology or ethnicity, or gender, but almost never posit a supportive and effective response to transform structures' (Canclini, 2010:17). Within the contentious Latin American societies, there is a lack of consensus on the possibility of achieving social change. This resistance is not sufficiently strong in either its structure or goals to succeed.

From the NSMs position, the ideas of Canclini (2010) are not entirely applicable to the recent Latin American context of mobilisation for peace, dating from 2011 in the Mexican case study. The reason is that the NSMs in Mexico through inefficiency and poor organisation have not managed to raise social awareness of the war on drugs in Mexico, therefore, the status quo has not been transformed and peace in the country has not been achieved.Prior to 2011, mass mobilisitations and demonstrations against the war on drugs in Mexico were not noticeable, as people were afraid to express their opposition in the public sphere to what was happening. With the rise of the MPJD in April 2011, strong civic ties were forged and collective action undertaken. However, the divisions amongst the mobilisations for peace in Mexico were visible when the MPJD decided to open a dialogue with the Mexican authorities rather than rejecting the negotiations and taking a radical position. As Canclini (2010) has said the NSMs in Latin America cannot claim to be responsible for the achievement in changes to the social structures, in part due to the lack of unity amongst the various mobilisation groups.

Canclini (2010) indicates that NSMs in the Latin America of the 1960s, in comparison to the NSMs in Europe, have the characteristics of social movements abandoned in the eighties and nineties due to the hegemony of neoliberalism, accepted as the only way of thinking. In addition, the author proposes that the contemporary mobilisations take advantage of social interactions where anyone can create and disseminate images using their cameras, mobile phones and YouTube to get mobilised. This scenario of information and communication technologies with regard to the NSMs theory is not generally taken into account in the classic models of the NSMs to understand the dynamic processes of the social movements.

It is important to specify that the NSMs theory is based on the context of modern nation-states in Europe within the advanced industrial societies, whereas, the Latin American context of mobilisation groups are placed in a background of colonization, exploitation and domination. The perspective on NSMs in Latin America originated from 'the crisis of the developmentalist and populist state in Mexico and South America in the 1960s' (Foweraker, 1995:41). The developmentalists believe that national autonomy for 'Third World' countries

can be attained and preserved through the utilization of external resources by those countries in a capitalist system.

Applied to the Latin American context in the words of Canclini's work,*Different, Unequal or Disconnected* (2004) the framework, however, demonstrates a remarkable understanding of struggles and governance in Latin America describing the economic challenges in the region affirming that:

> In a neoliberal hegemony that is rooted in poor governance, its inability to generate growth and stability has been demonstrated everywhere since the nineties. In Latin America even the beneficiaries are dissatisfied minorities and this is even more apparent with the discomfort of the popular sectors. . (Canclini, 2004:131).

Stahler-Sholk et. al (2007) highlight the neoliberal model and the regimes that would implement it as the main core of these contemporary mobilisations, the central issue of the last two decades in Latin American's movements. These authors emphasise the development of new paths in research and the creation of a social theory regarding the interrelated roles of politics, economics, society and culture in social movements. (Stahler-Sholk et. al, 2007). They highlight the power of a discriminatory media in pursuit of the control of the culture by portraying only their own economic interests in context where poverty is the main characteristic of Latin American societies.. This is a noteworthy difference from the NSMs in Europe where the poverty and violence produced in this logic of advanced capitalism are not as central to the debate of their claims as politics, ideology and culture (Buechler, 1995).

Alonso (2012) in his article Cavilaciones sobre Movilizaciones de Indignados Sociales critically analyses the global mobilisations of 2011 around the world, including a section on Mexican mobilisations for peace, stating that rapacious capitalism expanded in a few pockets though forceful deprivation of the majority is presenting its non-viability as a system to live under (Alonso, 2012). Another characteristic of these social movements is the heterogeneity of composition, expressing their discontent on the consequences of the economic system, which has caused severe damage to the planet and human life provoking inequalities and injustices. All in all, Mexican mobilisations of 2011 are collective expressions of the people's intolerance of unacceptable situations, such as the violence and poverty that NSMs in European contexts have never experienced. Latin American movements occur in conditions of material deficiency and in authoritarian and military regimes, while NSMs in Europe, are characterised by having

specific subjects, such as youth, women or ecologists. Meanwhile, movements of indigenous peoples for example, are concentrated in the defence of their identity and territory.

Many peaceful demonstrations by the people have emerged to show outrage at the consequences of this economic system. Alonso (2010) explains that contemporary global mobilisations, including the Latin American movements, are in a position of autonomy and self-determination. The existence of advanced capitalism has created new forms of violence, as the NSMs theory suggested in the movements of 1960s. Alonso (2015:6) argues that 'drug trafficking has taken advantage of the serious crisis of the neoliberal voracious capitalism, which has left masses of young people without opportunities to study or have a job'. In this sense the NSMs theory is applicable to the Latin American context as an explanation of how neoliberalism has created new forms of violence to which the Latin American movements are a response.

It seems evident that these social upsurges are similar and even stronger than in 1968, in the pursuit of autonomy from below and constructing new ways of living together outside the logic of capitalism. Alonso (2013) reaffirms the idea that Touraine knows Latin America, particularly the South American social reality, in depth, but in his interpretation Touraine maintains a Eurocentric position. This is because there is a constant struggle in Latin America for collective human rights. Santos (2003) also criticises the idea of Touraine that NSMs are centred on subjectivities. Instead, he proposes, the need for alternative thinking that challenges the people to develop social indignation against inequality and exclusion. In the Latin American context Santos (2003) affirms that the NSMs' Eurocentric approach cannot be applicable because these movements provide a profound critique of capitalist social regulation and denounce new forms of oppression. These Latin American movements also vary amongst themselves and relate to specific local contexts and there are significant differences in terms. .

For Santos (2001) the NSMs of the European countries and Latin America are different and in his article 'Los Nuevos Movimientos Sociales' he highlights the contrasts. In Europe, he explains, the main focus of NSMs are ideological objectives, post-materialist values, consumer criticism, overdevelopment, alienation and the wefare state. In Latin America, on the other hand, the focus of the NSMs are basic social needs, criticism of the lack of consumption, under-development, hunger among the new middle class and popular classes, and the authoritarian state. These are important differences in the context of Europe and Latin America

mobilisations', making it impossible to recognise the NSMs' approach as a single theory because of the need to relate it to a different social structure and background.

Alonso (2013) agrees with Boaventura de Sousa Santo's view (1998, 2003) when he explains the uncertainties about the potential of NSMs theory to be sufficient to explicate in depth the social movements' complexities, arguing that though there are no pure or clearly defined social movements there is a multidimensionality. Latin American movements make demands to compensate for serious shortcomings of a dignified life (Alonso, 2013). This means that human rights violations in Latin America and poverty are in the main the central issues of social movements.

On this basis the NSM theory is limited to the understanding of this latent phase of mobilisation groups within this advanced capitalism that has devastating consequences on the lives of thousands of people: migrants, young people, women and children. This idea is explained in Davis' position when he explains 'The New social movement (NSM) approach is incomplete in its explanatory potential and scope because they are built on "western" assumptions about state formation and state-society relations that do not hold in the Latin American context' (1999:585). These assumptions can be summarised by saying that modern Latin American states are extremely centralised because of forms of colonialism, mercantilism, and processes of urban-led industrialisation. Moreover, political power is remarkably concentrated in specific institutions of the national state excluding others. This means that one social class position has more access to the state than another. Latin America is characterised by having many rural areas with high concentrations of the poor. Finally, cultural patterns of migration and genocide of native people have left out communities whose language, ethnicity, race or gender distinguishes them from those who govern and control the state, excluding these groups from the discourse and the conceptions of the state; as a consequence, certain populations are distanced from the institutions and practices. (Davis, 1999)

The NSMs theory is also currently engaged in claims about middle-class struggles. Although recent contemporary Mexican mobilisations are promoted by middle-class actors, one distinction is centred on empowerment through the formation of horizontal interactions from below in order to join forces with different classes; unifying a variety of ideas and projects in the pursuit of their goals.

In the article: 'Globalizing Resistance: The New Politics of Social Movements in Latin America, in the journal Latin American Perspectives', Stahler-Sholk et. al (2007) consider:

'The origin and context of the upsurge of social movements, the strategies and dynamics of their struggles, and their outcomes and implications' (Stahler-Sholk et. al, 2007:6) as the main focus of analysis of three groups of concerns. These New Latin American Social Movements are characterised by the shared goals:autonomy from 'conventional/hierarchical political institutions'; horizontal and participatory process in the decision making and the search to construct ties of solidarity resulting from social justice connections; and a 'subjective identity' related to issues of ethnicity/gender.

In their critical evaluation of Latin American NSMs Stahler-Sholk et. al (2007) identify the following as vital elements: 'the Internet and other globalised communication, globalised networks of resistance, and the political space that democratisation has provided to create repertoires of resistance and action that are indeed new and subversive of traditional politics and traditional political culture'. (Stahler-Sholk et. al, 2007:7).

However, the NSMs approach is limited within the context mentioned above of Latin American studies of the role that Internet and social network sites play in the mobilisation of groups. Magallanes and Treré (2015:3653) in their latest work, 'Battlefields, Experiences, Debates: Latin American Struggles and Digital Media Resistance' make an assessment of the studies of social movements in Latin America in a context of digital communication technologies arguing that:

> Although much academic attention has been paid to these movements, we believe that recent uprisings and social movements in Latin America, and the roles they have played in the global scenario in relation to the use of digital communication technologies have not received similar consideration and scrutiny.

In the following section I will explore some of the theoretical contributions from the Internet Studies and Social Movements position in Mexico. I start by looking at the seminal work of the Mexican expert on social movements and the Internet, Galindo Cáceres (1997). His article: 'Comunidad Virtual y Cibercultura: el caso del EZLN en México', analyses Zapatistas' movements defining their communities online practices as 'collaborative spaces' where people can participate and construct meanings, with the possibility of sharing the values of what is constructed within these spaces in the virtual sphere. In this observation, he mentions that social relations through the Internet can be characterised by being horizontal social constructions, where there is not a specific 'centre', but rather forms of circulation and production.

An important element that Galindo (1997:17) takes into consideration is the technological infrastructure and the relation that it has with the culture. Galindo analyses the case of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), defining the Internet as a creative intelligence, where a diverse range of 'publics' can be connected such as:

1. Social networks of indigenous people and Internet users.

2. Social networks on Latin America issues, and Mexico in particular.

3. International social networks on Peace.

4. Social networks of Human Rights.

5. Social feminist networks on the Zapatista Agenda.

6. Social Networks on political issues, particularly related to local spaces, self-managed groups.

7. Search engines on Internet, on topics of interest of the international news agenda.

Galindo (1997), thus, identifies the creation of an international virtual community that gave visibility to this social movement. Finally, Galindo summarises how, through the concept of virtuality, a new form of social movement structure is enabling new forms of communication for social change.

Galindo and González's (2013:9) most recent book *#YoSoy132 La Primera Erupción Visible* have identified a recent prevailing outlook in the studies of social movements related 'to use, habits and consumption ('who', 'what', 'as')' that lacks complexity in considering sociocultural elements but leads to a broader comprehension of the social phenomena in a context of digital social network platforms. In their theoretical assumption, with respect to the case study of the #YoSoy132 social movement, it is suggested that although most Mexicans do not define themselves as activists, they are waiting to be activated, to mobilise, and are in a position to generate new and powerful social movements.

A significant contribution to the studies of social movements and digital ecosystems of communication is made by Galindo and González, (2013) based on their discussion on how traditional mass media can give a biased coverage of the movements and that activists' discourses can be empowered through social networking sites, which can counterbalance those versions produced by traditional mass media. In addition, for the authors, the construction of

identity is considered an essential element when these contemporary social movements invite the people to be part of them (Galindo and González 2013).

Galindo (2010) asserts that social networking sites on the Internet can be considered in the future field of Social Movements studies and Communication and the analysis of 'the structure of the new relations of tension between domination and collaboration' (Galindo, 2010:12-13). The author proposes a new field of study for when we translate this vision to the studies of social movements in a context of online digital platforms.

 In relation to the idea of inequality of access in Mexico, Meneses (2015b:40-41) argues that when the Internet is conceptualised for its 'democratic effectiveness' the 'inequality of Internet access' is crucial, since the Internet is not a reality for everybody in Latin America and the notion of digital citizenship is still incipient. Meneses (2015b) also considers a series of issues which are related to the have-nots phenomenon, such as the poor access to education for most of the Mexican youth population, the gap in the access to general knowledge and the low level of political participation. These issues considerably reduce citizen participation in the political sphere for social change in Mexico.

Meneses (2015) stresses in her analysis that, even though all these contemporary mobilisations in the context of digital ecosystems are creative in their communication, coverage and potential for amplifying their voice, it is as important that they are heard by those in power to change policies. This author concludes that the social virtual networks are not strong enough as a tool for the democratisation of Mexico, but they can be a force to counter-balance the traditional powers.

The author (2015b) also points out that virtual social networks in the case of Mexico, operate as an opponent for the political power, which has employed a range of strategies to counter-balance the citizen power. Among the strategies employed are the use of digital campaigns through 'trolls' or paying Internet users with a considerable Internet audience to defend the government in the digital public sphere, presenting public opinions, aiming to discourage online citizen participation.

After almost a decade Stahler-Sholk et. al (2007:14), assert that 'more theoretical work is needed on the outcomes of the social movements (…) to debate on the possibilities and pitfalls of organising contemporary social movements in Latin America' in the context of the Latin American New Social Movement's theory.

The main standpoints reviewed in this section of Social Movements and Internet from the perspective of Mexican Media Studies, indicate that there is still a lack of investigation into the contemporary scenario of political mobilisation groups and their relation with the digital communication ecosystems. However, the power of media in the construction of identity is recognised in these theoretical positions in the same ways as the NSMs considered in its assessment, highlighting the potential of the online spaces as a field of new struggles for citizen participation, remarking on the inequality of access to the Internet, the lack of education on Internet social practices and the impact these are having on the effectiveness for changing policies to the benefit of the people.

Despite the fact that the existing Latin American literature on the NSMs framework demonstrates the lack of significant outcomes for social change in Latin America, and the NSMs' inability to transform the social structures as the struggles are fragmented (Canclini, 2010), there are initial efforts, through these civic movements, to counterbalance the catastrophic consequences that neoliberal policies have brought to Latin American contexts due to the lack of efficient governance. (Canclini, 2004, Stahler-Sholk et. al, 2007, Alonso, 2015).

I would argue, in support of Galindo, 1997, that the studies analysed here are important because they add another layer of argumentation to this incipient field and indicate new theoretical and empirical possibilities to be further explored in the relation to the technological infrastructure within these online communities, which can generate spaces of togetherness and the different kind of social networks that can create social change through the contemporary social movements in Mexico.

These studies also highlight the prevailing inequality in the access of these digital platforms that can be potential forces in the process of democratisation and education for a vast majority of the Mexican youth and open up the possibility of using these digital platforms as online spaces that can be effective as civic participation tools (Meneses,2015b).

This thesis provides a strong contribution towards closing the existing gap in the Latin American literature on social movements and digital communication. For this thesis, the potential difficulties in applying western literature relates to the very different historical, cultural, economic and political contexts in which the social movement for peace in Mexico is positioned. The Latin American NSMs theoretical framework has a limited understanding of

the role of Internet and social networking practices and dynamics in grasping the rich complexity of contemporary mobilisations around the world, and in the recent Mexican mobilisations for peace in Mexico.

2.6   Social Movements and New Communication Technologies

One of the key questions in relation to the transformation of social movements through new technologies of communication relates to the extent to which the Internet encourages new identities, grievances, incentives to protest, and new terrains of contention, and if new technologies are contributing not only to the supply of protest but also the demand for it (Polleta et al., 2013). The authors highlight that the Internet has created new publics and new networks of sociability, explaining that 'people may signal their political commitments in such banal ways as modifying their status updates online or turning their Twitter pages green, but they may also encounter pressures to act further on those commitments' (Polleta et al., 2013:32). In general, however, such participation in a protest implies less risk and almost no difficulty. Additionally, participating in a protest has become a form of registering consumer preferences, transforming the protest into as much a repertoire of social activity as political or civic activity. Zomeren (2013:82) has criticised the work of Polleta et al., arguing that the authors do not answer key questions: 'How does online mobilization affect psychological self-relevance? How does it affect individuals' emotional experience?'

One of the most relevant impacts of new communication technologies is on the collective identity of social movements. For Taylor (2013:45), networks and social movement participation has been impacted by the use of virtual links, and identity can be constructed in this social context by using new communication technologies. Taylor asks if political contention that relies on the Internet is able to produce 'the social psychological elements necessary for consensus mobilization'. The author highlights that virtual networks may create distinctive forms of community and identity. All in all, information and communication technologies need to be taken into account by any theories of modern social movements (Minkoff, 2013). For Minkoff (2013:198-199), virtual networks are useful in the initial phase of the mobilisation, and can help 'the processes of grievance definition, collective identity formation, and joint action, which are integral to sustained social movement activity'. Minkoff

remarks on the relevance of studying the role of new communication technologies to better understand the link between collective identities and collective action.

It is undeniable that one of the aspects of social movements that has been changed is in relation to the identities that 'under the impact of social and technological change [have] become unprecedentedly multiple, fluid, and/or fragmented [...] it may be doubted whether identity is still a glue capable of holding social movements together' (Rotes, 2013:300). While face-to-face personal networks have remained the most powerful mediums of mobilisation, the speed of communication technologies allows for the emergence of new forms of rapid mobilisation.

Loose physical networks are vulnerable to infiltration by opponents or police, and webpages, e-mails, and social networks are monitored by intelligence officers, but even though they may be monitored, such is the speed of communication by Twitter and SMS that police are often unable to keep up, with the result that protest preserves its autonomous capacity to surprise (Rotes, 2013:304-305).

Personal networks may be akin to groups rather than solidaristic communities, and as such they may be held together by shared concerns rather than identity. An individual may, after all, have a variety of concerns that are shared with members of different networks but do not overlap, let alone cohere into a single identity. Shared identity facilitates solidarity, though it is unclear to what extent it is either sufficient or necessary. Do the new ICTs foster or fragment identity? If fragmentary identities are sufficient to sustain flash mobilisations, might they be sufficient to sustain a social movement? (Rotes, 2013:306).

Stekelenburg and Boekkooi (2013:217-220) highlight the mobilising strategies that are made possible for social movements in the context of new communication technologies. The authors notice a process of individuation in late modern societies, where the ties with organisations are flexible, but there can still be commitment to collective causes, characterised by the ease of joining and leaving – unlike with established groups such as trade unions. This process allows the individual to 'feel a personal sense of political responsibility rather than an obligation to a community or group'.

For these authors, it is essential to comprehend how strong the group connection is, and 'the time invested, the emotional intensity, intimacy, and mutual trust involved in membership'. The authors have referred to Web 1.0 as the 'older generation', where group connections were about a transmitter making an effort to grasp receivers who read, observed,

and used up information. For mobilisation processes this means that Web 1.0 was restricted to strengthening remaining practices and the situations of previously deep-rooted players. One of the most relevant changes brought by Web 1.0 was the 'supersizing effects' on the speed and dissemination of information reaching wider audiences. Meanwhile Web 2.0 is about 'many senders attempting to exchange information with many receivers via multiple media, where people write, produce, and influence the information', changing the dynamics of contention by a reduction of mobilisation and participation costs, an expansion of organisers and the tactical repertoire, a promotion of collective identity and the creation of networks. These processes characterise by decreasing communication and coordination costs, new technologies of communication allow the easier formation of mobilising structures and create new, low-cost forms of participation.

Another aspect to consider is the expansion of the tactical repertoire. The Internet can be used as a tool for organisers to facilitate organisation and coordination, taking into account all the new technologies of communication that allow activists to document actions and exchange messages, and engage with other tactical options, such as online petitions, e-mail bombings, and hacktivism. In addition, new technologies of communication can encourage collective identity in the following form:

> Social media sites offer several opportunities to display an identity, for instance, by adopting or donating a site or by placing [a so-called twibbon – a logo] specifically designed to place on social media sites […] offer people the chance to visibly display these cases to the virtual networks with which they identify. (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013:221)

Finally, new technologies allow the possibility of the creation of networks for mobilisation: 'the more people are socially embedded formally, informally, and virtually, the higher chances are that they will be targeted with a mobilizing message and keep to their promises to participate'. These fluid networks could develop with 'little planning', unrestrained and uncontrolled; However, mobilisations in the streets have solid structures and 'light structures and light identities make it harder to reach and motivate people' (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013:229). On the other hand, the authors stress that by examining only the solid structures, one may lose an opportunity to comprehend the entire mobilisation process.

Conclusion

This chapter has approached the analysis of social movements within the broad transformations that globalisation has brought about on the creation of communities, the role of new communication technologies in relation to the process of mobilisation, and the relevance of participation to the bringing together of people for collective action. Self-organised protests and political action, organised through loose networks crossing national boundaries, without a central coordination or affiliation, allow movements to simultaneously use diverse ways of organising and mobilising, blending online and offline efforts (Roggeband and Duyvendank, 2013).

Additionally, this chapter has presented an analysis of the definition of a social movement from different perspectives (Klandermans, 2013b, Diani, 2013, della Porta, 2006, Melucci, 1992, McAdam and Tilly, 2007), showing the different aspects of what structure a movement can take, and what organisations and strategies they can use to reach their goals. In addition, this chapter has taken into account the vital elements require to develop mobilisations, such as grievances and emotions.

This chapter progressed to examine different approaches towards the understanding of the requirements for the coordination of collective action: to establish by trust and cooperation between participants an identity formation, and to use a wider category of collective action frames that vindicate, dignify, and encourage collective action (della Porta, 2006). This chapter also analysed the requirement of continual construction, maintenance and renegotiation of collective identity, affecting social movements across their lifespan, and considering the important cultural dimension of the networks that source the themes, worldviews, ideologies, and practices used to articulate a collective identity (Taylor, 2013).

This chapter examined the new social movement theory, which suggests that contemporary social movements can be characterised as fundamentally novel due to the new forms of collective action, and their new goals, values, and constituents, and which sees the roots of NSMs in the specific properties of advanced industrial societies in the late 1970s. NSM theory focuses its analytical attention on the symbolic action and cultural aspects of civil society, involving an autonomous process of self-determination in which the identity plays a

central role. This part of the chapter looked at the perspectives of the main NSMs theorists, Manuel Castells, Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, and Jürgen Habermas (Buechler, 1995).

The last section of this thesis analysed key issues on the transformation of social movements. As individuals in late modern societies have come to prefer less rigid relationships with organisations over traditional rigid and hierarchical ones, they have become increasingly connected as individuals rather than as members of a community or group; they operate their own personal community networks.

Once the methodology of this research is addressed in the third chapter, this thesis aims to demonstrate through the analysis of data presented in chapters four and five the ways in which social movements for peace in Mexico have organised themselves have been transformed by all these elements explored above.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENT RESEARCH

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explain the methodology employed in this research, along with any related challenges. The use of social networking sites (SNSs) and the Internet for social movements has been continually increasingly in recent years, and they have been constantly used for several purposes such as organising mass street demonstrations, organisation, calls for actions, and informing people of events, to mention some of the most significant uses. The use of SNSs and the Internet inevitably entails the production and the reflection of new forms of data that can be used for analysis: using the Internet as a tool for research gives access to massive stores of multimedia material.

This chapter presents the main arguments supporting the use of a methodological approach based on the use of a qualitative approach that allows us to understand how individuals construct their social worlds and explains phenomena in their larger aspects, using the qualitative methods of online interviews, online nonparticipant observation and user comment analysis.

Conducting online interviews provides a number of advantages, and is an appropriate form for meeting participants that are geographically dispersed. Online interviewing can efficiently be combined with other data collection methods to strengthen the credibility and confirmability of the findings.

The online nonparticipant observation method allows researchers to obtain a detailed description of social settings or events in order to situate people's behaviour within their own socio-cultural context (Hennink et al., 2011:170). The use of online nonparticipant observation in this research project involved the collection of data from different SNSs and Internet sites,

produced by the different social movements for peace in Mexico on different digital platforms, and archives and news created by journalists that follow the phenomena closely.

Finally, to analyse the data collection online I used the comment user analysis method. As Price (2006) states, online discussions are more democratic than face-to-face encounters, leading to increased contributions by low-status participants. Participants in computer-mediated discussions also produce more enquiries, more self-disclosure, allowing closer and more direct questions than face-to-face encounters. Each of these methods are detailed in this chapter and these comprise the formal sources of my collection of data.

In addition, this chapter emphasises the use of innovative digital tools in the conduction of online research. The main existing approaches to analysing social movement issues in relation to the use of the Internet and SNSs have informed the methodology used in my research, and the forms in which the current discussions have directed the course of my analytical approach are considered in this chapter.

After detailing the methodology used in this research, I will specify certain ethical issues which relate to the specific objects of my study and to the process of choosing the sample for my study, issues which informed the research process.

3.2   Qualitative Approach for the Online Research of Social Movements

As discussed in the previous two chapters, this thesis examines how social movements in Mexico use online social networks and social media, how online social media change the nature of political action in Mexican social movements and how social movements using social networks might transform the status quo of Mexican politics.

For the purpose of my research thesis 'New Social Movements and Social Media Uses: Mexicans' mobilisation for peace' I used a mainly qualitative research approach that consists of an explanatory, realistic methodology to understand the world. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005:3) argue: 'qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them'. Hesse-Bibber (2010) explains that the qualitative approach focuses its objectives on trying to understand how individuals create the meaning of their social world and how people construct the meaning of the experiences they take part in (Merriam, 2009). This means that 'the social

world is created through social interactions of individuals with the world around them', it is not something defined by individual perceptions, but instead socially constructed (Kracauer, 1952:638). In this regard, a qualitative approach is appropriate for this thesis, as it is interested in the analysis of voices, opinions and experiences from the activists, journalists and experts on the use of the Internet and SNSs for social movements for peace in Mexico, and in understanding the diverse meanings and interpretations of how new information and communication technology represents an opportunity to empower and mobilise people and construct a collective identity for collective action.

From the perspective of Denzin (2010:271), objective reality cannot be apprehended completely. 'In depth understanding, the use of multiple validities, not a single validity, a commitment to dialogue is sought in any interpretive study': this is a part of what a qualitative research approach can offer. The qualitative research for Guest et al. (2013:4) provides to the research design a 'theoretical sampling strategy' that allows the researcher the opportunity to make modifications to the sampling processes that rely on the incoming data for the period of the data collection process.

The qualitative approach explores the content by making an explanation in as much depth as possible. Qualitative methods are especially effective at describing complex processes; answering questions about people's form of engaging with the world; qualitative research questions permit more flexibility, and an interviewer is usually allowed to make enquiries in a flexible way, to guarantee the participant has comprehended them properly (Guest et al., 2013). The authors highlight flexibility as a characteristic of the qualitative data collection approach, suggesting a distinctive benefit over quantitative analysis. One of the most remarkable advantages is the facility to examine opinions and observations further as required to achieve more exhaustive explanations and descriptions of understanding, actions, and beliefs. Additionally, for the authors, the qualitative research method affords an 'interpretive perspective': this approach offers several certainties in contrast to examining for one objective reality. Also, qualitative research can be deployed in a context where the researchers need to be sensitive to the views of the people involved in the research (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002).

For Flick (2014:5), the analysis of qualitative data has numerous benefits when attempting to describe a phenomenon in greater detail. Geertz (1973) similarly refers to 'thick description', describing, analysing and interpreting. This means that the subjective experiences of a specific individual or group can be part of the analysis of the qualitative data. In the same

way, it is important to take into account that the modes of 'communicating in new media channels and through new technological devices produce new forms of data, which can be used for analysis in these phenomena' (Flick, 2014:13).

Three of the characteristics of the qualitative approach in the perspective of Markham (2006:5) are that 'research questions change throughout the course of the study; methods are derived in the context of the study and not pre-determined, and researchers engage in strong reflexivity about their role in the production of knowledge'.

For Dicks (2012), the digital revolution suggests numerous important benefits for researchers, for example the facility to create continual, identical reproductions of the same material and to fluently interchange this data amongst diverse media while keeping the information safe, and the capability to produce, access and accumulate this information through personal computers and other digital devices. But for Mosca (2014:397), it also represents a challenge for researchers, as they 'should be more reflexive on the kind of data they collect online'.

In the context of the study of social movements, Murthy (2008:844-845) states that SNSs can be useful to a qualitative approach because: 'they contain vast stores of multimedia material regarding even the most marginal social movements or groups; pages can be created by social researchers with the explicit purpose of conducting research online'. In addition, using the Internet as a tool for research 'opens up the possibilities of studying projects which might have seemed impracticable before' (Mann and Stewart, 2000:80). In the case of my thesis research, social movements for peace in Mexico have created substantial spaces online for collective action, making available a wide range of multimedia material for a qualitative analysis. In addition, the mainstream media have used SNSs to publish links to news stories, generating an online space where debate occurs through user comments, representing another possibility for a qualitative research approach to examine their opinions and experiences on the topic of study. To this end, I created a Facebook account to contact potential participants to my research thesis project.

When considering a research methodology, it should be considered that 'while social movement studies have not dedicated enough attention to online methods, there are plenty of

publications in the social sciences that provide useful insights when reflecting on online methods for studying collective action' (Mosca, 2014:398). Postill and Pink (2012:125) mention that 'doing research about social media and activism entails [...] bringing together relevant online materials and either following or actively participating in blogs, social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), online news sites (both professional and amateur), and face-to-face events'. These sources of material are further expanded on by Mosca (2014:397), who suggests that when attempting to collect information about the history of the social movement – their claims, organisations, and actions – 'documents, comments, posts, and tweets on individual blogs, websites, and social media profiles of groups and activists can be accessed'.

Choi and Woo (2014) stress the idea that SNSs have been influential in the mass street demonstrations of 2011, such as those in Iran, Tunisia, and Egypt. This kind of action has exposed the potential of SNSs to support mobilisation.

For my thesis research project, I used the qualitative approach in collecting the online material, though contrary to Postill and Pink I did online nonparticipant observation without participating actively in social media platforms or new online sites. Attending face-to-face events was not possible because of the geographical scope, time and financial constraints.

The online presence of social movements can be helpful to study '[…] interactions taking place online, movement communicative practices, the role of the Internet in shaping (and being shaped by) organizational and democratic practices, framing and mobilizing processes, and so on' (Mosca, 2014:397).

Concerning the third point mentioned above regarding the 'strong reflexivity' in the role of producing knowledge, it was essentially an everyday exercise throughout the process of my thesis research project to take into account the context of violence where these social movements emerged and my subjective position as a researcher towards my object of study.

Taking also into account an everyday ethical position persisted to me what Malthaner (2014:188) reflects on when conducting qualitative research: 'with victims of severe human rights violations, researchers need to be aware of the fact that reliving traumatic events may involve some degree of re-traumatization and should prepare by consulting psychologists or therapists specialized in the field'. For this reason, during my thesis research project I decided not to conduct qualitative interviews with victims of the violence in Mexico. I did, however, take into account data collected from the Internet of the testimonies of such victims. Van De

Ven (2007:269-270) defines two positions of the researcher, 'the outsider', implying a 'detached, impartial, onlooker who gathers data', and an 'inside researcher [...] a participant immersed in the actions and experiences within the system being studied'. In this context, the qualitative approach that I used during the research project was that of an 'outsider'.

All in all, a 'strong reflexivity' has followed me throughout this research process, ahead of the object of study, to maintain my ethical research position. In the perspective of Milan (2014:447), it is essential to reflect on certain valuable questions such as 'to whom should research matter?' In other words, researchers should critically explore the purposes their research might serve, its intended and unintended consequences, what audiences are addressed, and which data serve which ends. In addition, I asked myself, because of the nature of the research, how to psychologically handle the data collected on the Internet in relation to the human tragedy in the context of the war on drugs. I adopted a reflection of one of the Mexican activists (Rizzo, 2013) that I recurred to on a regular basis during this research journey, remembering that 'It is important to develop a stomach, and the ability to be moved, the ability to know that what you are registering "is not happening to me", although it is part of the social circumstances'. In this regard I also attended the Nottingham Trent University counselling student service to develop skills in the management of emotions that developed through the study of this sensitive topic.

As my thesis project uses the Internet and social network sites for conducting my qualitative research, I considered the idea of Hazelton (2002) that defines the Internet as a 'conversation', considering that 'messages tend to be informal, phrased in conversational form, and often engender a great deal of direct interchange' (Shank and Cunningham, 1996:29). Evans et al. (2008:315) state that the Internet can 'provide ready access to an extensive range of diverse narratives'. Thus data collection for Flick (2014:3) could be limited 'to recording and documenting naturally occurring phenomena'.

However, the Internet as a medium of communication allows not just interactions, but the 'performance of identity and community' (Markham, 2011:114), in which conception the Internet is also a method for reaching out to participants or information. One of the main aspects that Markham (2011:16) stresses is that Internet research can be designed without 'the restrictions of proximity or geography [...] participants can be selected on the basis of their appropriate fit within the research questions rather than their physical location or convenience to the researcher'.

The advantages Markham notes with regard to the Internet as a research tool were particularly germane for me. As a Mexican doctoral research student conducting my thesis research project in England, challenges for reasons such as geographical scope, time and financial constraints were to an extent ameliorated through the use of the Internet as a medium for research. At the same time, however, I was aware of Markham's (2014:120) warning, where she highlights that even though such research practices can extend our scope, facilitate data collection, or allow social interaction, the 'application of these methods must remain grounded in the fundamentals of rigorous and systematic qualitative research methods'.

Markham and Buchanan (2012:3-4) have presented a definition of Internet research, saying that an inquiry that involves any of the following constitutes such research describing the processes and potential methodologies that can be applied:

> [A study of] how people use and access the internet [or a study which] utilizes or engages
> in data processing, analysis, or storage of datasets, databanks, and/or repositories
> available via the studies software, code, and internet technologies [or] employs visual and
> textual analysis, semiotic analysis, content analysis, or other methods of analysis to study
> the web and/or internet-facilitated images, writings, and media forms.

Curasi (2001:374) states that for future research it is necessary to have: 'an open mind focused on attempting to better understand how the Internet can be used in the future'. This formulation allows creativity in the research of Internet studies, which corresponds to the online research practice explored by James and Busher (2012:188), which requires 'an epistemology and ontology of research that stresses "the hybrid and unfinished character of cyberspace"' (Teli et al., 2007).

3.3   Collection of Data

The purpose of data collection is to answer my thesis research question on how social movements in Mexico use online social networks and social media, how online social media change the nature of political action in Mexican social movements and how social movements using social networks might transform the status quo of Mexican politics for peace. According to the statistics (AMIPCI, 2014) Mexico had 51.2 million Internet users in 2013, of whom 77%

use SNSs. The most popular SNSs amongst Mexican users are Facebook with 51 million users.[4] Twitter with 8.1 million users,[5] and YouTube with 10 million users.[6]

The SNSs were key sites of analysis in relation to the social movements for peace. One of the main methodological challenges was collecting the online data in social media platforms. As the MPJD came to hold a prominent position in the traditional media, the agenda moved promptly into different aspects in the pursuit of social change for peace in Mexico. It took a considerable amount of time to identify online spaces where conversations could be used for the analysis, as the social media pages for peace in Mexico were not themselves interactive conversations. At the beginning, the MPJD website was essential to trace potential contacts to be interviewed for this study and to follow social media spaces created to communicate their messages.

I took a sample of 4,446 messages that were collected from Facebook pages, YouTube, MPJD website movement, and Twitter; consisting of conversations and messages in relation to the mobilisations for peace in Mexico. I selected ten profile groups on Facebook related to social movements for peace in Mexico: this list was selected from the website of MPJD, to map the main discussions in their publications. I analysed 17 news stories published on the Facebook profile pages of the political magazine *Proceso*. I selected this weekly political magazine for the analysis, as it is considered a contemporary informative reference on issues relevant to Mexican political life and enjoys national distribution. In addition, I analysed 557 messages published on the website of the MPJD, 478 new stories from Mexican national newspapers in relation to the MPJD and 1,040 tweets from one of the accounts of the MPJD.

Six of the Facebook profile pages are for groups located outside of Mexico (in Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, England and Switzerland) and four are in Mexico, of which one is the MPJD. All these groups are linked to the MPJD, although they have developed their own agenda and demonstrations. I analysed quantitatively every post published on Facebook by each group in an Excel spreadsheet, in which I registered the main subject discussed in each post.

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[5] Ampudia, A. (20 May 2015) México tendrá 8.1 millones de usuarios de Twitter al 2015, *El economista*. Retrieved from http://eleconomista.com.mx/tecnociencia/2015/05/20/mexico-tendra-81-millones-usuarios-twitter-2015 (Accessed 15 August 2015)

[6] http://www.socialbakers.com/

I also selected the Facebook profile page of the Mexican magazine *Proceso*. This was the main publication to have news on the social movement for peace and during 2011 and 2012, when the social movement for peace in Mexico had important mobilisations, a great variety of comments were produced by the users in the news posted on the Facebook profile page of this publication in relation to the MPJD. In comparison with the ten profile pages on Facebook of groups related to social movements for peace in Mexico, the profile page on Facebook for *Proceso* allowed the analysis of 783 messages produced across 17 news articles. This is relevant to this project because the discussions are produced in these profile pages and not in the virtual spaces of the social movement groups. One of the hypotheses for this behaviour is that the profile page on Facebook of the publication has considerably more users than those of the social movement groups. What these messages have in common is that they are about the MPJD, through which the social movement gained considerable visibility in the mainstream media.

In addition, I have selected 436 news articles from 17 Mexican newspapers published during 2011-2013, choosing this period because it was when the social movement and demonstrations were most active. The aim was to explore the main issue of the MPJD as reported by the media and the data provided the secondary benefit of helping to locate the journalists involved in the debate for interview. For Earl et al. (2004:76), the use of newspaper data on protest events has facilitated the supplementary study of social movements. The authors remark that there are many important questions around social movements that cannot be addressed with data on protest events, because data on the rate and/or characteristics of protest events cannot shed light on the less public face of social movements. These questions of interest for the authors concern 'internal organizational dynamics, movement decision making, and leadership, for instance'.

As part of my data collection, I used Google Trends, which was suggested by the activist Alberto Escorcia during the interview via Skype. Google Trends is a public web facility of Google Inc., based on Google Search, which shows how often a particular search term is entered relative to the total search volume across various regions of the world, and in various languages. In this form the graphic shows the data from 2011-2013, using the terms 'peace', 'narcotraffic', 'deaths', 'Beltrán Leyva' (who was a cartel boss whose death produced an increase of violence in Morelos), and '2011', when the main discussions around peace in Mexico took place:
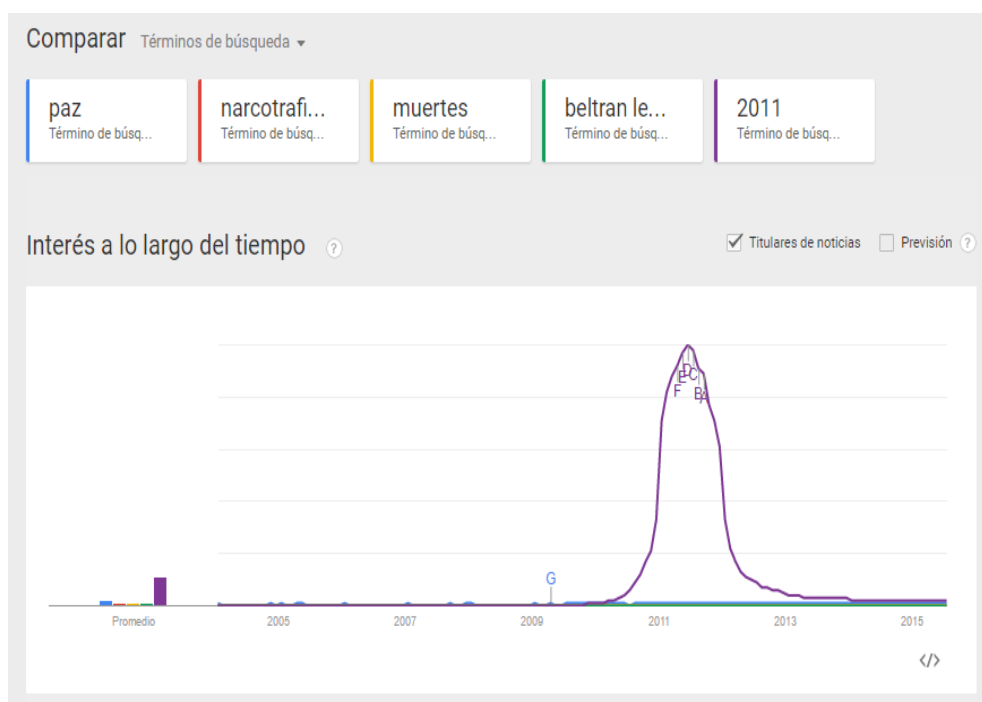
Fig. 1. Google trends.

I selected, the five most popular videos published on YouTube in relation to the MPJD. Two of these videos are about a campaign launched in 2012 to create awareness of the victims of the war on drugs. The aim was to analyse the comments to observe the positions and views of the MPJD's members. The other three videos contained material which had first been transmitted in the mainstream media.

I also selected the website of the MPJD – where they published a variety of posts (557 posts) including news, press releases, pronouncements, calls for demonstrations, etc. – in order to analyse the discussions of the MPJD itself. The results show that most of the publications relate to claims of justice for the victims of the violence in Mexico, notes about the three caravans that the MPJD made in Mexico and USA, and publications about the demonstrations.

3.4 Online Interviews for Social Movement Research

The original idea of this thesis research project was to conduct face-to-face interviews in Mexico. However, this was not feasible. I was located in England and conducting my research online throughout my PhD studies and it would have been very expensive to travel to different parts of Mexico and work together with each participant face-to-face.

In addition, some of the participants were located in different parts of the world, such that travelling there would have been unaffordable, as Nottingham Trent University was unable to offer financial support. The change in this methodological approach led to the fieldwork taking two years, from 2011 to 2013. Another reason for the delay was the fact that my three applications for funding the field work in situ proved unsuccessful.

Since the beginning of this thesis project, the focus of analysis of the research has been The MPJD and the mobilisations for peace in the context of the war on drugs. In December 2012, the cycle of collective action of the MPJD decreased considerably and the MPJD and its repertoire of contention decreased; the main leader of the movement, Javier Sicilia announced his return to academic life and he expressed the necessity to retire for a brief period of time with part of his family to France. As the journalist Daniela Pastrana wrote in her article: 'The movement for peace in the future: Grow leaderless'.[7]

Initially I randomly took some contacts of a press release from the website of the MPJD published on July 8th 2012[8] but also, I created a Facebook account where I sent some invitations to journalists, media creators and activists. It is important to mention that some of the people I contacted by e-mail provided me with an online interview, even though they were unable to give me some potential interviewees.

Qualitative interviews are a window into the everyday world of activists, and they generate representations that embody the subjects' voices, minimizing, at least as much as possible, the voice of the researcher (Ragin and Amoroso, 1994). In the case of this research project, qualitative interviews provided a space to look into the visions of journalists and experts who were included in my research thesis interviews. Evans et al. (2008:320) explain that '[the use of] online interviews negates the need to budget for transport costs', while Knox and Bukard (2009) and Novick (2011) stress that conducting online interviews is a suitable way to encounter participants who are geographically dispersed; having as a benefit the cost-efficiency of not needing to travel, which might be fairly attractive to researchers.

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[7] Pastrana, D. (19 December, 2012) La carta del poeta que se va, Expansión en alianza con CNN. Retrieved from http://expansion.mx/nacional/2012/12/19/la-carta-del-poeta-que-se-va (Accessed 3rd May 2016)
[8] EXHORTO DE LA SOCIEDAD CIVIL A PUBLICAR LA YA PROMULGADA LEY GENERAL DE VÍCTIMAS, (8th July,2012) https://libertadyconcordia.wordpress.com/2012/07/08/exhorto-de-la-sociedad-civil-a-publicar-la-ya-promulgada-ley-general-de-victimas/ (Accessed 3rd May 2016)

Hanna (2012:240) puts stress on 'how practical benefits of scheduling the interview and freedom to shift times at the last minute were also suggested as advantageous due to the often busy lives of research participants'. In addition, Liccope and Morel (2012:400) point out that 'more recently, with the development of third-generation (3G) mobile networks, video telephony has become available on handheld devices such as PDAs and mobile phones'.

Further advantages include the fact that researchers can take extensive notes of an interview without making participants feel uncomfortable, and that response bias may be reduced in the absence of facial expressions. Shuy (2003) offers the view that conducting interviews by phone improves researcher safety and facilitates faster results.

On the 3 and 4 July 2013, I participated in the conference: 'Rebuilding National Imaginaries, Reasserting Torn Social Fabrics: Reactions to Violence and Disappearance in Latin America, an Interdisciplinary Approach'[9], organised by the Institute of Advanced Study at the University of Durham, United Kingdom, where I had the opportunity to contact some of the participants who agreed to take part in the online interviews.

I conducted 26 online interviews with ten activists, eight persons who are activists and experts, three journalists, three experts and two digital media producers from 163 invitations that I sent through e-mail and Facebook, with each interview lasting around 45-60 minutes. Two of the interviews were handled through e-mail because the subjects preferred to answer in that form. Knox and Bukard (2009:5) stress the idea that 'participants could be permitted to choose how their interview is conducted, in the hope that they would be more forthcoming in the approach with which they were most comfortable'.

Kitto and Barnett (2012:335) further state that 'e-mail interviews can provide an efficient mechanism for gathering data online', and note that another potential benefit to e-mail interviews is that 'responses may represent participants' more considered judgment because they have had the opportunity to examine their answers, reflect on and rethink their positions, and edit the products'.

I followed Smith and Weber's (2000) suggestion to send an initial introductory e-mail describing how the interview would proceed. I considered in the e-mails the ethical aspects about how the information provided will be used. Salmons (2011:11) considers precision and

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[9] Rebuilding National Imaginaries, Reasserting Torn Social Fabrics: Reactions to Violence and Disappearance in Latin America, an Interdisciplinary Approach (July 2013), *Institute of Advanced Study, University of Durham* Retrieved from https://www.dur.ac.uk/reactions.violence-disappearance.latinamerica/ (Accessed 5 May 2014).

clarity to be important components of the research design, because without them there could potentially be a misunderstanding, saying that: 'researchers and research participants need to know what is expected of them, why and when'.

This phase was a crucial first step to gain the personal trust of the interviewees. As the thesis project is about a sensitive topic, the communication process with the potential participants was a key to engagement, as Salmons (2012: XVII) puts it, to 'build mutual respect to elicit information-rich responses'. Underscoring the need for sensitivity, one of the most common questions from the interviewees in this process was if I work for the Mexican Government, with one of the participants confusing the initials of my university e-mail, 'PGR' meaning 'Post Graduate Researcher', with the Procuraduría General de la República (Attorney General of Mexico), an organ of the federal executive in Mexico that is primarily responsible for investigating and prosecuting federal crimes. It was thus important for me to communicate clearly that I was a doctoral research student conducting research for academic purposes. Mann and Stewart (2000:143) suggest, in a different perspective, the importance of sensitivity to sustaining a relationship based on understanding, and the value for an interview of being able '[to deal] with sensitive issues and/or potentially embarrassing or conflictual interaction'.

Therefore, the interviewer might consider a disclosure process, revealing personal information about himself/herself or the research project to encourage participants to disclose personal information about themselves (Moon, 2000). Ideally, this informative self-disclosure allows a progressive reciprocity between interviewer and participant. Fontana and Frey (1994:367) point out that it is necessary to have an attitude of empathy, putting oneself in the role of the respondents and perceiving the situation from their point of view instead of imposing 'the world of academia and preconceptions upon them'.

One of the most important elements that the researcher must take into account when dealing with political activists is observed by Milan (2014:454), who notes the responsibility for researchers 'to protect the identity and privacy of activists by negotiating the level of disclosure of sensitive information, up to the point of avoiding using real names and disclosing information that might facilitate identification to third parties'.

While reciprocity with an interview subject is in many ways a positive, a close rapport with participants could challenge the distance and objectivity of the researcher, objectivity which is necessary to allow reflection on the subject. As such, the researcher must take care to avoid 'losing his or her distance and objectivity, or [he or she] may "go native" and become a

member of the group and forgot the academic role' (Mann and Stewart, 2000:82). The authors add that gaining access to participants is part of a qualitative approach and that this relationship is fundamental from the initial stages of the research process. It is also relevant to mention that during this phase I received invitations: as Ryen (2002) discusses, interview participants of some cultural groups may expect a collaborative and cooperative relationship with researchers, one that extends outside of or well beyond the research study. In this study this happened in two forms. Firstly, I was asked to consider joining a group of scholars and activists who develop a varied agenda on studies that contribute to the understanding of complex topics in relation to violence and neoliberalism in Mexico. Secondly I was invited to participate by allowing some of the material collected during my PhD studies to be published on the website of one civil organisation. On this point Knox and Bukard (2009:9) emphasise that 'rather than merely collecting data and leaving the community, the researcher may also be expected to help design and implement interventions to address and improve the community from which the data were collected'.

I also used the research technique of 'snowballing', which Mann and Stewart (2000:79) explain involves finding potential participants recommended by others, especially people who had participated in the interviews themselves. A point of relevance when online interviews are conducted as part of a research study highlighted by Salmons (2012:13) is that the identity of the interviewee needs to be verified, whether 'by membership in a group, organization or reliable administrative list [such as lists for organizations or associations'. In my case of study, potential participants belonged to different social network sites where they interact, most particularly Facebook where some of them were contacted. In the case of the journalists, their identities could be verified through the websites where they publish their articles. One key strategy that I followed to identify potential participants was through the mailing list of the MPJD; a list of organisations and people that supported the actions of the social movement was located at the end of their releases.

The interviewees were from eight countries, the audio was recorded with the digital software Audacity, which I learned to use during this process. The interviews were conducted from December 2013 to January 2014 using the Skype application. I did not use video recording principally for one reason: the available Internet bandwidth in Mexico is too slow to support video conferencing, when I tried to video record the interviews the video call frequently cut off. As such, using only audio recording represented a suitable option, and from these

recordings I typed the transcriptions of the interviews using a word processor, which took me a month (February 2014).

When considering interviews as a qualitative method for the collection of data, O'Connor and Madge (2000) suggest that they can provide 'high levels of self-consciousness, reflexivity and interactivity'. Borer and Fontana (2012:47) debate how the postmodern context has changed the roles of the interviewer and interviewee, because the traditional relationship can reproduce 'societal power dynamics', where ideally 'new forms of communication in interviewing are being used, as interviewer and respondent(s) collaborate together in constructing their narratives.'

For Klandermans and Staggenborg (2002:95-96), the use of interviews to investigate social movements provides the opportunity to learn about 'the context of motivations, beliefs, and attitudes of social movement participants'. In addition, it allows investigation 'into the individual and their collective visions, imaginings, hopes, expectations, critiques of the present, and projections of the future on which the possibility of collective action rests and through which social movements form, resist, or disperse'. It was through the online interviews that I had access to the possibilities expressed by these authors.

Klandermans and Staggenborg also stress the opportunities presented by interviews to have a 'longitudinal window on social movement activism'.

> The rhythms of social movement growth and decline, and participant involvement and withdrawal over time, allows the understanding of social movement outcomes as the construction of collective and individual identities and finally interviews bring human agency to the centre of movement analysis (Klandermans and Staggenborg, 2002:95-96).

In the same way, as mentioned before, online interviews allow the in-depth investigation of details of the social movement important to the formation of the collective identity.

It is important to discuss how online interviews – in the view of Salmons (2012:11) – must be 'conducted [...] in accordance with ethical research guidelines; verifiable research participants [must] provide informed consent before participating in any interview'. Salmons concludes that more reflexive work needs to be done to examine the online interview data collection process itself.

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Milan (2014:447) remarks on the position of the researcher in relation to the social movement's values and practices, providing an 'ethically informed positioning' that is fundamental 'not only in view of gaining access, but also to further reciprocal understanding and mutual respect, and the preservation of necessary boundaries between the two groups'.

In the same way, Salmons (2012:21) states that videoconferencing 'closely compares with face to face dialogue, so it can be used with semi-structured or unstructured styles'. Mann and Stewart (2000:131) suggest that conducting online interviews 'might generate more data from participants' through the use of 'highly interactive "real-time" forms of CMC'. Watlher (1992) highlights that computer mediated communication can allow the development of 'warm relationships'; he argues that the same factors that motivate people to cultivate relationships in different contexts can apply in online environments.

Another aspect that can improve the relation between researcher and participant in the conduct of online interview is the visual anonymity that is present online, which 'may make it easier to discuss more sensitive topic or state unpopular views' (James and Busher, 2012:181), while Knox and Bukard (2009:4) state that participants 'may use a pseudonym and thereby not fully identify themselves'.

It is also relevant to mention how the space of the researcher and participant can remain 'neutral' and a 'safe location' during the online interview. As Hanna (2012:241) discusses, an online interview means that 'the researched can remain in the comfortable location of their home while being interviewed without the sense the researcher is encroaching on their personal space, while the researcher avoids the feeling of imposing themselves physically within the participant's personal space'.

In my research project I only recorded the audio of the online interviews, and did not record video. As mentioned above, in the case of Mexico in particular there were bandwidth issues preventing a stable video connection – Mexico has the lowest Internet speeds in Latin America[10] – but in addition, my computer during the interview period was a mini-laptop Hewlett-Packard 110, which lacked sufficient hardware for the recording of video.

Moreover, as Folkman (2001:372) suggests: 'Online interviewing can effectively be triangulated, or combined with other data collection methods to strengthen the credibility and

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[10] México con velocidad de Internet más baja que países de AL (16 April 2014) *Economíahoy.mx*. Retrieved from http://www.economiahoy.mx/telecomunicacion-tecnologia-mx/noticias/5713135/04/14/Mexico-con-velocidad-de-Internet-mas-baja-que-paises-de-AL.html#.Kku8u4vy0X9owEm

confirmability of the findings', thereby increasing 'the validity or the trustworthiness of an investigation'. This means that online interviews are effectively complementary with the collection of qualitative or quantitative data, as Salmons (2012:12-13) indicates, 'through online observation or participant observation, questionnaires or surveys'. The online interview itself can be conducted through 'phone, mobile device, or computer' (Salmons, 2012:3).

Prior to the interview period, a number of the participants had already taken part in pilot interviews over the Internet using Skype. Mann and Stewart (2000:134) stress that 'the good practice of conducting a pilot study [...] may contribute to the success of research where either interviewers or participants are technological novices'. On this point it is important to mention that through pilot interviews I learned to sort out the technological challenges of how to use the audio software to successfully record the interviews. Most of the participants in the pilot phase accepted a second interview to ensure that audible digital files were recorded.

James and Busher (2012:188) suggest that Skype can be used either to talk or make video calls, and also stress how social networking sites such as Facebook are now being explored as a venue where 'live' interviews can take place, rather than questions being sent via e-mail. As such, I tried using the more suitable form of communication available to me, choosing eventually to use the voice call functionality that Skype provides.

Another relevant point of consideration when conducting online interviews is in relation to organising timing, taking into account the times zones depending on the country of the participants. The difference of hours could allow for example that an appointment made on 23 January for the interviewer would be on 24 January for the participant. It is therefore highly recommend that the date and time be confirmed twice via the Internet, to ensure that there is no misunderstanding of the appointment time.

Having scheduled the online interview appointment, it is important, as Mann and Stewart (2000:127) advice, to take into consideration what the authors call 'communication differences between media', specifically understanding that the transmission of information depends on the available bandwidth. This reflection comes up as a contrast between the richness that face-to-face interaction is assumed to allow, against the narrow bandwidth of computer mediated communication (Sala, 1998). As it concerns the handling of online interviews, two factors appeared that challenged the successful recording of good quality digital audio. Firstly, the bandwidth of the participants varied depending on the country, as a consequence the online call through Skype was sometimes dropped, in some cases more than

twice, and it was therefore necessary to attempt a reconnection and resumption of the interview. Secondly, some of the participants used mobile phones with Internet access, one of them for example was travelling when the interview took place, and in such situations the Internet connection was more susceptible to disconnection.

When assessing my decision to conduct online interviews for my thesis research project, it is vital to consider what Folkman (2001:362) discusses about the automatic restriction this implies on the potential interviewee pool 'to those individuals who have access to the Internet [...] data collected online are not representative of the attitudes and experiences of the general population'. Some of the potential participants had no access to the Internet or have the facilities necessary to use Skype, and in this concern I took the qualitative analysis of multimedia material to be analysed. Salmons (2012:12-13) writes that 'technology may be selected by the researcher based on preferred kinds of data (visual, verbal, text) or by the participant based on familiarity, availability or access', and as such it is vital to know from potential interviewees what tools are available to them to use.

3.5 Online Nonparticipant Observation

At the outset of my thesis study, I planned to conduct online participant observation, commonly known as ethnography of the Internet (Hine, 2000). However, it was not possible because of the lack of engagement of participants on the social network sites, both on Facebook groups created for the purpose of the social movement for peace in Mexico, and on the webpage of the MPJD. Online participant observation (Hine, 2000) involves participation by the researcher in the processes of interactions, activities and understanding of those in the online spaces, or as Wittel (2000) puts it in his work *Ethnography on the Move: From Field to Net to Internet*, a 'thick description of the network, its dynamic and the interplay of relations between people, things, activities and meanings.' The strength of findings from such observations depends not only on the observations themselves, but also on the participations that contributed to the outcomes. Online participant observation demands 'rather than lurking or downloading archives, to engage with participants' (Hine, 2000:23). The reason for this engagement is because the researcher as an active participant can more deeply understand the meaning of the online message created. In this form the researcher is 'visible and active' within the online setting. 'Questions can be asked and emerging analytic concepts tested and refined' (Hine, 2000:23). All in all, the researcher could discover the concerns, feelings and commitments of the study subjects.

Given this methodological limitation preventing an ethnographic study for this research, I selected instead the method of online nonparticipant observation, specifically of online material published on the Facebook page of the magazine *Proceso* and comments from five YouTube videos related to the MPJD, where ordinary users publish their opinions on the topics. While undoubtedly valuable, these online spaces do not provide the settings of an online community necessary to conduct an ethnography of the Internet.

The aim of the selection of online nonparticipant observation was to carry out an analysis of how social movements in Mexico are portrayed in online social networks and social media, and to examine the socio-political complexities within which the social movements for peace in Mexico are embedded. For Williams (2008:561), nonparticipant observation is a 'relatively unobtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspect of the social world without interacting directly with its participants'; it is also useful to conduct nonparticipant observation without a physical presence in the natural setting. One of the reasons Williams (2008:561) gives to engage in nonparticipant observation is where there is 'limited access or no access to a particular group and therefore [the researcher] may not have the opportunity to engage in participant observation'. Another reason to prefer nonparticipant observation is in situations where participant observation would be unsafe or difficult. The author gives as an example riots or protests in which the researcher can depend on film or video for the observation of historical social phenomena. Thirdly, the author remarks that the researcher may be required less in the 'subjectively experienced dimensions of social action'.

The observational method is considered the foundation of science, the backbone of all scientific research (Marvasti, 2014:354) and the essential root of all research methods considered as discreet as possible (Angrosino and Rosenberg, 2008). Moreover, Mann and Stewart (2000:65) note that observational techniques are quite commonly used when conducting qualitative research, mixing this method with others such as interviewing: 'there are forms of data collection where there is a lower level of interaction with the researcher and a stronger emphasis on documentary analysis, such as journals, diaries, and autobiographical approaches'. From the same perspective, Hennink et al. (2011:170) highlight that 'observation can be used as a stand-alone method, but it is also useful for complementing other methods of data collection'.

The observation method allows researchers 'to systematically observe and record people's behaviour, actions and interactions. The method also allows researchers to obtain a detailed description of social settings or events in order to situate people's behaviour within their own socio-cultural context' (Hennink et al., 2011:170). Surman and Reilly (2003:50) highlight that observation refers to a broad range of activities that extend from research to 'intelligence gathering'. The authors say that a practical form of online nonparticipant observation in the civil society sector is the collection and combining of information, including 'the sort of peer mailing lists and research networks [...] that feed into informal collective intelligence networks'.

This methodology can be applied to online nonparticipant observation of SNSs and people's behaviours and online interactions where the range of material available is accessible to be systematically observed. For Williams (2008), the open access and anonymity of the Internet and SNSs can be an opportunity for nonparticipant observers, who can collect information from a community by reading the contents without belonging to it or having to post information themselves.

Moreover, Bíró et al. (2012:53) point out that examining documents on the Internet is another method of online nonparticipant observation: 'social media offerings, such as discussion newsgroups, weblogs, chats and online communities provide interesting and informative data as documented opinions and experiences of the web users'.

Some of the advantages of online nonparticipant observation that Bíró et al. (2012:53-54) underline include that research contents are commonly 'automatically logged', that 'through the virtual presence of the researcher, the participants are less influenced than through a "real" presence', and that there is 'openness through anonymity, the data sources are authentic and not created primarily for research aims'. Online nonparticipant observation sources can provide insights for authors which are probably not available through interviews. In the view of Angrosino and Rosenberg (2008:164), a further potential advantage to the use of the Internet as a vehicle for qualitative research is the potential for access to individuals who are unwilling to communicate directly.

Some of the disadvantages of this methodology relate to ethical problems concerning the use of data. With this in mind, all the data collected systematically through online nonparticipant observation was rendered anonymous. Additional potential issues include the concerns that conclusions made on real behaviour based on virtual behaviour might be

ambiguous and error-prone, that the real identity of the observed people can often not be assured, that the interconnection of the observed information to a given context is often difficult to capture, and that only specific target groups can be observed through these methods. An additional point to be aware of is that because of the potential for information overload, especially in the case of document analysis, a researcher must carefully select the data.

A final challenge lies in the fact that online conversations 'may well have deeply nuanced subtexts that depart markedly from the superficial meaning of the typed words' (Angrosino and Rosenberg, 2008:164). As such, it is necessary that researchers develop an understanding of the full range of communicative strategies to comprehend the context of the message. As my native language is the Spanish of Mexico, I had no problem understanding, for example, the Mexican slang that is common to see in the user comments of the online nonparticipant observations conducted.

Online nonparticipant observation has been one of my main tools for directly analysing how social movements in Mexico use online social networks and the Internet, and it has also helped me map data produced on the Internet by journalists and experts about the social movement issues related to violence, including a complex variety of topics related to it (e.g. migrants, disappearances, human rights reports, activism, MPJD, etc.).

The first phase of online nonparticipant observation consisted of the collection of an online database from June 2011 to July 2015 of a social bookmarking website called 'diigo', which allows signed-up users to bookmark and tag webpages, and to highlight any part of a webpage and attach sticky notes to specific highlights or to a whole page. These annotations were kept private for the purpose of my thesis research. I collected 919 website links using 300 tags to map the topics related to my focus of study. The fourth chapter of this research demonstrates the complex context that can be drawn from the use of this data.

The second phase of online nonparticipant observation involved the profile page of one of the magazines most critical of Mexican political issues, *Proceso*, that reported news on its Facebook page of the spread in 2011 of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity. I systematically recorded the comments written in the news articles published on its Facebook profile page – that has 3,269,331 likes – from 1 April 2011 to 16 August 2012, that is, from when the social movement emerged to the US 'Caravan for Peace' of 2012: it was during this period that the social movement gained most of the media coverage from this medium. It is

important to mention that out of 61 news articles published on Facebook I took as a sample for analysis the 17 pieces which produced the most comments.

The third phase consisted of the selection of the ten profile groups on Facebook of the most prominent activist collectives that spread in 2011 within the MPJD. I systematically recorded their posts from 2011-2013 to analyse their content. Six of them are located outside of Mexico (in Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, England and Switzerland) and four are in Mexico, of which one is the MPJD. All these groups are linked to the MPJD, although they have developed their own agenda and demonstrations. I analysed quantitatively every post published on Facebook by each group in an Excel spreadsheet, in which I registered the main subject discussed in each post.

In the fourth phase, I systematically recorded 436 news articles published during 2011-2013 – when the social movement and demonstrations were most active – across 17 Mexican newspapers, in order to analyse the political agenda. The aim of this collection of data was to map the main topics that the Mexican newspapers saw as relevant to the MPJD. The data was also useful in helping to locate the journalists involved in the debate for interview.

For the fifth phase, I selected the five most popular videos published on YouTube in relation to the MPJD. Two of these videos are about a campaign launched in 2012 to create awareness of the victims of the war on drugs. The aim was to analyse the comments to observe the positions and views of the MPJD members. The other three videos contained material which had first been transmitted in the mainstream media. The sixth phase involved the MPJD itself. I selected 557 posts received from 2011-2013 through their mailing-list, including news, press releases, pronouncements, and calls for demonstrations, in order to analyse the discussions of the MPJD and also contact potential interviewees. All this data is also published on the website of the MPJD.

3.6   User Comment Analysis

For the purpose of analysing all the data, it must be systematically observed and registered. To this end, I used a textual analysis of user comments that examines the content and connotation of texts. For Lockyer (2008:865), 'textual analysis does not attempt to identify the correct interpretation of a text, but is used to identify what interpretations are possible and likely.' It is through texts, for Brennen (2013:194) that qualitative research can investigate 'the

social practices, representations, assumptions and stories' related to an individual's life. Duvall (2012:389) proposes that 'in the practice of textual analysis, there is an understanding that people from different cultures experience reality differently and that there is no right or wrong way to interpret texts'. The author stresses how textual analysis centres its attention on 'the geographically and temporally specific nature of texts but situates the texts historically' (Duvall, 2012:389). Analysing text demands a consideration of the culture within which it is created and consumed: the traditions, established norms, and categorises that motivate the texts. The author notes that the landscape of textual analysis is qualitative in nature, and that numeric coding may be applied:

> Researchers may find it useful to track specific instances of a recurring theme, set of words or phrases, images, or other phenomena. In this way, the researcher's focus remains on interpretation but may use some numeric data to show patterns in representations or to organize the reporting of data (Duvall, 2012:389).

One of the advantages of using textual analysis is the availability of the texts which can accelerate the research process and avoid ethical challenges in regards to the access of information, the only concern being to maintain the anonymity of the texts. Mixing textual analysis with other methods, such as in-depth interviews, complements the analysis, thereby avoiding 'textualizing the world', and acknowledging 'the world that exists outside of the texts' (Lockyer, 2008:866).

McKee (2003) refers to textual analysis as a method for collecting data on how individuals create a sense of the world. It is a methodology that attempts to gain a comprehension, through the interpretation of texts, of how cultures and subcultures construct the sense of who they are, and of how they appropriate the world of which they form a part. Fairclough (2003:6) suggests that textual analysis can be 'productively applied to samples of research material rather than large bodies of text'. In the perspective of Potter (1996), textual analysis is a reasonable basis for research, and neither interviews nor the observation of participants are required to create interpretations.

I employed textual analysis when looking at user comments on YouTube videos related to the social movements for peace in Mexico (especially the MPJD) and on the Facebook page of the magazine *Proceso*. Choi and Woo (2014) highlight that social network sites have become 'important venues for the sharing of political information and discussions'. The effect on civic engagement of online information seeking and political discussions has been found to be

positive (Boulianne, 2009, De Zúñiga et al., 2009, Price, 2009, Howard, 2006). For Freelon (2010:1176) 'citizens of vastly divergent worldviews do encounter one another online, on newspaper websites and elsewhere – and any proposed model of online political discussion would need to account for these exchanges'.

The Internet, in the perspective of Dahlgren (2005:152), allows an amazing 'communicative heterogeneity'. Dahlgren sees a basic typology of 'multisector online public spheres', dividing online discussion spaces into five categories: e-government, advocacy/activist, civic, para-political and journalistic. This categorization is quite important when measuring online political discussion, but he does not explore the issue of how to measure the conversation.

Domingo et al. (2008) point out that there are a variety of website structures that permit user participation, with commentary and debate spaces currently being the most widely offered participation opportunities in online newspapers. Public journalism is an alternative model that implies news should be considered a conversation rather than a lecture. The most known form of participation in the current news media is commenting on the news, and this is considered one of the most common forms of citizen engagement online.

Boulianne (2009:195) places stress on the idea that 'new online opportunities for expression may help with the identification and organization of like-minded citizens, expanding engagement across diverse populations.' The perspective of this author, people could engage online because of a dissatisfaction with traditional methods of political participation. Therefore, the Internet might strengthen 'civic life by increasing access to political information, facilitating political discussion, developing social networks, and offering an alternative venue for political expression and engagement'.

Another advantage to participating online might be seen in a reduction of the costs of participation in time and effort, by increasing the availability of information (Boulianne, 2009:205). The author remarks on the necessity of further research to explore the Internet's varied effects on specific civic and political activities.

For Reich (2011:97), user comments represent 'a new stage in the evolution of user participation in media-provided spaces. The number of people wanting to make their voices heard is unprecedented'. In the past, media gatekeepers used to control participation channels as exclusive places, participation through comments was allowed only so long as they do not break the explicit rules.

The author states that comments are the result of the desire of people to express themselves. While this form of participation can be located on news websites and others concerning journalism, it is also relevant to mention that comment sections in social network sites, especially Facebook or YouTube, also allow the users to express themselves.

These forums present the opportunity for open contributions in an instantaneous space and gives unedited access to the presentation of a point of view. Weber (2013) indicates that news websites are particularly important forums in the public sphere because they have the ability to communicate collectively relevant issues to large audiences and to facilitate the formation of public opinion. Gerhards and Schäfer (2010) state that 'the Internet provides greater accessibility for actors who do not receive attention in other media, and that perspectives diminished in other formats are more strongly represented in the Internet'.

However, user comments might be polemical, and can contain 'low quality [...] and frequently dubious contributions to the public discourse', as a whole being 'less thoughtful and more impulsive, shallow and aggressive than earlier forms of audience participation' (Reich, 2011:98).

Price (2006:1) states some doubts about how online, text-based exchanges can create meaningful and constructive political discussion, suggesting that the 'nature of computerized communication renders it poorly suited to developing meaningful relationships, encourages uncivil discourse, facilitates diffusion of unverified information, and ultimately serves to polarize opinions rather than support finding common ground'.

In the same form, Van Zoonen et al. (2011) remark – in a study made on comments on videos regarding Geert Wilder's anti-Islam film – that 'commentators frequently traded insults and tried to silence those who held different views on the controversial film'. For Weber (2013:2), the potential for quality discourse emerges only when a substantial amount of users participate in commenting on a news item and when there is a certain degree of interactivity among the users' comments.

Price (2006:1) suggests that computer-mediated interactions might simplify open conversations of controversial political ideas, because of factors such as the anonymity of the commentators and the lack of social, non-verbal, facial and vocal cues. In contrast, some authors point out that the Internet might not sustain political deliberation because communication networks are disposed to be light and uncontrolled in a way that face-to-face relations are not (Fishkin, 2000, Putman, 2000).

Price (2006) states that online discussions are more egalitarian than face-to-face encounters, as they increase the opportunity for low-status participants to contribute. Participants in computer-mediated discussions also produce more enquiries, offer more self-disclosure, and give closer and more direct questions than in face-to-face encounters. Finally, the author suggests that online encounters may assist people in communicating their thoughts, by demanding an economy of expression in the text of the online conversation, and having as a benefit the option for a participant to review and edit their text before posting it.

Studies on YouTube comments conducted by Reilly (2013:6) highlight that 'the comments left below YouTube videos only show how a small section of the audience are "making meaning" of this content', demanding their right to a voice. He highlights for analysis the identification of the words and phrases most commonly used by commentators. Large-scale quantitative studies of YouTube have found that videos based on activism produce 'mixed responses' (Thelwall et al., 2012). For Reilly (2013:6), the use of pejorative language by commentators 'might be conceptualised as a mode of expression that shows some level of engagement with the subject matter'. Orbe and Kinefuchi's (2008) analysis of YouTube comments used elements such as criteria of repetition, recurrence and influence, which were then used to identify themes emerging from the comments.

3.7 Ethical Issues

The ethics of Internet research concern different aspects of the process of working with online data and participants. Ethical issues have also emerged in the engagement with social movement research, with Fuster (2009:21) highlighting that 'there is no such thing as political and/or neutral research'. It is essential, for example, to interrogate the role of researchers 'by addressing the divide between research, action and policy making, as well as the differences between the organizational cultures of academia and activism, respectively' (Milan, 2014:447).

Sharf (1999:253) suggests at the outset of the research and throughout the process of study the researcher might anticipate 'whether or not the purposes of the research are in conflict with or harmful to the purpose of the group. Conversely, the researcher should consider whether the research will benefit the group in some way'. Sharf (1999:254-55) offers some further recommendations:

1. The researcher should clearly introduce himself or herself as to identity, role, purpose, and intention to the on-line group or individuals who are the desired focus of study.

2. The researcher should make a concerted effort to contact directly the individual who has posted a message that he or she wishes to quote in order to seek consent.

3. The researcher should seek ways to maintain an openness to feedback from the e-mail participants who are being studied.

4. The researcher should strive to maintain and demonstrate a respectful sensitivity toward the psychological boundaries, purposes, vulnerabilities, and privacy of the individual members of a self-defined virtual community, even though its discourse is publicly accessible.

One of the most important aspects that James and Busher (2012:183) highlight concerns the construction of a **'**nonthreatening environment', to minimize the risk to the participants' rights to privacy and anonymity, and, as the authors put it, 'to ensure a creative, collaborative relationship with other people online'.

Through an e-mail the researcher can send to the research participants a statement about the aims and content of the research study and who the researchers are. Even when this action is taken into account, potential participants in a research project could feel suspicious of the ethical framework, especially of the process itself, of the research and the protection they will receive in terms of privacy; this is one of the most common concerns.

The information collected through an online interview or e-mail interview can be transferred without difficulty to third parties intentionally or involuntarily. As a result, although participants may feel better able to discuss sensitive topics in an online environment than in a face-to-face interview (Mann and Stewart, 2000, James and Busher, 2012, Salmons, 2012), the researcher must take into account the online and offline contexts. Eynon et al. (2008:26) suggest that 'online research must also be sensitive to different online contexts, since the Internet is many things to many people'.

In my research thesis project, I followed the 'Principles, procedures and minimum requirements of the Framework for Research Ethics (FRE) 2010' (as updated in September 2012) that consists of the six key principles of ethical research that the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (2010:2-3) expects to be addressed whenever applicable:

1. Research should be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.

2. Research staff and participants must normally be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

3. The confidentiality of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

4. Research participants must take part voluntarily, free from any coercion.

5. Harm to research participants and researchers must be avoided in all instances.

6. The independence of research must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

The ESRC (2010:32) offers some relevant questions to be considered for Internet research, such as: the privacy in an online environment, the informed consent, the 'real' identity of the participants, and when dishonesty or covert observation is considered justifiable. James and Busher (2012:184) state that there is a need to ensure that 'research is not at the expense of individual participants', while the ESRC notes that research should be 'conducted so as to ensure the professional integrity of its design, the generation and analysis of data (that can be trusted), and the publication of results' (ESRC, 2005:23).

In the case of online research interviews, the ethical challenges relate to individual privacy and confidentiality, and the greater challenges in terms of ensuring and affirming reliability and data authenticity, according to the ESS and Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) (2002). James and Busher (2012:187) state that researchers have a responsibility to guarantee 'the anonymity and confidentiality of participants and data at all stages of the research interview, during all interactions with participants, when data are transmitted between participants and researchers, and when they are stored and published'. Confidentiality is of particular concern when personal or sensitive information is collected or when conducting research with vulnerable participants, as defined by the Research Ethics Framework (ESRC, 2005), or if the topic is sensitive. Eysenbach and Till (2001:1104) remark that:

To determine whether informed consent is required, you first have to decide whether postings on an Internet community are 'private' or 'public' communications'. [This difference is important because informed consent is required] 'when behaviour of research participants occurs in a private context where an individual can reasonably

expect that no observation or reporting is taking place.

All in all, researchers have the responsibility to ensure confidentiality through all the phases of the research process, including when the data is transmitted and stored, taking into consideration the nature of the data collected (Eynon et al., 2008:28)

It is important for the researcher to make the medium which will be used for interviews clear to research participants, to explain the systems in place to protect their privacy and anonymity, and to permit the participants to withdraw consent if they desire it.

Sharf (1999:247-248) stresses the freedom of the participants 'to contribute personal anecdotes', and notes that 'those who do not respond have made a conscious choice to do so'. Also, participants have the choice 'to disguise their identities with user names that do not reveal actual names or exact locations. Respondents can also control how much information they wish to volunteer.'

An additional step in the formation of an ethical framework for online interviews is to allow participants to decide the mode in which they are to be conducted, to ensure that the conversation takes a form that is suitable, respectful and well-mannered (James and Busher, 2012).

Another significant aspect of ethical research issues is what Madge (2007:663) refers to as 'netiquette', which is defined as the set of rules to follow between those that are having interactions on the Internet. 'It is concerned with Internet courtesy and protocols and is directed at preventing aggressive and insulting behaviour. It includes often unspoken rules about what is considered appropriate, polite and respectful behaviour online'.

Hall et al. (2004:224-47) have identified six issues with regard to netiquette. First, the subject header used in any posting to a newsgroup must not misinform the participant or create misunderstandings between the researcher and participants. Second, the self-identification and self-presentation of the researcher are critical, as receivers of the research will form evaluations about the credibility of the research and the researcher. Third, to ensure respect for those being researched, the researcher must be familiar with the common language used by the participants/communities, including jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, emoticons, and common grammatical rules. Fourth, researchers should always ask appropriate questions, and to do this, they must acquaint themselves with the subject matter before asking for help. Fifth, prior understanding of the specific culture of the group/community should be attained either by

observing the group for a period of time or through a review of online material. Sixth, the researcher has an obligation to inform the participants about the purpose, nature, procedures, and risks of the research.

The protection of the data collected online is an important issue to be considered in an ethical framework. For James and Busher (2012:188), the use of laptops and hard drives in preference to institutional servers is a way to reduce risk. For Magde (2007:660), a 'way to increase data security is to regularly back up research data and store it in the most secure location possible.'

Reilly and Trevisan (2015:4) assert that when data is collected from Facebook as part of covert observation, it must go together with 'the anonymization of datasets in order to minimize the risk of potential harm to unaware participants on Facebook. This typically involves the removal of Personally Identifiable Information (PII)' for example: age, gender and user identity, which could allow for the identification of the users who wrote the online comments. For the data collected in the form of online Facebook comments, I did not record such personally identifiable information to avoid damage to any of the participants in the debates related to the social movements for peace in Mexico.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the methodology applied to this research and has argued as to why a qualitative approach is most suitable in this case. This qualitative approach I used was based on the use of the combined methods that provided the context for this research. Since the Internet and SNSs afford such a vast amount of information, researchers are able to collect significant material that can shape the direction of research. I analysed the data collected online to study how social movements in Mexico use online social networks and social media, how online social media changes the nature of political action in Mexican social movements and how social movements using social networks might transform the status quo of Mexican politics.

This chapter has explained how I used an approach combining online interviews, online nonparticipant observation and user comment analysis. Carrying out online nonparticipant observation provided the opportunity to locate potential participants with whom to conduct the online interviews, as part of my analysis on all the different ways that the Internet and SNSs

allow activists, journalists and experts to increase the visibility of social movements and face the complexities that challenge the pursuit for peace in Mexico. Other topics covered include the challenges and risks involved in digital activism, the importance of the construction of a social movement identity online, the goals that the social movement would like to achieve, and the relationships constructed with the mainstream media, to mention some of the most important aspects.

The use of user comment analysis allowed me to collect data to understand how the social movement is received by users who participate in comments on the Facebook page of one of the most critical magazines that covered the social movements for peace in Mexico that emerged in 2011, and to analyse the concepts considered important by the users in the context of the war on drugs. The use of various technologies and the challenging ethical issues faced during research have both shaped my approach to the analysis of the use of the Internet and SNSs concerning social movements for peace in Mexico, and enriched my understanding as a researcher.

The following chapters will constitute the empirical component of this thesis, and will be focused on the analysis of material collected through the methods described herein, in conjunction with the theoretical background elaborated in the first two chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE MEXICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR PEACE

4.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the the formation of the social movements for peace in 2011within the context of the war on drugs. To this end, I took into consideration the socio-political aspects that contextualize the rise in violence in Mexico since 2006 (Solis, 2013, Watts and Zepeda, 2012, Alonso, 2012). This chapter analyses how the war on drugs was publicised by the Mexican government through the media to gain legitimisation of the strategy used to battle organised crime (Aguilar, 2012), and how the issue was positioned in a monolithic and biased fashion by the Mexican media agenda. I examined also human rights violations in Mexico and proposals to solve the issue of the violence in the context of the war on drugs (Amnesty International, 2013, Americas Program for International Policy, 2014).

In this chapter I analysed how the violence of the war on drugs is not a solely domestic issue, but is related to the high levels of drug consumption in the United States (Rodríguez et al., 2010). The chapter includes an examination of the policy President Calderón employed to battle the drug cartels. In this form, elements of US-Mexican policy such as the Mérida Initiative have played a key role in the support for Calderón's war on drugs, by providing economical support, military equipment and military training for the security bodies (Watts and Zepeda, 2012, González, 2012, Wolf, 2011).

This chapter addresses how news stories of violence in Mexico produced by the strategy implemented by President Calderón were non-existent in the mainstream media, which failed to represent the growing violence on Mexican territory. Where the messages were shown in the media, the complexities of this issue were not addressed; instead the message content signified that more people being killed only implied greater success in the war (Reguillo, 2013, Villanueva et al., 2013).

This chapter explores how the human casualties and damages of Calderón's war on drugs were devastating (Solis, 2013, Esquivel, 2012), while deaths have been played down as 'collateral damage'. Having explored the reasons behind and complexities of the war on drugs from 2006 to 2012, I analysed the rise of the movements for peace in Mexico, primarily the MPJD, which gained the attention of the citizens and civil organisations in the pursuit of their demands for civil and political rights (Gallagher, 2012).

In the second part of the chapter I explored the emergence of civil organisations and the spread of demonstrations and protests to demand a change of strategy in the battle against the drug cartels. This chapter examines the context of the emergence of the social movements for peace in 2011, such as 'No more Blood' and the MPJD, how they were formed, and their purpose of making visible the narratives of victims to disrupt the silence imposed by the mainstream media and the Mexican government. All these efforts from the social movements for peace in Mexico generated information to counterbalance the monolithic discourse of the Mexican authorities.

The third part of this chapter analyses the achievements of the MPJD in relation to the construction of the victim's narratives, how the social movements for peace have empowered and legitimised them, producing a transformation in their agency, as these communicative practices through the Internet and the media have produced symbolic messages that explained in depth the problematic of the violence in the context of the war on drugs. The dialogues for peace constituted an episode that made possible the visualization of these victims (Monsiváis et al., 2013).

4.2   The Humanitarian Mexican Tragedy in the Context of the War on Drugs

According to the Human Rights Watch (2013), Mexican security forces have committed widespread human rights violations in efforts to combat powerful organised crime groups, including killings, disappearances, and torture. Almost none of these abuses are adequately investigated, exacerbating a climate of violence and impunity in many parts of the country.

The context of all this violence in Mexico is the military engagement against drug-related violence and organised crime. The armed forces, in the process of undertaking law

enforcement activities, have perpetrated grave human rights violations. Mexico's National Human Rights Commission reported that from January 2007 to mid-November 2012, 109 cases found that members of the army executed severe human rights violations, and the commission received 7,350 complaints of military abuses.

According to the Report on Forced Disappearances in Mexico[11] (2011 online), there are four main groups of people who are particularly vulnerable to the currently enforced disappearances:

> 1) Journalists and human rights defenders; 2) people involved with some kind of political militancy or armed social movement; 3) migrants and 4) people (particularly women and young people) who live in places where violence has been increased by the clash between the bodies of national security or public safety and organized crime groups.

In this environment, journalists who have covered the issues related to drug trafficking have suffered grave persecution and attacks. From 2000 to July 2012, 82 journalists were killed and 16 more disappeared, while 32 human rights defenders were killed from June 2012 to May 2014.[12] Participants in social media networks and the offices of news outlets have also increasingly been subjects of violence, but it is important to remark that this has been attributed, with evidence, to the involvement of state officials in some of the cases. One remarkable example involving a producer of social media content is the case of 'Blog del narco'. Lucy, the pseudonym the author uses, explained in an interview with the British newspaper *The Guardian*[13] that she had to flee from Mexico because of the threats made against the continuation of the blog where she provided information read by the authorities, drug gangs and a widespread audience of ordinary people.

The climate of impunity has led to alarming numbers of crimes. According to the Attorney General of the Republic, as presented in the National Law Enforcement Program 2013-2018,[14] 93% of crimes, including burglaries, vehicles theft, homicide, kidnapping,

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[11] Informe sobre la Desaparición Forzada en México 2011 (21 March 2011) *Comité Cerezo México*, Retrieved from http://comitecerezo.org/spip.php?article879&lang=es#outil_sommaire_0 (Accessed 18 August 2015)
[12] En dos años, 32 defensores de derechos asesinados en México (28 July 2015) *Regeneración*. Retrieved from http://regeneracion.mx/causas-justas/en-dos-anos-32-defensores-de-derechos-asesinados-en-mexico/
[13] Carrol, R. (16 May 2013) *The Guardian*. Retrieved from (Accessed 20 August 2015) http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/16/blog-del-narco-mexico-drug-war (Accessed 21 August 2015)
[14] En la impunidad, el 93% de los delitos en México (19 December 2013) *SPDnoticias.com*. Retrieved from http://www.sdpnoticias.com/nacional/2013/12/29/en-la-impunidad-el-93-de-los-delitos-en-mexico (Accessed 21 August 2015)

extortion, rape, injuries and property crime, go unpunished. This means that authorities have consistently failed in the investigation and prosecution of crimes against members of the press and in safeguarding journalists whose lives are at risk, fomenting besides the impunity, an effective self-censorship. Mexico created a special prosecutor's office for crimes against freedom of expression in 2006, and provided it with higher authority in 2010, but it has failed to efficaciously take legal action in these cases. While more than 630 attacks on the press were reported from 2006 through mid-2012, so far the special prosecutor has achieved only one criminal sentence (Human Rights Watch, 2013).

One of the most vulnerable and affected groups are the undocumented migrants, crossing Mexico with the aim of reaching a better life in the US, leaving their country because of the high rates of violence and lack of opportunities. Serious abuses face them as they cross the country, such as disappearances, kidnapping and physical and sexual assault perpetrated by organised crime, migration authorities and security forces. Human rights defenders continue to suffer harassment and attacks, sometimes directly at the hands of state officials. Recently, in July 2015,[15] one of the most important human rights defenders, the priest Alejandro Solalinde, uncovered human organ trafficking as one of the most lucrative drug cartel businesses, raising significant amounts of money from the migrants who attempt to cross the Mexican border to the US, who are the main targets of these crimes.

Nearly 22,000 migrants are kidnapped every year, according to the National Human Rights Commission; frequently these crimes are committed with the objective of extracting payment from their relatives. Authorities have not taken satisfactory steps to protect migrants, or to inspect and act against those who exploit them. Migration officials often do not notify migrants of their rights, for instance the right to seek asylum. Authorities and criminal groups have targeted and disturbed the staff of housing facilities which assist migrants (Human Rights Watch, 2013). This situation has recently been deteriorating because of the 'Plan sur frontera' implemented in the middle of July 2014,[16] with the purpose of putting in order the migrant flows coming from Guatemala to Mexico, but the results have shown that thousands of migrants have been deported to their home countries. As the National Human Rights

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[15] Martínez, S. (5 July 2015) El tráfico de órganos, negocio de cárteles, políticos y médicos, denuncia Solalinde, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/07/05/politica/012n1pol (Accessed 01 September 2015)

[16] Los gobiernos de México y Guatemala pactan nuevo programa migratorio. (7 July 2014) *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2014/07/07/los-gobiernos-de-mexico-y-guatemala-pactan-nuevo-programa-migratorio (Accessed 05 September 2015)

Commission has reported, in conditions of increased surveillance by Mexican migratory authorities, migrants have changed the routes by which they pass into Mexican territory, to protect themselves from systematic human rights violations.[17] The strategies employed by the Mexican government have effectively militarized the path for migrants, rendering it a more dangerous place for them.

Trewartha and Koloffon (2013) have noted that from 2011 to 2013 the fear of crime spread into the general population; the number of citizens considered potential victims of extortion or kidnapping increased 103%, according to the National Survey of Victimization and Perception of Insecurity by the Institute of National Statistics and Geography, and an alarming increase of 102% was registered in the fear of falling victim to injury caused by physical assault. Firearm injuries increased by 176% between 2006 and 2012 according to information compiled by the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System. In the case of robbery, the increase was 51% over the same period. Cases of kidnapping saw a rise of 80%.

The United Nations Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) conducted a fact-finding mission to Mexico in 2011,[18] concluding that there is no comprehensive public policy and legal framework to deal with the different aspects of prevention, investigation, punishment and reparation for victims of enforced disappearances. They report that there does not seem to be a vertical and horizontal coordination between the federal, local and municipal authorities, and that there is also no adequate national system to search for involuntarily missing persons. In addition, the findings showed that the victims of forced disappearances do not trust the justice system, neither the prosecutors, nor the police and armed forces. The perception of impunity is a persistent pattern present in cases of enforced disappearance and no sufficient efforts are underway to determine the fate or whereabouts of disappeared persons, punish those responsible and ensure the right to truth and reparation. It would seem that Mexico is unwilling or unable to conduct effective investigations in cases of enforced disappearances.

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[17] Hernández, F. (10 August 2015) Plan Frontera Sur sube las deportaciones y cambia la ruta de los migrantes, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2015/08/10/plan-frontera-sur-sube-deportaciones-y-cambia-ruta-de-migrantes (Accessed 20 August 2015)

[18] Informe del Grupo de Trabajo sobre las Desapariciones Forzadas o Involuntarias (20 December 2011) *Naciones Unidas*. Retrieved from http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-58-Add2_sp.pdf (Accessed 29 August 2015)

At the end of November 2011, the Mexican attorney Netzaí Sandoval appeared in the International Criminal Court (OTP), backed by a petition with more than 23,000 signatures, to file a complaint against President Felipe Calderón and his cabinet, as well as members of the Sinaloa cartel, for committing various crimes against humanity that occurred in the context of the current war against organised crime. The complaint contained 470 documented cases of killings, torture, forced displacement and recruitment of children which occurred in the general context of systematic violence that has led Mexico to a humanitarian crisis. The response of the presidency was made in a press release, stating that the government was investigating legal options against the people who had signed and submitted the demand.

All in all, the Amnesty International Report (2013) marks an important achievement in this complex scenario with the approval by the Mexican Congress of the General Victims' Law in 2012, strongly promoted by the MPJD, enacted to provide a more significant legal acknowledgment of the rights of the victims, comprising the right to truth, justice and reparations. The Act similarly states in a more visible fashion the obligation of the state to investigate crimes and human rights violations. While the Act does not assure improved access to justice, it will still be a key advance if the law is appropriately applied.

Meanwhile, the federal government has taken the following measures (Amnesty International, 2013:14):

1. It has enacted the General Victims' Law;

2. It has published extracts from the database on missing or not located persons, and has promised to create a national database of missing persons;

3. It has met with family members of missing persons and is committed to developing a research strategy and a search for the victims;

4. It has established a special unit to investigate disappearances in the Office for Human Rights, under the Attorney General of the Republic;

5. It has signed an agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to strengthen procedures for search and identification;

6. It has signed an agreement with forensic experts worldwide to work to identify the remains of the victims.

7. It is committed to promoting the adoption by all prosecutors' offices of standardized protocols for searching for the victims of disappearances.

Human rights defenders, and the organisations and advocates for victims, including the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, have established priority actions that authorities should undertake, although the federal and state governments have not yet committed to fully meeting these recommendations. In a report, Amnesty International (2013:16) advised that the federal and state governments take action to:

1. Harmonize federal and state legislation with international human rights standards, inter alia creating a General Law on Enforced Disappearances.

2. Establish as criminal offenses enforced disappearance as a separate offense in all states and the federal jurisdiction, so as to ensure that all allegations of disappearances are thoroughly investigated regardless of the identity of the alleged perpetrator, and that the crime of forced disappearance is prosecuted where there is evidence of the involvement of public officials, even in cases of authorization, support or acquiescence.

3. Ensure that public officials accused of failing to undertake prompt, impartial and thorough investigations into cases of disappearance are investigated and are held accountable.

4. Ensure that arrests by police and security forces are recognised immediately and accurately and that the suspects appear before the prosecutor without delay. The breach of this procedure should lead to immediate investigation and sanction. Also eliminate curfew orders (special preventive detention).

5. Meet with families of victims and human rights groups to agree on a detailed action plan for implementing public policies designed to prevent, investigate and punish disappearances and to develop parameters and mechanisms of assessment to guarantee compliance with those policies.

6. Create a detailed and reliable nationwide database on missing people, incorporating DNA information as well as a database on the national level of unidentified remains, in accordance with international best practices concerning the location and identification of victims of disappearance, including migrants.

7. Establish a national mechanism for fast searches based on standardized protocols agreed to give answers and immediate, coordinated and effective processes focused on locating the victims.

8. Develop, implement and monitor standardized research protocols in consultation with civil society to ensure coordination, cooperation and accountability between local, federal and state bodies in order to ensure that prompt, comprehensive and effective actions are

taken in the case of all disappearances.

9. Guarantee the right of the relatives of victims to be treated with dignity and to have access to justice and reparations, among other measures fully implementing the General Victims' Law.

10. Strengthen the right of family members to contribute to research and keep track of an investigation (right cooperation) without placing any financial responsibility on them in respect of the investigation or any associated actions.

11. Ensure that family members have access to health care, housing and other social services, particularly in light of the legal limbo disappearance can lead to.

12. Ensure the safety of family members, witnesses and defenders of human rights, and that intimidation or threats are fully investigated and that those responsible are held accountable.

13. Reform the Code of Military Justice so that the civil justice system is the only one with the power to investigate and prosecute any allegations of human rights violations by members of the armed forces.

14. Recognise the competence of the UN Committee for Enforced Disappearances to receive individual complaints under Articles 31 and 32 of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances and invite the Committee to visit Mexico.

From a different perspective, in the pursuit of solutions to the humanitarian tragedy that Mexico is suffering from in the context of the war on drugs, in January 2014 the Mesoamerican Working Group (MAWG) of the Americas Program of the Centre for International Policy – which is a leading source of information for activists, academics and citizens regarding US foreign policy towards Latin America and movements for social justice within the hemisphere – released a report declaring that the 'U.S. security policy in Mexico and Central America, focused on militarized counter-narcotics efforts known as the war on drugs, has had severely negative effects on the region'.[19] The report analyses the effects of the US policy on the areas of militarization, drug policy, violence against women and forced migrations, and examines the impact of this security policy on three countries: Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras. The policy recommendations made in this report were to:

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[19] The Mesoamerican Working Group (MAWG). Rethinking the Drug War in Central America and Mexico (21 January 2011) *Americas Program*. Retrieved from http://www.cipamericas.org/archives/11315 (Accessed 23 September 2015)

1. End the Mérida Initiative and other military and police aid to Mexico. It has not worked and will not work. It is time for creative alternatives to increasing the power of corrupt security forces and attempting to fight violence with violence.

2. Develop a binational relationship with Mexico that prioritizes public safety, prevention and root causes of crime through poverty alleviation and education, while combatting transnational criminal activity within our borders.

3. Reinforce anti-money-laundering mechanisms.

4. Focus on community building and repairing the badly damaged social fabric by contributing to civil society efforts, empowerment of women, education, youth programs and construction of a culture of peace and lawfulness.

The state of human rights in Mexico in the context of the war on drugs has been continually deteriorating. Merino et al. (2015) highlight that in the government of Calderón 5.9 persons disappeared per day, which in the present government with Peña Nieto has increased to 13.4 persons disappearing each day. On 26 September 2014, with the disappearance of 43 students in Iguala, Guerrero, the mobilisations in Mexico and across the world restarted, accusing the state of responsibility for the presumed participation of police forces. In October 2015, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, in his visit to Mexico, argued that the number of human rights violations perpetrated in Mexico are shocking,[20] suggesting that Mexico should schedule a time for the stopping of armed public security tasks and their replacement with better trained police forces, and concluding that no one in Mexico could feel safe because of the lack of law most clearly indicated by the fact that 98% of the crimes committed in Mexico remain unpunished.[21] The high commissioner also remarked on the issue of enterprises involved in mega projects, who frequently are not consulting the indigenous owners of the lands that these businesses would like to exploit.[22]

Another visit was made to Mexico in October 2015 by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH), with the purpose of observing the situation of human rights in the

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[20] López, P. E. (14 October 2015) Derechos humanos en México: las alertas internacionales están encendidas, *Animal Político*. Retrieved from http://www.animalpolitico.com/blogueros-ruta-critica/2015/10/14/derechos-humanos-en-mexico-las-alertas-internacionales-estan-encendidas/ (Accessed 20 October 2015)

[21] ONU urge a México a retirar soldados de las calles (8 October 2015) *Univision.com.* Retrieved from http://www.univision.com/noticias/noticias-de-mexico/onu-urge-a-mexico-a-retirar-soldados-de-las-calles (Accessed 21 October 2015)

[22] Declaración del Alto Comisionado de la ONU para los Derechos Humanos, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, con motivo de su visita a México (7 October 2015). Retrieved from http://www.hchr.org.mx/images/Comunicados/2015/151007_HC_Statement_MexVisit_SP.pdf (Accessed 23 October 2015)

country, with specific interest paid to forced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and torture, the situation of insecurity, access to justice, unpunished criminality, and the situation of journalists, human rights defenders and other groups affected by the context of violence in Mexico. The Commission found in their visit that the magnitude of the violence and violations of essential rights is severe and disproportionate on people in poverty, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons, women, children and adolescents, human rights defenders, journalists, indigenous peoples, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals (LGBT), among others. They note that violence is also employed against the relatives of victims, activists, human rights defenders and journalists in order to silence the complaints and claims for truth and justice, and to perpetuate impunity for serious violations of human rights.[23] It is important to mention that the CIDH has concluded, as did the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Human Rights, that the Mexican government should present a concise plan for the halting of the military tasks, indicating that by their nature such tasks should be carried out by the civil police. The reaction from the US government resulted in a 15% reduction of the funds for the Mérida initiative to combat drug trafficking, in light of the human right violations.[24]

All in all, the human tragedy continues in Mexico, as thousands of people remain disappeared while the Mexican authorities have recurrently denied the huge dimension of this tragedy, reacting in the same way to the thousands of Central American people that cross Mexico on their way to the USA. In my personal experience alone, I have seen Central American people on city transport, mutilated, asking for help to save enough money to return to their home country, and explaining how they were hurled from the train called 'the beast'.

4.3   The War on Drugs in Mexico (2006-2012)

After the presidential elections in 2006, when the new president Felipe Calderón took the Mexican presidency, the social atmosphere was characterised by a crisis, with a situation of intense social polarisation and numerous conflicts resulting from the uncertainties arising from an election that many believed to be fraudulent. That moment caused great post-electoral tension in the country, especially in Mexico City, where the candidate Andrés Manuel López

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[23] Observaciones Preliminares de la Visita in Loco de la CIDH a México (2 October 2015) *Organización de los Estados Americanos*. Retrieved from http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2015/112A.asp (Accessed 25 October 2015)
[24] Cortan los fondos para Iniciativa Mérida (20 October 2015) *Periódico ABC* Retrieved from http://www.periodicoabc.mx/articulo/cortan-los-fondos-para-iniciativa-merida (Accessed 21 October 2015)

Obrador, as a part of peaceful civil resistance against the fraud committed during the presidential election, established 47 camps in one of the main streets of the city, the 'Paseo de la Reforma[25]'.

Subsequently, Solis (2013) states that at the end of December 2006, the true face of the disconcerted Mexican population emerged, the popular support of the new government was fragile. Calderón decided then to launch his war – a war that generated fear in Mexican civil society – and ran a saturating media campaign with political speeches appealing to nationalism and containing excessive slogans, all with the purpose of gaining popular support amongst the Mexicans citizens. At the beginning of January 2007, around a month after Calderón took the presidency, he caused a controversy by appearing in military dress, paying tribute to soldiers, sailors and police, who in his words would stop the increase of crime in the first phase of his planned operation.[26]

Another cause believed to have contributed to the level of violence, according to the Global Peace Index Report (2013), are the elements that were related to a lack of peace, such as high levels of poverty and low standards of education. It is a combination of these and similar elements that has caused the scale of drug trafficking and organised crime in Mexico.

The escalation of violence in Mexico has come about from the combination of two factors. First, the urgent necessity for Felipe Calderón to construct an artificial image to gain, through institutional violence, a legitimacy not obtained at the polls (Watts and Zepeda, 2012, Alonso, 2012), because of the perception, well-known among the population, of the fraudulent nature of the presidential election of July 2006. Second, the pressure from the US government to intensify its anti-drug activities through the Mérida initiative, granting the new federal government funds with which to fight the drug cartels away from their borders, in the Mexican territory itself, and 'protect' against the so-called 'narco-terrorism'.

Solis (2013) states that these actions were effectively a declaration of war by Calderón against various organised crime cartels. Simultaneously, the upsurge of violence caused by the impact of the drug cartels has been a great stimulus for employment for military staff all the

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[25] This is a long avenue that goes diagonally through the heart of Mexico City.
[26] Herrera, C. and Martínez, E. (4 January 2007) Vestido de militar, Calderón rinde "tributo" a las fuerzas armadas, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2007/01/04/index.php?section=politicaet.article=003n1pol (Accessed 28 October 2015)

way through Mexico, supposedly with the goal of containing or ending the control of narcotrafficking organisations (Watts and Zepeda, 2012).

Inopportunely, Calderón acted without the most basic strategic concept, supporting the military front but neglecting the financial front, the 'laundering' (Morris, 2010), which is where the real power of the drug cartels lie, as well as the political front, marked by systemic corruption and impunity and protected by the regime itself (Buscaglia et al., 2006).

A significant realisation when examining the factors in Mexico's drug-related violence is the recognition that this problem is not a purely internal issue. Rodríguez et al. (2013:79) state that as the world's central protagonist of the existing international drug prohibition regime, the principal customer for its drugs, and its leading provider of firearms, the United States is a direct sponsor of Mexico's drug violence. In the last three decades, an increasing number of US adults, including approximately half of all individuals over the age of thirty-five, acknowledge some drug usage during their lifetime. Mexican dealers enjoy enormous profits, estimated at $6-7 billion annually. One example can be seen in the case of 'El Chapo Guzmán', who the business magazine *Forbes* listed as the 67th most powerful person in the world in 2013.[27]

The first measure taken by Calderón following his investiture was to launch a national strategy against the drug cartels and for the benefit of national security, with 10,000 troops (Reguillo, 2013).[28] After 500 murders in Michoacán, Mexico, a zone of the country blighted by executions, President Calderón proposed to start a battle against 'the enemy'. Without an expert diagnosis and without any schedule in place for this procedure, Calderón ordered the sending of 5,000 troops to Michoacán in what was called 'La Operación Conjunta Michoacán',[29] and 2,296 troops and 300 federal police in 'La Operación Conjunta Baja

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[27] Joaquín Guzmán Loera, *Forbes*. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/profile/joaquin-guzman-loera/ (Accessed 10 November 2015)

[28] El presidente de los estados unidos mexicanos, Lic. Felipe Calderón, en la transferencia de personal de la secretaría de la defensa nacional y de la secretaría de marina (16 December 2006) *Presidencia de la República*. Retrieved from http://calderon.presidencia.gob.mx/2006/12/el-presidente-de-los-estados-unidos-mexicanos-lic-felipe-calderon-en-la-transferencia-de-personal-de-la-secretaria-de-la-defensa-nacional-y-de-la-secretaria-de-marina/ (Accessed 23 September 2015)

[29] Herrera, C. (12 December 2006) El gobierno se declara en guerra contra el hampa; inicia acciones en Michoacán, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2006/12/12/index.php?section=politica&article=014n1pol (Accessed 13 August 2015)

California',[30] against the main cartels of those states: Familia Michoacana and the Tijuana Cartel.

Watts and Zepeda (2012) note that the US-Mexican policy under the rubric of the Mérida Initiative provided equipment and training, and as such constituted a vital means of support for the government of Calderón. Wolf (2011:706) argues that the war on drugs had two aims within the scenario of profound economic problems that intensified during the neoliberal period amid the militarisation of parts of Mexico and failures of justice by authorities using the excuse of the war on drugs:

> To arm and secure unpopular neoliberal policies, investor rights and US geopolitical interests while quashing and punishing dissent and popular protest. The illegal trade in drugs had found conditions favourable to expansion under neoliberal government's post-1982 and post-NAFTA in 1994, and has continued to benefit from the similar policies of a weak Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN) government post-2000 (Watts and Zepeda, 2012:180).

González (2012:15) believes that the Mérida Initiative has been unproductive and has guided the fight against drugs from a punitive perspective alone. According to the Human Rights Watch report of 2013:

> The United States has allocated over US$2 billion in aid to Mexico through the Mérida Initiative, a multi-year aid package agreed upon in 2007 to help Mexico combat organized crime. Fifteen percent of select portions of the assistance can be disbursed only after the US secretary of state reports to the US Congress that the Mexican government is meeting four human rights requirements, which include ensuring that military abuses are investigated in the civilian justice system, and prohibiting the use of testimony obtained through torture.

It is necessary that this agreement reflect the historical, structural and cyclical character that has brought us to the current crisis of insecurity. Therefore, a state policy that incorporates a multidimensional strategy against money laundering, including confiscation of property, crime prevention campaigns, reform of police, judiciary, penitentiary and rehabilitation systems is needed. But above all, a change of economic model will contribute to a rethink of

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[30] Roman, J. et al. (3 January 2007) Miles de fuerzas federales en el operativo Tijuana, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2007/01/03/index.php?section=politica&article=003n1pol (Accessed 29 July 2015)

the idea of the state and its political system. This should be accompanied by an adherence to human rights, and to the standard and appropriate personnel in corporate security.

Salgado (2012) argues that through adopting the rhetoric of security, Calderón seeks to legitimise a series of measures and strategies involving neoliberal exploitation of natural resources and social control of the population. That is, the discourse of security, through the declaration of war and an enemy, tries to justify and disguise the real causes of violence and decay that plagues our country. Such discourse has been raised to defend the interests and objectives of the bourgeois class, and has been worked so as to present these interests as being for the entire nation. In Calderón's speech you can easily identify the construction of us and them; heroes, victims and enemies (Salgado, 2012). The construction of the enemy is intentional, as it has shown the most interesting phenomenon and most dangerous is the range of resources and efforts which have been invested to polarise civil society: it is clear, the enemy can be anyone who is among us.

For Solis (2013) and Esquivel (2012), the consequences of Calderón's war on drugs from 2006-2012 were 70,000 dead by November 2012, over 25,000 missing and 250,000 displaced, as well as the weakening of the institutional fabric and erosion of the prestige of the armed forces, numerous accusations of human rights violations and involvement with drug trafficking, without the slightest chance of success in the medium or long term. Jasso (2013) puts the losses incurred during the drug war of the presidency headed by Felipe Calderón at about 83,000 deaths classified as 'collateral damage', 27,000 missing and 250,000 displaced by violence.[31]

The statistics reported by the National Human Rights Commission in 2013 indicate the registration of 24,800 cases of enforced disappearance in Mexico in the last five years, and in 2,443 of them the participation of public officials has been proven, none of whom have been prosecuted for their crimes, according to the ombudsman Raul Plascencia.[32]

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[31] Recuento de daños sexenio de muerte (11 November 2012). Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/en/2012/11/22/recuento-de-danos-sexenio-de-muerte/ (Accessed 17 September 2015)

[32] Martínez, P. (5 June 2013) Funcionarios públicos participaron en 2 mil 443 desapariciones: CNDH, *Animal Político*. Retrieved from, http://www.animalpolitico.com/2013/06/paris/#axzz2VMuPdYLv (Accessed 20 September 2015)

Recent statistics reveal that 100,000[33] people have been killed or disappeared. At the same time organised crime has been recruiting children and this phenomena has increased in cities like Chihuahua, Reynosa, Monterrey, Ciudad Juarez and Zacatecas. According to studies by the Network for Children's Rights in Mexico (REDIM) it is estimated that between 25 and 35 thousand children are used by drug cartels in the roles of hawks, drug dealers and hitmen.[34]

Espinal-Enríquez and Larralde (2015) state that since December 2006 more than a thousand cities in México have suffered the effects of the war with several drug cartels, either amongst themselves or with Mexican armed forces. Sources do not agree about the number of casualties of this war, and reports vary from 30 to 100 thousand dead. These authors conducted research that analysed and described the emergence and propagation of gang-related violence waves from 2007-2011.
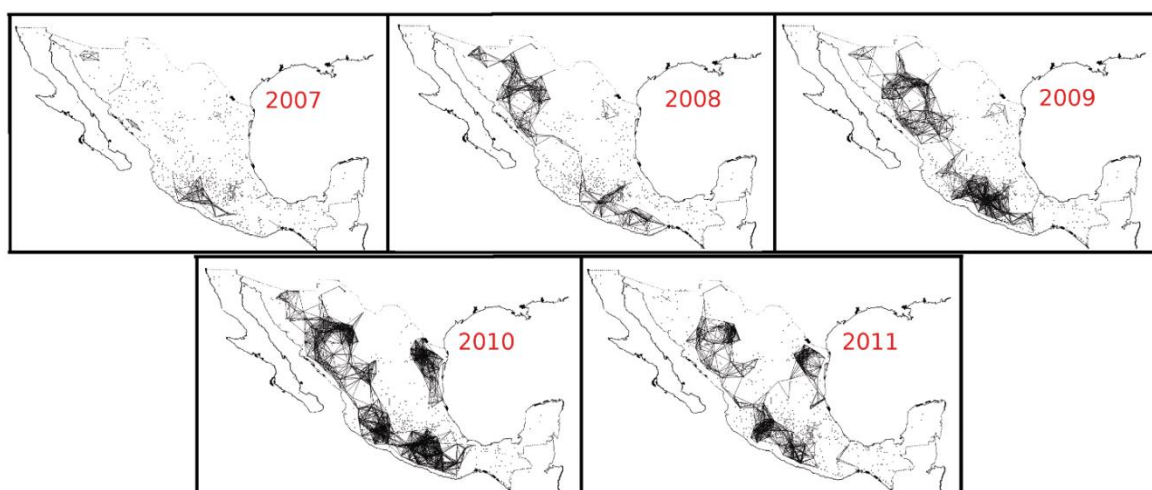
Fig. 2. Map of the spread of violence from 2007 to 2011.[35]

[33] Rodríguez, E. (30 June 2015) Mapping Mexico's deadly drug war, *Science*. Retrieved from http://news.sciencemag.org/latin-america/2015/06/mapping-mexicos-deadly-drug-war   (Accessed 30 October 2015)

[34] Niños, la herida más abierta de la guerra, (4 February 2013) *Sin embargo.mx.* Retrieved from http://www.sinembargo.mx/04-02-2013/512087 (Accessed 06 July 2015)

[35] Each line joins municipalities with more than 70 casualties per 100,000 inhabitants each year which have municipal government seats located less than 200 km apart. Points are municipalities with at least one narco-related death that year. In 2007 there were only small groups of connected cities in the states of Michoacán, Guerrero, Sinaloa and Chihuahua. During the following months, the Pacific coast suffered a burst of violence, while the north-western part (Nuevo León and Tamaulipas) did not see a significant increase of violent episodes. However, at the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, that part of the country suffered internal struggle supposedly between the Gulf Cartel and its former armed wing, the Zetas group. By 2010–2011, it had become possible to cross the country visiting only violent municipalities. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0126503.g003

This has led to the almost unanimous condemnation by the population of the 'war of Calderón' against drugs, with a lawsuit filed against him before the International Criminal Court of Justice in The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by his government (Camacho, 2011, Carrasco, 2011).

Solis (2013) and Anguiano (2014) highlight that Calderón's government unleashed forces that have come to steal the power of the state in entire regions of the country, where drug cartels impose their law, taxing companies and individuals in the form of 'protection' or 'dues' and appointing or removing mayors, police chiefs, deputies, and so on, by force where necessary.

Despite the arrests and deaths of numerous leaders and members within the framework of the so-called war crime cartels, this business appears more attractive than ever, with an effectively unlimited group of manpower from the ranks of the millions of unemployed (Villalobos, 2011) and marginalized youths without jobs or education, in addition to police and military elements of all grades and levels acting more or less hidden in the service of the cartels, providing protection and participating in crimes.

For Solis (2013), some business and political interest groups in the United States have dishonestly favoured the arms trade, a business even more profitable than the drug trade itself, facilitating the sale of weapons to organised crime groups. Gallagher (2012) expresses the belief that the realities of this chaotic scenario has acted on people, movements and organisations to produce a shift in mobilisation in the direction of demands for civil and political rights remote from the more typical protest focus of socio-economic grievances.

In Aguayo and Benítez's (2012) conception, Mexico is entwined in three wars, an issue made worse still because there are overlaps in the borders of the three wars which give rise to the multidimensionality of the violence:

> 1. The ones which are fought between criminal organisations for control of territory, transit routes and businesses of all kinds, the most obvious. 2. The offensive launched by the federal government against them. The state fights against itself: by corruption, criminal organisations have influence in many places over the three levels of government. 3. This means that the "clean" part of the state is faced with the "contaminated" areas (Aguayo and Benítez, 2012:12)

The reaction of society in the eyes of the author was to take action on two fronts. The first front was created with the dual purpose of understanding and describing what is happening

and influencing public policy. In recent years it has seen a remarkable reorientation of efforts towards understanding the peculiarities of violence. There has been participation in the universities and research centres, media and civil organisations, multilateral institutions and foundations. One example of this front is the Violence in Mexico seminar[36] coordinated by Sergio Aguayo, that contemplated with an interdisciplinary approach issues such as the origins of the violence (domestic and international), and the evolution, current state and possible solutions to the various aspects of violence that plague Mexico.

The second front comes from CASEDE,[37] which was founded in 2006 to help understand what was happening in the fields of security and democracy. Since then, this research centre has brought together academics, members of the media and government experts. In the field of public pressure, the most significant event is the approval of the General Victims' Law that the new government promised to publish in January 2013.

In summary, the militarization brought about in Mexico to battle the drug cartels has created a serious situation in regards to human right violations. An emblematic example of the failure of the military strategy has been the case of Tlatlaya in the State of Mexico, where in 30 June 2014, it is believed that members of the military massacred 15 of 22 people found killed.[38] In the case of the 43 students disappeared in Iguala on 26 September 2014, a study carried out with the support of the Investigative Journalism Program at the University of California in Berkeley based on testimonies, videos, unpublished reports and court hearings shows that the Federal Police were actively and directly involved in the attack.[39] These are two representative examples of the current state of affairs in which the military or police forces are implicated in crimes against citizens, a fact which underscores the failure of the Mexican state to eradicate violence in the country in relation to organised crime.

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[36] Seminario sobre la violencia y paz, http://violenciaenmexico.colmex.mx/ (Accessed 26 July 2015)
[37] Colectivo de análisis de la seguridad con democracia, http://www.casede.org/ (Accessed 02 July 2015)
[38] Zepeda, M. (22 October 2014) ¿Qué ocurrió en Tlatlaya minuto a minuto, según la CNDH? Retrieved from http://www.animalpolitico.com/2014/10/la-matanza-del-ejercito-en-tlatlaya-segun-la-cndh/ (Accessed 09 January 2015)
[39] Hernández, A. and Fisher, S. (13 December 2014) Iguala: la historia no oficial, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=390560 (Accessed 20 January 2015)

4.4   The Role of the Media Coverage in the War on Drugs

This thesis attempts to analyse the context of the war on drugs and how the mainstream media portrayed the framework behind that war, and as such it is vital to understand how the Mexican government constructed and portrayed the elements necessary to justify their offensive against organised crime. Aguilar (2012), since the beginning of the Calderón government, the media was persuaded to advertise a single theme: 'the war against the drug cartels'.

The author also highlights the media such as radio and television adverts, in which the president himself would announce the actions that marked his victory in that fight. One of the most known slogans of the Calderón government was 'live better'. The cartoonist José Hernández used this governmental slogan to create a cartoon that ironically reflected on the strategy employed in the war on drugs, saying: 'To prevent drugs reaching your children, we are killing them'. He explained that he drew the cartoon with that phrase because of all the young and innocent students from Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey that have been killed.[40] The cartoon was not published in the newspaper.

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[40] El cartón que La Jornada no quiso publicar (23 March 2010). Retrieved from
http://www.publimetro.com.mx/noticias/el-carton-que-la-jornada-no-quiso-publicar/mjcw!z2jJOWSQnO0Q/
(Accessed 23 July 2015)

Fig. 3. Mural prepared for the march for peace of 8 May 2011 in Mexico City.[41]

The war on drugs was positioned in the media agenda as a necessity, and with the purpose of portraying a government concerned by and committed to the issue. In those six years the war on drugs occupied the agenda of the government media, mainstream media and international news agencies. President Calderón and those with him who took the resolution did not properly understand the implications of their decision, and did not envisage the problems arising from it, or that society would suffer the consequences (Aguilar, 2012).

Reguillo (2013) argues that stories of violence in Mexico were not recognised by the government and were not problematized in depth and portrayed appropriately by the mainstream media. Media commentators favoured the vision of President Calderón, and as such certain media actions occurred with the purpose of criminalizing the victims, denying their existence, or minimizing the statistics and hiding the violent deaths and disappearances (Ovalle et al., 2014).

Another measure Calderón took in this context, was to announce a reduction in federal spending on education, science, and culture. Instead, he increased the budget for the expansion of the security forces and the creation of new agency of national security. Additionally, the Mexican government created a propaganda and advertising system of 'political symbols and modes of recognition'. Reguillo (2013) explains within the context of an increasing degradation of politics, the crisis of representation, and a questioned legitimacy, the remedy of the rhetoric of security has found a form that gives the impression of an unquestionable strategy.

From another perspective, Watts and Zepeda (2012) state that the news from media establishments such as Televisa in Mexico, CNN in the US and the BBC in the UK have a tendency to portray the 'drug war' in Mexico as an enigmatic and incomprehensible struggle in which the government has no option but to fight. As such, they do not describe the complexities of the situation, and disregard the causes that generated the high rates of violence in the country.

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[41] Some sectors of Mexican society have shown disagreement with the Mexican government's anti-narco strategy, initiated in 2006. The image was a satire of the governmental slogan of Felipe Calderón. https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movimiento_por_la_Paz_con_Justicia_y_Dignidad#/media/File:No_mas_sangre_0 6.jpg (Accessed 24 July 2015)

This distorted portrayal of the drug war portrays the actors who perpetrate violence and abuse human rights as if they were saving the citizens from their evilness, and are thus afforded complete immunity by influential mainstream media organisations. President Calderón referred to the criminals on one occasion as 'cockroaches' and 'animals' that were infecting the country, who can only be addressed through social cleansing,[42] indeed, his national programme to fight against organised crime was called 'Cleaning Mexico'.[43]

The media messages suggested that the higher the number of civilians or criminals liquidated, the greater the success of the war on crime. In short, 'war is peace' for the authors (Watts and Zepeda, 2012).

Villanueva et al. (2013) state that in the media reporting process images are used as a way to expose the violence, highlighting the exposure of bodies in killings without proper treatment for thousands of victims. The media messages were part of the daily conversations of ordinary people. The fear was spreading through all the country. I was aware of stories of violence becoming commonly socialized amongst students and friends, as I was working as a lecturer in the university.

Additionally, these media messages come to be used by organised crime itself as a way to send public messages between cartels in the bodies of those killed or in areas where violence took place. The media also sometimes referred to 'executions', 'kidnappings' and/or 'gunmen' to explain the violence, thereby using the vocabulary of organised crime in the public space. The handling of images, language and the coverage of violence in Mexico is undoubtedly challenging in that organised crime can use the reporting to spread its contents widely for their own purposes and interests.

Another dimension of the role of the media in the war on drugs is raised by the scholar Günther Maihold,[44] who in his book *Atlas de la Seguridad y la Defensa de México* (2012) remarks that the media is vulnerable to displacement of its role in society, not only by the fear that their companies and journalists who integrate may suffer the consequences, but also because by censorship and self-censorship imposed upon others or themselves.

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[42] Rodríguez, A. (14 December 2011) Compara Calderón a criminales con 'cucarachas', *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=291301 (Accessed 30 March 2015)

[43] Presenta Calderón programa de seguridad 'Limpiemos México' (2 July 2010) *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=209383 (Accessed 01 April 2015)

[44] Marín, N. (20 May 2013) Narcomantas, instrumentos de comunicación masiva de los cárteles, *El Mexicano*. Retrieved from http://www.oem.com.mx/elmexicano/notas/n2989293.htm (Accessed 05 April 2015)

Regarding the same issue discussed above, for Aguilar (2012), the media during 2006-2012 was responsible for the regulation of speech. This was a consequence of the lack of a code of ethics in the coverage of violence and in particular that violence produced by drug trafficking. Front pages commonly featured decapitated heads, blankets with messages, mutilated corpses, and so on. There was no doubt who controlled the media agenda, in a sensationalist and scandalous form.

On 24 March 2011, a group of fifty Mexican media executives, businessmen and academics, led by the companies Televisa and TV Azteca, signed the *Agreement for the coverage of Violence,*[45] with a total of 715 media companies joining the framework of the agreement.[46] This agreement proposed not providing publicity for or overestimations of the war against organised crime by the federal government. This initiative was called the 'Iniciativa México'[47], and generated controversy because it was portrayed as a form of censorship of the reality of Mexico. The criteria implied that certain actions should be followed in media coverage, such as not being spokespeople for organised crime, by avoiding the use of particular language to refer to their crimes, portraying the true dimension of the violence without making exaggerations by providing a context of the situation, and not communicating information that could affect the operations of the authorities or could put lives in danger, to mention some of them.

All in all, the issue of media coverage was a central focus of the war on drugs. Brambila (2014) argues that during the government of Calderón, the Secretariat of National Defence (SEDENA) increased exponentially, by an average of 450% per year: from 111,000 pesos in 2007 to 49 million pesos in 2011. However the author states that in its media communication strategy, the government of Calderón did not take into account:

> Any kind of national campaign to prevent and inform citizens about the alarming conditions of insecurity that many areas of the country suffered, and relegated any message dedicated to citizen awareness about living in war zones, often overwhelmed by military checkpoints and open clashes between the armed forces and organised crime groups (Brambila, 2014:29).

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[45] Martínez, F. (25 March 2011) Pacto de medios para limitar información sobre violencia, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2011/03/25/politica/005n1pol (Accessed 01 May 2015)

[46] Medios mexicanos firman un acuerdo para informar sobre violencia (24 March 2011) *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/03/24/medios-mexicanos-firman-un-acuerdo-para-informar-sobre-violencia (Accessed 10 May 2015)

[47] Iniciativa México, http://www.iniciativamexico.org/

Cruz et al. (2013:16) argue that it is also a characteristic of the media coverage on the war on drugs that civilian deaths are minimised by accepting the definition of such deaths as 'collateral damage' by the Calderón administration. Included in this classification there are children, students, businessmen, journalists and social activists, and there is no state or federal authority to rule on the actual number of civilian casualties.

All things considered, the media coverage, as expressed above, was frequently biased, representing a conflict of 'the good' versus the 'the evil' ones, and in the same form criminalizing the people that were killed in the conflict, without investigating if they were implicated in organised crime. Another factor that jeopardized the media coverage was the lack of a code of ethics that, for example, presented arrested individuals as criminals before any trial, with this kind of action intended to show that the government was winning the battle against the drug cartels, weakening their groups, while in fact on the contrary the dimensions of the violence increased.

In the same form, the media coverage started to use loaded language to refer to the crimes, exposing it constantly on their front pages. Equally importantly, the censorship that the media suffered has produced a massive silence in some regions of Mexico on topics related to the violence. In the same vein, the international media did not examine below the surface when facing the issue of Mexican violence incited by organised crime.

4.5 The Eruption of the Social Movements for Peace in Mexico in the Context of the War on Drugs

It has been particularly noted that, since the beginning of the war on drugs in December 2006, it took four years, until early 2011, as Heyns (2013) argues, for the expansion of the violence associated with the anti-drug strategy to trigger the emergence of numerous social organisations, demonstrations and protests such as: 'Citizens organised against violence', the 'Network for Peace and Justice', the 'National March for peace', the 'No more Blood' movement, 'the March of journalists for your right to know and my right to inform: the end of impunity', and the 'Stop aggression' campaign launched by the 'we want them alive' committee.

Although 2008 did see the 'Illuminate Mexico' movement – also called 'The white movement' – arise, with it starting on 30th August under the slogan 'if you can not do your

job, renounce!', this mobilisation did not take into account the framework of Calderón's war on drugs, as did the massive mobilisations from ordinary victims in 2011.

The start of 2011 saw the beginning of a general mobilisation of broad sectors of citizenship with the 'No more Blood' movement led by the cartoonist Eduardo del Río (usually known by his pen name 'Rius'). This is when the citizenry showed their willingness to become organised as an agent within the narrative of events, to stop being a victim and have input in decisions (Cervantes, 2012:101). In this regard, Batres (2011) makes the distinction between 'No more Blood' and 'The white movement' mobilisation of 2008 against insecurity.

He states that the 'No more Blood' movement had a progressive ideology, where the earlier movement has been organised by the elite classes with the purpose of seeking the punishment of the criminal groups. The 'No more Blood' movement against violence, crime and insecurity also questioned the way the federal government had acted to reverse the problem. Instead, the movement argued on the basis of the results, it seems that the governor's tactics only exacerbate the violence, suggesting therefore that it is urgent to change the strategy to a plan that is more effective and less harmful to the population.

Mateos (2011) has explored the campaign on Twitter where the cartoonist José Hernández asked users to change their profile photo to an image designed for the campaign: this image was also published on the front page of the national newspaper *La Jornada*, and users also sent messages to President Calderón's Twitter account. It is important to mention that people on Facebook started to share the logo 'No more Blood' to show their solidarity with the difficult situation of violence in Mexico, and indeed to this day demonstrations for peace in Mexico still use this logo.

Through this network, the cartoonist argued the reasons for the protest in their messages to the president:

> Because you are responsible for a failed and irresponsible strategy. Because your pretentious war is unconstitutional and we are paying the price. Because the police actions and military persecution cannot by themselves defeat the narco. Because this pretentious war has only given us more expensive drugs and cheaper lives. Because crime is not fought with misleading and sterile ads by 'Canal Once'. Because this war has not done anything against the financing of organised crime, because of collusion with the authorities fighting against organised crime. Because in four years of the 'war against drugs' there has been no concrete result (Mateos, 2011).

Batres (2011) observes that 'No more Blood' used social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to significantly increase its presence among users of these technologies which, incidentally, points to the importance of communications networks for the struggle and survival of the organised response of civil society in Mexico to the violence that exists in the country as a result of the war on drugs.

The Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD) began to take shape as of 26 March 2011 when the poet Javier Sicilia, whose son Juan Francisco was killed by people linked to organised crime, urged Mexicans to speak out against violence produced by criminal groups in opposition to the violence created by the security policies of the Mexican government. On 1 April 2011 Javier Sicilia released a call to action:

> I urge Mexicans to unite around ourselves and take to the streets to demand federal, state and municipal authorities stop the violence and insecurity, and say that enough is enough! Youngsters, men, women and children are killed because of the war against organised crime that Calderón began, the war that has left over 40 thousand people dead. We're going to the streets to demand that these sons of bitches stop organised crime and these bastards! The government is urged to give us an answer. There are young men to be claimed. They were good and they had a future, but have fallen down because of the irrationality of crime and the blindness of our authorities (Morelos, 2011).

In 2011, the MPJD was launched as a national campaign against violence and impunity. Many families of the disappeared have participated in the campaign and have supported the movement, whose leaders have played an important role in supporting the families of victims in their demands that the government reopen cases of disappearance (Amnesty International, 2013). This moment was seen as a zenith of unity, as for the first time in a public space, the massive clamour of complaints from the Mexican citizens against the strategy followed by Calderón's government was seen, with the sentiment of the people being well expressed by Sicilia's comment: 'Enough!'

The movement began as a March for Peace with Justice and Dignity that began from Cuernavaca, Morelos on 5 May 2011 and arrived at the Zócalo of Mexico City on 8 May of that year, with the purpose of expressing the grievances that the violence of the war on drugs had generated in Mexican society. The mobilisation was joined by several human rights organisations and independent citizens around the country.

Valadés (2011) argues that the dynamics of participation are symbolic actions, and notes that social networking sites such as Twitter allow the dissemination of content via hyperlinks in order to express solidarity and help to promote the movement. The distribution of information took place on Twitter through hashtags, the most popular from this demonstration being '#marchanacional'.

While this social movement was not itself organised through this social networking site, it was used as a medium of diffusion for Twitter users, active or not within the hashtag, and it has been recognised that this symbolic action took place within this social network over the Internet.

However, while the MPJD came to develop its activities on social media, Treré and Cargnelutti (2014) argue that the participation of people on the wall of MPJD on Facebook is reduced in most cases to what some authors have called click-activism (Gladwell, 2010, Morozov, 2011), the minimum level of public engagement with the published information, simply a click on the 'I like' button of publications or comments.

The authors state that the real debate and dialogue with members of the movement occurs outside of social networks in the workshops, meetings, rallies, marches, caravans, protests, and all face-to-face activities, describing a movement that gives priority to personal relationships and contact as part of the main repertoire of contention. Information and communication technologies are important, but are not a priority (Treré and Cargnelutti, 2014).

Linares (2012) expresses the view that the narratives of the victims have powered the initiative to create greater visibility in the media through the use of campaign networks and public spaces, as seen with the 'No more Blood' and 'Todos somos Nepomuceno[48]' campaigns, and the video productions of MX Emergency. The effort to generate information in alternative communicative spaces and spread the narratives of the victims of such cases as that of Nepomuceno motivated actions and other organised solidarity networks that generated a forceful collective scream, one such example being the media campaign 'Ponte en los Zapatos del Otro'[49], launched in early 2012.

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[48]This phrase signifies 'We are all Nepomuceno'. It is a statement of solidarity with Nepomuceno Moreno a father whose missing son was murdered in 28 November 2011. He was a member of MPJD and participated in the Dialogues for Peace with Felipe Calderón at Chapultepec Castle, where he denounced the enforced disappearance suffered by his son Jorge Mario.
[49]It is a Spanish expression that means a way to understand and comprehend what the other feels, empathetic, putting oneself in someone else's position. in the place of another: 'Put yourself in someone else's shoes'.

With regards to the mainstream media, the national newspaper *El Universal* published a press release on 6 May 2011[50] covering the demonstration, noting that it was to be held in silence to protest the growing violence, to demand changes to recover peace, the security of citizens, and the Mexican social fabric.

Many civil organisations supported this message: Alianza Cívica, Alternativas y Capacidades, Asamblea Nacional Ciudadana (ANCA), Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir, Causa en Común, CENCOS, Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos, Colectivo Alas, Colectivo Camina Haz Ciudad, DHP, Espacio de Diálogo Estratégico de OSC, Gestión Social y Cooperación (GESOC), Horizonte y Oportunidad, INCIDE, Social, Instituto para la Seguridad y la Democracia (INSYDE), México Unido contra la Delincuencia, Observatorio Eclesial, Propuesta Cívica, Red de Instituciones Especialistas en Juventud (RIE), Sociedad en Movimiento and Servicios a la Juventud.

Fig. 4. Call for the demonstration for peace on 8 May in Mexico City.

'El domingo 8 Mayo: Marcharemos en silencio por la paz' (El universal, 2011).

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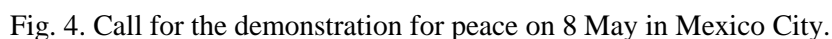
[50] El domingo 8 de mayo: Marcharemos en silencio por la paz, (6 May 2011) *El Universal*, https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/21215461/Universal06052011.pdf (Accessed 23 March 2015)

The demonstration of the MPJD that took place on 8 May 2011 was organised by Emilio Alvarez Icaza, the priest Alejandro Solalinde, María Elena Morera, Eduardo Gallo, Julián LeBaron and representatives of a wide range of civil society organisations across the country who followed with the aim of forming a national pact.[51] Some 100,000 people attended this demonstration.[52]

> This requires all residents of Mexico, and 'this conference is the first step to making sure everyone knows', remarked the poet of Morelos who also emphasised the diversity and plurality exemplified by 'the variety of organised society at the table' in the movement. The importance of the work of citizens in social networks, faced with the impossibility 'of living in a permanent state of emergency', was also highlighted (Cencos, 2011).

Equally significant was the national newspaper coverage of the MPJD demonstration that began in the city of Cuernavaca, Morelos on 5 May 2011, walking from there to Mexico City, arriving on 8 May. The messages presented by the Mexican newspapers included: 'demands to stop the violence', 'organised crime is the cause of institutional corruption', and 'demands to be listened to by the Mexican authorities and politicians'.

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[51] Sociedad civil convoca a todos los y las mexicanas a organizarse contra la violencia y la impunidad (26 April 2011). Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/es/2011/04/26/sociedad-civil-convoca-a-todos-los-y-las-mexicanas-a-organizarse-contra-la-violencia-y-la-impunidad/ (Accessed 03 March 2015)

[52] La caravana por la paz de Sicilia recorrerá 12 entidades del país (19 May 2011) *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/05/19/la-caravana-por-la-paz-de-sicilia-recorrera-12-entidades-del-pais (Accessed 15 March 2015)

Fig. 5. Front pages of 8 May 2011, the demonstration from 5 to 8 May of the movement for peace lead by Javier Sicilia. http://kiosko.net/mx/2011-05-08/

A day after this demonstration for peace in Mexico, on 9 May, for a second time newspapers provided coverage of the peace demonstration, focusing on the speech given by Javier Sicilia in the 'Zócalo' in Mexico City. The main headlines included: 'Fire the director of the Secretary of Public Safety, Genaro García Luna', 'Mexico for peace', '"No more dead" demands the demonstration', 'Thousands of Mexicans in a peace demonstration', 'Enough!' and 'The elections will be boycotted'. For the most part, this media coverage focused on the claims for peace and representations of the Secretary of Public Safety as responsible for the issue of violence.

Fig. 6. Front pages of the Mexican newspapers after the speech of Sicilia on 8 May 2011.http://kiosko.net/mx/2011-05-09/

Apart from the non-governmental organisations, human rights defenders, academics, intellectuals, and the public in general, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) from the mountains of the Mexican Southeast in Chiapas also announced their support, publishing a letter on 28 April 2011 from their spokesperson Subcomandante Marcos to Javier Sicilia.[53] 20,000 Zapatistas took to the streets on 7 May 2011 to request that Calderón's government stop the war on drugs,[54] adding to the demonstration and stating that:

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[53] Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, Carta a Don Javier Sicilia de Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos (28 April 2011) *Enlace Zapatista.* Retrieved from http://enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx/2011/04/28/carta-a-don-javier-sicilia-de-subcomandante-insurgente-marcos/ (Accessed 30 May 2015)

[54] Mariscal, Á. (7 May 2011) 20,000 zapatistas marchan en Chiapas en apoyo al poeta Javier Sicilia. *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/05/07/cerca-de-20-mil-zapatistas-participan-en-la-marcha-por-la-paz-en-chiapas (Accessed 29 May 2015)

In these particularly painful moments for our country, we are called by the clamour that is synthesized in his brave words, caused by the pain of the vile murder of Juan Francisco Sicilia Ortega, Luis Antonio Romero Jaime, Julio Cesar Romero Jaime and Gabriel Alejo Escalera, and the call made by the National March for Justice and Against Impunity, due to begin on 5 May 2011 in the city of Cuernavaca, Morelos, and reaching the Zócalo of Mexico City on Sunday, 8 May this year. Although it is our sincere desire to march beside those demanding justice for the victims of this war, we cannot go now to Cuernavaca or Mexico City. But according to our modest capabilities, and as part of the national campaign to summon us, the indigenous Zapatista will march in silence in the city of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas, in the exercise of our constitutional rights, on 7 May 2011. After the march in silence, we will say our words in Spanish and in our native languages, and then return to our communities, towns and places. We will take on our silent march banners and posters with the messages: 'Stop the War of Calderón', 'No more Blood' and 'Enough!' We ask you please to convey these words to the families of the 49 dead children and 70 injured in the tragedy at the ABC Nursery in Hermosillo, Sonora; to the worthy mothers of Ciudad Juarez; the families of LeBaron and Salazar Reyes, Chihuahua; the relatives and friends of the victims of this arrogant war; the defenders of the human rights of nationals and migrants; and all the people convening the National March for Justice and Against Impunity (Enlace Zapatista, 2011).

Fig. 7. Zapatista's demonstration in support of Javier Sicilia's movement for peace (7 May 2011). Photo: Marta Molina.
https://martamoli.wordpress.com/2013/12/14/retales-y-el-silencio-se-convirtio-en-poesia-y-mexico-escucho/

Monroy-Hernández et al. (2013) have the view that social network sites have been used in the movements for peace. They indicate in a study on how people use Twitter in the Mexican drug war that social media has a highly visible presence in public life. The authors remark that, for Mexicans, social media have become a space that facilitates their participation in circulating information over digital platforms in an increased form, being as a result a replacement for traditional news media and governmental institutions. Citizens in the most affected localities, such as Nuevo Leon, Michoacán, Tamaulipas and Guerrero, to mention some of them, are using, social media as a resource for the dissemination of alerts and other information.

Since the development of the MPJD it has engaged in two primary forms of participation in the public space on the issue of the national emergency: public dialogue with the authorities, and nonviolent intervention in public spaces for four years, having the most intensive actions from 2011-2013 (Villanueva et al., 2013).

Treré and Cargnelutti (2014:189) note that the MPJD uses the media to assemble the population, but also uses social networks, with which it has put before the public its demands and proposals, and announced its marches and caravans. The MPJD understands the value of social networks, has websites on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and has created courses and workshops on digital journalism and resistance, among others.

The first important feature to note regarding the resonance of the initial march is the presence of the circle's friends of Javier Sicilia: intellectuals, people who by their profession have access to the media and enjoy credibility in the public space. Also, with Sicilia himself being a contributor to such prestigious media as the newspaper *La Jornada* and the magazine *Proceso*, he has access to a microphone and was therefore heard by a wider audience (Cervantes, 2012).

Linares (2012), however, remarks that the practices of the MPJD have only had a marginal influence on the communicative cultural production in Mexico, as in recent years the government's strategy has invested great efforts in producing messages aimed at legitimising the frontal attack and militarized strategy used in the war against drugs.

The start of the mobilisation that culminated with the formation of the MPJD is established by a common enemy for the citizens: the authorities responsible for the war, Genaro García Luna as head of the PGR and Calderón. Cervantes (2012) notes that after the 12 May

publishing by the MPJD of the National Pact for Peace,[55] 3,000 civil organisations had signed it by 10 June 2011.[56] The document included six key demands:

> 1. We demand truth and justice. 2. We demand an end to the current war strategy and demand a new approach to public safety. 3. We demand a fight against corruption and impunity. 4. We demand a fight against the economic roots and the proceeds of crime. 5. We demand emergency care for the young and effective actions to repair the damaged social fabric. 6. We demand participatory democracy, better representative democracy and democratization of the media (MPJD, 2011).

The first caravan of the MPJD, called 'The Relief Caravan', travelled from 4 to 12 June 2011 around 12 cities of Mexico, 3,500 kilometres in all from the south of Mexico, Cuernavaca, Morelos, to Ciudad Juarez, in the north. Trerè and Cargnelutti (2014) highlight that the caravans have been the most emblematic strategy of the MPJD's 'repertoire of action', as they travel through different states, allowing more people to join to tell their stories and demands to the government.

In the first caravan, Javier Sicilia stated that they offered relief to the victims they encountered over the course of the journey.[57] On the fourth day of 'The Relief Caravan', in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Javier Sicilia listened to some of the testimonies of the victims and they walked together to the State Attorney's Office.[58]

Emilio Alvarez Icaza, Javier Sicilia and relatives of the victims from Nuevo Leon came near midnight to talk to authorities, and later came out with Attorney Adrian Emilio de la Garza Santos to announce the result of this peaceful civil action. Some of the achievements were that the Caravan got the attorney to review the cases of nine of the victims and implement a timetable with the CADHAC (Citizens in Support of Human Rights), the organisation supporting such cases. A period of one week was given for the prosecutor to announce the

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[55] Pacto Nacional por la Paz. Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/documentos-esenciales-del-movimiento/pacto-nacional-por-un-mexico-en-paz-con-justicia-y-dignidad/ (Accessed 14 March 2015)
[56] Guadarrama, Ó. (11 June 2011) Más de 300 organizaciones firman un pacto por la paz en Ciudad Juárez, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/06/11/mas-de-300-organizaciones-firman-un-pacto-por-la-paz-en-ciudad-juarez (Accessed 29 March 2015)
[57] Montalvo, T. (10 June 2011) La brigada de aliento que impulsa la Caravana por la Paz, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/06/10/javier-sicilia-y-el-consuelo (Accessed 13 March 2015)
[58] Cencos, Caravana día 4. Con acción civil pacífica Caravana toma PGJ en Monterrey (9 June 2011) *Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos en Coahuila*. Retrieved from http://fuundec.org/2011/06/09/caravana-dia-4-con-accion-civil-pacifica-caravana-toma-pgj-en-monterrey/ (Accessed 13 March 2015)

status of these cases, with the agreement that a month after the Caravan, its members will return to see that the commitments have been fulfilled.

Through the Global Network for Peace, the movement become international.[59] More than 20 cities around the world joined the protests for peace in Mexico, supporting Sicilia's Caravan to Ciudad Juarez. Through social networks, group representatives and sympathizers of Mexicans in Asia, Europe and Latin America communicated and created the Global Network for Peace in Mexico.

Mexicans living outside of Mexico and supporters of various nationalities joined the protests for peace in the movement that had been brewing in Mexico since April. Some of the most recognised actions took place in Japan, Paris, Spain, Germany and Brazil, while public activities in the United States were carried out in El Paso, Texas, Los Angeles, California, Washington D.C. and North Carolina. Julian LeBaron, one of the main leaders of the MPJD, visited the branch of the Global Network for Peace in Montreal, Canada, and another meeting took place in Paris, France, with Javier Sicilia.[60]

On 7 September 2011,[61] the MPJD announced a second Caravan, to take place from 9 to 19 September and to be called 'The Caravan of the South', journeying from Mexico City to Chiapas, and concentrating their visit on the six southern states of Mexico. The dialogue was to focus on migrant and indigenous victims, paying attention to the following questions:

> How are we affected by the war on drugs? How we are facing the war? How we are
> organising to stop the war? Where do we agree and where do we disagree in our strategies
> to stop the war? What actions of resistance can we take together to stop the war and build
> peace? (MPJD, 2011).

This Caravan travelled 3,000 kilometres. The Caravan of the South documented 221 cases of violence in the states of Morelos, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Tabasco and Veracruz.[62]

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[59] Apoyo internacional al movimiento ciudadano por un México en Paz con Justicia y Dignidad (10 June 2011) *Cencos*. Retrieved from http://cencos.wordpress.com/2011/06/10/apoyo-internacional-al-movimiento-ciudadano-por-un-mexico-en-paz-con-justicia-y-dignidad/(Accessed 16 March 2015)
[60] Cencos, Los temas de derechos humanos 2011: Rostros de la emergencia nacional: MPJD, *Sin embargo.mx.* Retrieved from http://www.sinembargo.mx/21-12-2011/101489(Accessed 18 March 2015)

[61] El Movimiento por la Paz con Justicia y Dignidad anuncia ruta de la Caravana del Sur (7 September 2011). Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/es/2011/09/07/el-movimiento-por-la-paz-con-justicia-y-dignidad-anuncia-ruta-de-la-caravana-del-sur/ (Accessed 17 July 2015)
[62] Prometeo, L. (19 September 2011) La Caravana por la Paz llega a la Ciudad de México tras recorrer el sur, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/09/19/la-caravana-del-sur-acumula-testimonios-y-se-acerca-a-la-capital (Accessed 25 July 2015)

The testimonies collected in each of the cities visited mostly concern forced disappearances, with 116 such reports; followed by homicides, with 30; 28 concerned detentions; 13 were stories of forced displacement; eight were based on faults in due process; seven were cases of torture; five were kidnapping; four were threats; and two involved trafficking, assault with violence and extortion.

The Relief Caravan, which headed north in June, documented 291 cases, with most registered in Chihuahua, Durango and Nuevo Leon. Murder represented 45% of cases, forced disappearances, 42%, and 11%, kidnappings. By the end of 2011, the MPJD had engaged in 71 actions of peaceful civil resistance. There were at least 26 plenary meetings open to everyone where the general course of the social movement was decided. The MPJD also secured two meetings with President Felipe Calderón, one with the state legislature and one with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to denounce the situation as a national emergency. More than 500 cases were documented by the Commission from the testimonies collected by the MPJD during their caravans. More than 300 relatives of victims of enforced disappearance were grouped in the Family United for Our Disappeared (as) in Coahuila (FUUNDEC). More than 30 cases were under review by the Attorney General of Nuevo Leon, accompanied by the Citizens in Support of Human Rights (CADHAC).

On 15 June 2012, the MPJD released a statement[63] expressing the reasons for the #CaravanaUSA, giving five main pillars in support of the mobilisation process. The pillars were chosen to try to find a place in the US political agenda and in its public opinion, and were: the war on drugs, arms trafficking, money laundering, international cooperation and migration. The press release announced:

> As the number of innocent people who continue to die in Mexico because of the failed war on drugs rises to 71,000, the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD) has announced that it will lead a month-long "Caravan for Peace" across the United States to draw attention to the misguided drug war policies that have caused a crisis of violence and impunity. The MPJD and dozens of organizations from both countries are joining together to coordinate the Caravan, a more than 6,000-mile journey, leaving San Diego, CA, on August 12th and arriving in Washington, D.C., on September 10th. Led by victims of the drug war on both sides of the border, the Caravan aims to inspire U.S. civil society

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[63] Conferencia de Prensa: Presentación de la Caravana por la Paz México / USA (15 June 2012). Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/es/2012/06/15/invitacion-a-conferencia-de-prensa-presentacion-de-la-caravana-por-la-paz-mexico-usa/ (Accessed 10 March 2015)

to stem the flow of weapons into Mexico, to support humane and health-oriented alternatives to drug prohibition, and to demand more effective, non-violent security strategies. Bi-national respect for justice and human dignity lies at the heart of this initiative, making humane immigration policy another central concern of the Caravan (MPJD, 2012).

According to Global Exchange,[64] an international human rights organisation dedicated to promoting social, economic and environmental justice around the world, the 120-person caravan traversed 5,700 miles, holding events in 26 cities and generating extensive coverage in most of the major media markets in the US and Mexico. Global Exchange noted that:

> All along its journey the Caravan spoke boldly and used creative non-violent actions to dramatize the issues while seeking common ground on which to build the difficult, bi-national road to peace. In San Diego, Mexican mothers who had lost sons or daughters embraced American mothers who had similarly lost children to violence, drugs, or prison. The mothers called out their common humanity in the first of many candle-lit vigils (Global Exchange, 2012).

Hasegawa (2014) explains that the US Caravan for Peace travelled with human rights NGOs, and was covered by a number of official and alternative media. The amount of videos and articles written on the activities of the caravan in the 26 US cities show the great support that professionals provided to the movement. The documentary 'The Poet', covering the MPJD, by Katie Galloway and Kelly Duane de la Vega,[65] showed that the US media did not give coverage to the Caravan.

Linares (2012:7) describes other experiences in relation to the use of the media that the MPJD experienced. At the beginning of January 2012, the collective work of the 'Grito más Fuerte' and 250 members, including actresses, actors, directors and producers from over 20 companies and institutions related to design, production and communication joined to produce, create and launch spots. The collective also expanded their activities through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, creating and displaying their messages in radio stations and universities, and making some television spots that were transmitted on TV UNAM, Canal 44, the University of Guadalajara's network and Mexico City's channel 21. These messages were further shown in the music festival Vive Latino, and the documentary

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[64] Caravan for Peace with Justice and Dignity, http://www.globalexchange.org/mexico/caravan

[65] Lloyd, R. (1 May 2015) Review Dramatic, inspiring 'El Poeta' targets Mexico's War on Drugs, *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/tv/la-et-st-pbs-el-poeta-review-mexico-drug-war-20150501-column.html (Accessed 03 June 2015)

festival Ambulante. From January to March 2012, the main spot of their campaign, 'En los Zapatos del Otro', had more than 129,000 views on YouTube.

As can be seen, the mobilisations for peace in Mexico in the context of the war on drugs began after four years of Calderón's government, and displayed a huge response from ordinary people, activists, and civil organisations, with extensive media coverage from Mexican newspapers portraying on the front pages the claims for justice and calls for a stop to the violence. It is also important to note the support from social media users in the first demonstration for peace in Mexico for Javier Sicilia's movement, with the use of hashtags and the creation of Facebook pages, although the amount of discussion on the topic over the social networks was not abundant. The intensive demonstrations and other activities in the streets, and the meetings with the authorities, showed the intent – by showing the human tragedy and the victims of the government's strategy – of seeking a shift in the strategy of the war on drugs. The caravans of the MPJD in Mexico allowed the movement to have a clear idea of the violence produced by the government offensive, but also to have the necessary elements to establish a public dialogue with the authorities and, once again, to gain visibility in the Mexican media that will be analysed in the next section.

4.5.1 Dialogues for Peace with President Calderón

The dialogues for peace with President Calderón, for the purpose of this thesis, on 23rd June 2011 signified for the MPJD one of the most important encounters between Javier Sicilia and other victims of the war on drugs, and the Mexican president Felipe Calderón along with some of the Secretaries of State and the Attorney General.

The victims of the violence spoke at the Palace of Chapultepec. Not only was this relevant because it represented a unique opportunity to make visible in the public sphere the victims' tragedy in front of the Mexican authorities, but the encounter was, also symbolic the ideal moment to gain visibility through the media coverage in the Mexican newspapers.

The figure of Javier Sicilia was at the centre of the debate as a victim of the war on drugs. The newspaper's front pages of the day after, on 24 June, mainly showed two positions. One was more on the side of the victims, including examples such as 'The president apologizes for the 40,000 deaths', 'It Hurts!', 'The dialogue goes on', while the other showed support for Calderón's strategy, with headlines like 'Calderón to Sicilia: Against the crime, even with

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stones' meaning that he would battle organised crime with any kind of weapon, 'Forgiveness yes, withdrawal no' signifying that even as he requested forgiveness, the president would not change his military strategy, 'In the fight against crime, I do not regret', and 'Organised crime gives money to the judges, but I do not have proof: Calderón'.

Fig. 8. The front pages of major newspapers on the dialogue for peace with President Calderón (24 June 2011). http://kiosko.net/mx/2011-06-24/

During the first meeting, the MPJD focused on the representation of victims. The participants from the movement who had the opportunity to speak during the meeting were: Julian LeBaron, who focused on the visibility of the victims and raised the cases of their relatives who had been killed or disappeared; Araceli Rodríguez Nava, who covered the representation of the victims of police and military actions, and also raised the case of his son's disappearance; María Elena Herrera, who represented groups of mothers with missing sons, and exposed the case of four sons missing in such conditions; Campanur Salvador Sánchez,

representative of Cheran, Michoacán and the indigenous people collaborating with the MPJD, who presented cases of violence by companies and issues arising from government land tenure; and Norma Ledezma Ortega, founder of the organisation 'Justice for Our Daughters of Chihuahua', who spoke on cases in the state and the municipality of Ciudad Juarez.

On their behalf, the federal government was represented by President Felipe Calderón, who had four interventions and was accompanied by José Francisco Blake Mora, head of the Ministry of the Interior (SEGOB), who also served as moderator, as well as members of the security cabinet: Marisela Morales Ibáñez of the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR) and Genaro García Luna of the Public Security Secretariat (SSP). The involvement of such officials in the dialogue was limited to a single interjection, in order to provide data on cases that were presented, their participation was informative in support of Felipe Calderón's interventions. It should be noted that representatives of the Armed Forces and the Navy were also present.

Javier Sicilia, in his inaugural speech,[66] told Felipe Calderón that regardless of the fault of criminals, the state is also jointly responsible for the 40,000 people dead and the thousands of missing people and orphans, saying:

> Mr. President, you are responsible for having declared a war against an army that does not exist, because it is made up of criminals, without having made a profound political reform and a consolidation of institutions. Here, Mr. President, look at our faces and our names, listen carefully to our words. We are a representation of innocent victims. Do they seem just collateral casualties, statistics, numbers? One percent of the dead? (La Jornada, 2011).

In addition, Javier Sicilia discussed demands previously made in the National Pact, consisting of the following:

1. Investigate the murders and disappearances and name the victims.

2. End the strategy of the war and take a new approach to public safety.

3. Fight corruption and impunity.

4. Tackle the economic results and proceeds of crime.

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[66] Herrera, C. and Urrutia, A. (24 June 2011) Calderón debe pedir perdón por los 40 mil muertos: Sicilia, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2011/06/24/politica/002n1pol?partner=rss (Accessed 20 July 2015)

5. Provide emergency care for the young and enact effective recovery actions for the social fabric.

6. Facilitate participatory democracy.

The speakers focused on two main issues: first, making the victims of violence visible, emphasising that not only are they linked to crime but also to abuse and commissions of the government at various levels, including the federal. In this part, Javier Sicilia participated both as a representative of the movement at the dialogue table and a representative of the victims, demanded attention for unresolved cases, spoke on the treatment of public servants, and insisted that the government fulfil its responsibility to care and to resolve existing cases to care for the victims of the war on drugs, by the creation of a memorial and the opening of a compensation fund (Pérez, 2012).

The second issue presented by the movement was the demand for a change in the security strategy, incorporating social approaches through public security policy and social reconstruction. The approaches made on this topic were made by Javier Sicilia. They sought to raise arguments that showed the need for a modification of the current security policy (Pérez, 2012).

The journalist Carmen Aristegui reflected on the dialogues for peace after they concluded, saying:

> Today we have seen a huge symbolic debate [...] these people who came with their pain - the victims, are telling us that something is not working here, their diagnosis is essential for the next debate: the diagnosis of people who have lived the conflict in the flesh [...] and then what follows, as I see it, is a debate that still is not given,[67] which debate consists of a technical discussion [...] what should follow is a discussion of specialists from people who know about these issues [...] to confront those who are making decisions concerning Mexican society.[68]

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[67] It is important to mention that from 6 to 10 June 2011, before the dialogue between the MJPD and President Felipe Calderón, the MPJD announced on its website the International Conference on Security and Justice in Democracy, towards a policy of state at the dawn of the third millennium.

[68] Aristegui, C., Opinión sobre la reunión Sicilia-Calderón (24 June 2011). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3ZXwzvppQE (Accessed 23 June 2014)

The dialogues for peace with President Felipe Calderón on 24 June 2011, accomplished, for the first time since his 2006 declaration of the war on drugs, a shift in his discourse,[69] with him stating that:

> I am sad for the loss of life of thousands of Mexicans. The statistics do not reveal the importance of even one life we have lost. It pains me that the lives of so many innocent young people have been reaped. It pains me to hear the parents asking me to find their missing children. It pains me every time a police officer, a soldier or a sailor dies. It pains me to see their children orphaned. It also pains me to see the children who have been recruited by gangs, young without hope who have found death.

On 21 July 2011,[70] the same year, at the National Museum of Anthropology and History, four desks were set up for these purposes:

> 1. Bureau for the Care and Monitoring of Law Enforcement cases raised. This implies not only the remedy of specific cases, but also a) the creation of a strategy for the classification of the various cases according to the problems and the aggressors responsible (state apparatuses, organised crime, petty crimes that are the product of impunity) and the identification of those responsible, b) links and information between the various units for inquiries in depth, c) initiatives that allow state attorneys and prosecutors to do the job they are not doing, d) developing manuals and recommendations that model the various branches of organised crime.

> 2. Table for a Victim Support System. A new national model of a relationship with, valuation of, and fairness to the rights of victims. For us, and for the entire citizenry, not enough progress has been made in structural justice to address the causes of and ensure action against the violated rights of victims.

> 3. Table for the Comprehensive Review of the National Security Strategic Emphasis on Strengthening the Social Fabric. A new model of security strategy that focuses on human rights and peace. Despite the intention of the President of the Republic to maintain his security strategy, a strategy that has only resulted in pain, suffering and the horror in which we live, it is urgent that we stop this war and find conditions for peace with justice and dignity. This requires an end to the militaristic approach to combating organised

[69] Calderón, F. (24 June 2011) Reflexiones sobre el diálogo con el Movimiento por la Paz, *Presidencia de la República*. Retrieved from http://calderon.presidencia.gob.mx/el-blog/reflexiones-sobre-el-dialogo-con-el-movimiento-por-la-paz/ (Accessed 19 June 2014)

[70] Palabras de Javier Sicilia en la ceremonia de instalación de las mesas de trabajo con el Poder Ejecutivo (21 July 2011). Retrieved from http://movimientoporlapaz.mx/en/2011/07/21/palabras-de-javier-sicilia-en-la-ceremonia-de-instalacion-de-las-mesas-de-trabajo-con-el-poder-ejecutivo/ (Accessed 04 July 2015)

crime, and a broader and more structural approach.

4. Bureau for the Promotion of Democracy, Participatory Mechanisms and Media Democratization. We demand a thorough renovation of the political system, a renewal that allows the empowerment of citizens in matters of good governance and thus allows a stop to the viciousness of the political parties that are doing so much damage.

Gallagher (2012) argues that one of most remarkable of the MPJD's achievements has been their work in the construction of 'victims of violence' as a significant political identity and the subsequent acknowledgement of this identity by both national and state-level officials, and 'the empowering and legitimizing impact this identity shift has had on local groups as they struggle to hold the state accountable for investigating the disappearances and deaths of their family members' (Gallagher, 2012:6).

The author states that the MPJD, along with local and national human rights groups, succeeded in redefining the identity of 'victim' to cover all people affected by the violence in Mexico, whoever had victimized them, whether the state or organised crime, and regardless of class:

This identity shift conferred legitimacy on all victims of violence in Mexico, and helped to open political spaces previously closed to them, especially to poor victims of violence. This was demonstrated most clearly in the MPJD's ability to obligate the federal government to sit down with their leaders and victims (Gallagher, 2012:25).

Linares (2012:12) suggests an important element in the reconstruction of the biography of the victims' experiences of violence through the MPJD is a communication strategy which uses narrative elements that support 'a strong presence of the biographical narrative of the victim of violence. These experiences are outside the area of government policies that affect the public space so strongly through the exigency of war'.

All these communication strategies, and the use of new information and communication technology, have led to national and international visibility. The author notes that all these practices are generators of symbolic media and public space productions which reject dominant narratives and practices that built up all that is related to drug trafficking as the enemy of the government. These communication strategies are thought to influence the political and cultural environment within the context of the advocacy of human rights, cultural poetic activism or nonviolent resistance, and contribute to the building of solidarity networks to support the victims of the war on drugs.

Monsiváis et al. (2013) state that the dialogues for peace constituted an episode that made it possible to visualize the dignity of the victims and proclaim the moral consequences of the war on drugs. The MPJD and the dialogues for peace have helped put in the public sphere a discourse claiming rights for victims and taking the state to task in this regard.

A contribution from Tarica (2015) has been the creation of the concept of 'counter-victimization' that establishes a critique of the Mexican state through the presentation with dignity and agency of the victims of the war on drugs, all as a result of the efforts of the victims. As has previously been analysed, media coverage would play a role in the shift of the perception of the victims to a group of social actors with agency:

> It counters the prevailing tendency to criminalize or otherwise tar the reputation of those who have been killed or disappeared, which has the effect of holding them and their families responsible for the violence they have suffered while absolving the state of its responsibility for the violence. Counter-victimization emphasizes that the state's corruption, impunity and misguided policies amount to a kind of criminal violence for which the state should be held responsible.

As has been analysed, the media coverage in the early stages of the MPJD played a crucial role in the visibilization of the victims of the war on drugs, to position at the centre of public debate the unsuitability of the Mexican government's approach to combating the violence. The dialogue for peace in the castle of Chapultepec was framed in the media in two forms – thereby reducing the density of the debate on the issue of violence in Mexico – on the one hand Calderón's petition to be forgiven and on the other his insistence that the strategy will not change, that the military will not be withdrawn from its role in the war on drugs. The speeches of the victims that had taken place in the meeting did not gain widespread attention from the media, but crucially affected their narratives for upcoming meetings with the authorities. Perhaps most importantly, within the MPJD, the social media campaign 'En los Zapatos del Otro'[71], launched in early 2012 by the group 'El Grito más Fuerte'[72], positioned the victims of the war on drugs in a humanizing narrative to create empathy and give audiences a more complex explanation of the human tragedy brought about by the war on drugs.

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[71] It is a Spanish expression that means a way to understand and comprehend what the other feels, empathetic, putting himself/herself in the place of another: 'Put yourself in someone else's shoes'.
[72] In English it means 'The loudest scream'. It is a citizens' collective which does not belong to any political party, made up of people of art and culture in Mexico, willing to work to build peace and real participatory democracy.

Conclusion

The social movements for peace in Mexico emerged in a complex political environment, and multiple factors have converged to make their mobilisations possible. In this manner, the first mobilisations for peace in Mexico came from intellectuals and journalists in the 'No more Blood' movement, signifying that there were critical individuals ready to confront through the media the status quo of Calderón's strategy for battling the drug cartels.

A few months later, at the beginning of April 2011, as a consequence of the murder of Javier Sicilia's son, he attracted massive media attention, due in no small part to the number of intellectuals and journalists who followed his demands for justice, confronting publicly with huge media attention the results of Calderón's strategy against organised crime.

One of the main achievements of the MPJD was to make visible the victims of the war on drugs through its repertoire of action, for example the caravans during which the MPJD could preserve and document the hundreds of testimonies of the victims that were then exposed in the first dialogue of 24 June 2011 with President Felipe Calderón. This event was public and mediatised by television, radio, press and the Internet; it provoked, for the first time since the war on drugs was launched on December 2006, a shift in the President's discourse, causing him to express his condolences for all the people's deaths.

However, the status quo did not change: from that moment to the end of the presidency there have been an estimated 40,000 deaths,[73] leaving the toll of the war on drugs as a total of 100,000 deaths[74] and 26,000 missing people.[75] As mentioned above, the media coverage before the MPJD was primarily concerned with portraying a struggle between 'the good' and the 'the criminal' ones, and so portraying the people that were murdered in the battle, without investigating if they were part of organised crime.

One more feature that threatened the media coverage was the lack of an ethics code, this leading to, for example, the portraying of arrested individuals as delinquents prior to any

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[73] Calderón afirma que "no se va dejar" y seguirá combatiendo al crimen (15 August 2011) *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/08/15/calderon-afirma-que-no-se-va-dejar-y-seguira-combatiendo-al-crimen (Accessed 10 March 2015)

[74] Rodríguez, E. (30 June 2015) Mapping Mexico's deadly drug war, *Science*. Retrieved from, http://news.sciencemag.org/latin-america/2015/06/mapping-mexicos-deadly-drug-war (Accessed 01 July 2015)

[75] AI pide al gobierno mexicano investigar las más de 26,000 desapariciones (28 February 2013). Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2013/02/28/ai-pide-al-gobierno-mexicano-investigar-las-mas-de-26000-desapariciones (Accessed 13 March 2015)

legal process. Such activities gave the appearance that the authorities were having success against the high rate of crimes by dismantling the drug cartels, when in truth the length and breadth of the violence was only augmented. In the same form, the use of the language that organised crime itself used to describe their crimes was adopted, a result of the media's construction of the issue of violence as 'natural'.

The MPJD had an achievement of another kind, not related to transforming the public policies of the strategy used to combat the drug cartels. This accomplishment is the shift of the passive victims to actors with agency, re-signifying their political identity, empowering and legitimising their demands in front of the authorities, and opening political spaces that before had been closed to them, especially the poor victims. The MPJD also helped the victims to reconfigure the biography of their experience of violence, through a communication strategy which gave them international visibility.

The media coverage helped the movement rupture the government's dominant discourse that the people killed or disappeared most probably were related to the crime or otherwise did something wrong to deserve it. Furthermore, the discursive shift allowed ordinary people to express their disagreement with the policies in the struggle.

However, the position of the government did not change significantly even after they heard the victims. Even though human rights reports and international visits from the United Nations and other commissions have stressed the perpetration of grave human rights abuses by recovering the testimonies of the victims, there has not been a creation of an all-inclusive public policy and a legal framework to deal with reparations for the victims, the investigations of the crimes, or the punishment of those responsible.

CHAPTER FIVE

USES OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITES AND THE INTERNET IN MEXICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR PEACE

5.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the voices of the activists, journalists, experts, and the comments of users on the social network sites, in relation to the roots of the emergence of the social movement for peace in Mexico. This chapter analyses the elements that facilitated the development in the initial stages of the mobilisations that helped to define the processes of grievance definition, collective identity formation and their role in joint action, and explores the role of the Internet and social network sites in group formation and mobilisation.

The chapter examines the relation of the social movements for peace with the media and Internet. Taking into account the perspective of della Porta (2013), I explored how the media play a key role in the control of the symbolic production, with the outcome in this case of biased media coverage. This chapter considers the positions of Mosca (2010) and Earl (2015) in relation to the connections between the media and Internet that have let the amplification of the stories under the precondition that traditional media have been required to get engaged with the social media. This chapter analyses how the ideologies and practices of social movements for peace in Mexico have been simplified and homogenised by the mainstream media (Atton, 2013).

Moreover, this chapter analyses the use of the Internet in social movements for peace in Mexico and how it has made possible an empowerment of citizens that provides a counterbalance to the dominant media discourses, by sharing alternative points of view and by distributing their own opinions (della Porta, 2011). The ways in which collective identity can be promoted by the Internet are also examined (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013), as is the importance of the issue of identity to comprehending the connection between social media and

mass protests, perhaps most significantly the key role of emotions in the construction of collective identity and an understanding of the motivations behind mobilisation (Taylor, 2013).

In the final section of the analysis of the uses of the Internet by social movements for peace in Mexico, this chapter examines through a quantitative and qualitative approach the user comments on YouTube videos in relation to the MPJD. In addition, an analysis is undertaken of the uses of the Facebook page profiles of ten collective groups of social movements for peace in Mexico. Furthermore, the analysis examines the user comments of news stories from the political magazine *Proceso*, the uses of the webpage of the MPJD, an analysis of the main issues of the Mexican national newspapers in relation to the MPJD and the ways the MPJD uses Twitter.

5.2   Causes of the Upsurge in Social Movements for Peace in Mexico in the Context of the War on Drugs in the View of the Activists and Experts

In chapter four, the social and political context that allowed the emergence of social movements for peace in Mexico has been analysed through a literature review. With the intent of approaching the issue with a holistic procedure, it is relevant to this thesis to examine how the elements combined to create the common grievances resulting in the mobilisations for peace in Mexico, primarily from the view of activists. This part of the analysis examines the political context that provided the impulse for the establishment of the shared grievances that were at the root of the social movements for peace in Mexico, previous to the analysis of their uses of the Internet and social network sites.

In this sense, it is essential to recognise the fact that all the use of the Internet and social network sites by these social movements go beyond technological determinism. As Tilly and Woods (2010) highlight, the new media did not change the social movements by themselves, instead the changes produced originated from their social and political contexts and not from their technological innovations. An activist expresses this idea in this form:

> We must have a multidimensional look at the problems of the war against drugs, arms trafficking, immigration problems, money laundering, and the issue of media reforms. [...] What the families of victims are expressing is a gradual deterioration of the capabilities of the state as a result of a process of deinstitutionalization [...] resulting from

economic policies, militarized tactics, and a structurally precarious security system that criminalizes society and removes the conditions for social security. [...] By removing those conditions, the government dismantled the policies of neoliberalism and allowed the market to prevail for the public role of government in Mexico. We are still seeing the liberalization of institutions (Jorge).

From a similar perspective, García et al. (2013) state that the emergence of social movements relies on the values and features of the context of the current political regime, the nature of the issues, and the spread of media usage from which they emerged. Along the same lines, another activist states:

The movements for peace in Mexico arose because of several fundamental factors [...] while the violent confrontations of organised crime affected the middle class, the lower class has been suffering violent attacks for a long time, from the dirty war in the sixties to the long-lasting low-intensity warfare in Juarez. The social class that has the capacity to mobilise resources is exemplified by someone like Javier Sicilia who has a network of contacts. Social demand was touched by a person who had the capacity to mobilise media with the imagery of an affected parent (Sabina).

One of the most recognised figures in the emerging social movements for peace in Mexico was Javier Sicilia, who had a powerful enough voice to gather multiple civil organisations and sympathizers. Sicilia has the support of a strong network of people working in the media, especially journalists, not least for his work in Mexican culture as an intellectual writer. Sicilia, although he began his movement as a result of becoming a victim of the violence following the killing of his son and belonged squarely to the middle class, approached the victims that were not as visible as he was, mainly those who were part of the lower class. Cervantes (2012:125) highlights an important point in regards to Javier Sicilia's circle of friends, noting that they are largely intellectuals, and people who by their professions have access to media and enjoy credibility in the public space.

For Minkoff (2013), in the initial phase of a mobilisation, virtual networks can help in the development of grievance formation, collective identity construction, and united action, which are fundamental to continued social movement achievement. One of the collectives for peace made a strong suggestion that the possibilities the virtual networks which bring allow the gathering of the victims, intellectuals, activists and journalists, becoming a key step in the formation of a mobilisation. As Lolita Bosch states:

The war was officially declared in 2006. In 2008 after the death of the Beltran Leyva in

Cuernavaca, Morelos, the social visibility of the war got aggravated, also the violence came from many northern states in México. Initially people were animated by the military presence, but later the population saw that they were part of the corruption and extortion. The drug cartels infiltrated the army, and there was the mass massacre of migrants in San Fernando on 22 August 2010 at around the same time as the public announcement of the first mass grave in Mexico. The population affected by the violence did not have access to a voice. What happened in San Fernando received media coverage from many parts of the world, many people began to mobilise, open blogs and undertake cultural projects a few months after. The killing of the son of Javier Sicilia, the murder of the youth of the Monterrey Technological Institute of Higher Studies (ITESM), all these things made what we call 'victims of the first' [...] these victims are the elite, even though they cannot always react, as with the kidnapping of Cevallos. 'Victims of the second' are the middle class, while the 'victims of the third' are the victims who are overwhelmingly suffering the consequences of the violence, whether migrants or the million people moved from the lower class to poverty. What happened with Javier Sicilia's movement is that he made visible that hundreds of people were affected, though no one had heard them, and that changed everything. The movement made the victims meet each other despite differences of geography and age (Lolita).

Lolita Bosch denotes a clear hierarchy in her chronological narrative, where she expresses the different kind of victims who were appearing in the media landscape, such as the migrant victims who made an impact on the public sphere through the media, although she does not express a belief that the massacre caused the biggest spreading of peace mobilisations. For Lolita, that happened with the appearance of Javier Sicilia, who was influential and personally affected and his story created awareness of the violence produced by the war on drugs.

In addition, Taylor (2013) puts stress on the idea that the aim of the social movement is to generate new conceptions of stigmatized groups, replacing an emotional state of shame and isolation with one of pride and solidarity. Additionally, Atton (2002:492) asserts that the 'mainstream media produce a media system that is monolithic and inflexible, within which the representation of dissident, radical and otherwise "unofficial" voices are largely predictable: if heard at all, such voices will be demonised and marginalised'. Indeed, the victims of the war on drugs, prior to the uprising of the MPJD, were marginalised and accused of being criminals. The expert and activist Janice states that:

There was very little done in response to human rights violations in 2009 and 2010, the

discourse of Calderón dominated the public agenda. I argue that he could be right, the fact that cartels are so powerful suggests that it would be good to finish them. In this sense, the government was saying that those affected by the violence are bad people and that they were linked to drug trafficking. As the violence increased, people began to realize that this was not true, despite all the discourse of the president. When the killing of Sicilia's son was put on the public agenda, it was noted that his son was innocent and that yet he was killed by organised crime, and as a consequence the government's discourse was exposed as a lie. Javier Sicilia's contribution was that he clarified these doubts that existed in society (Janice).

Janice stresses the fact that the victims of violence were stigmatized as people linked with drug trafficking. From 2006 to 2010 most of the victims were labelled as criminals or collateral damage, simplifying their identities to numbers that just formed part of the statistics. Another activist expresses in a similar form how the victims of the war on drugs were simplified just to numbers, and were given no visibility in the public sphere. In this manner the common grievance becomes a collective identity based on the extensive amount of victims, as Roberto indicates:

In the movement we had different stages, the first thing that happened is that serious doubts appeared regarding the official numbers that really were very low. Then we began to question: How many people had been killed? They are not just numbers, they have names! We began to question all this, and we also had questions about the identities of these victims. We saw the attacks on the Reyes family in Chihuahua or the LeBaron family murders in the background. In Acapulco several massacres had already happened throughout 2011, and in the elections of 2012 the main topic was the killings and violence in Mexico, and there were some organised groups before the arrival of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity (MPJD). What made the movement pursue the action was the desire to give recognition to all the victims that were not visible in the public space. Javier Sicilia's story suggested the system had collapsed from the perspective of justice, and then more united citizens came together (Roberto).

Gamson (1992) remarks that the awareness of injustice plays a fundamental role in movement formation. A key point is the importance of identification with involvement in a social movement. Besides sharing grievances and emotions, a shared identity is essential for a social movement to develop the potential for mobilisation. It is necessary that grievances are turned into demands. One activist, a member of Mexicans for Peace in Switzerland states an awareness of the process of the group's formation, stating that:

It all starts at the time that these citizens are concerned by the political and economic upheaval, and the war that our country is going through. Many people abroad are affected by these main reasons mentioned above, but there are a few who decide to take decisions, get informed, organise and mainly engage in activities that may sensitize the rest of the citizens. Being aware and determined, some of us decided to create and organise one or more platforms which you can follow, sharing information and holding events to raise awareness about the plight of further violence and promote peace in Mexico. Events like these, as already mentioned, caused awareness in our country and people become encouraged to contribute, and participate in conveying this ideology of peace and a new culture through their families, friends and people around them, to help transform and evolve into a new mind-set and culture (Colectivo Suiza por la paz en México).

Reguillo (2013) argues that stories were not recognised but rather consciously silenced on behalf of part of the government, suggesting further that they were not problematized by the mainstream media commentators favourable to the 'iron hand' of the new president. María Guadalupe Mofín Otero, former head commissioner in the case of women killed in Ciudad Juárez, states on the topic of this governmental silence:

The agonising daily pain of seeing our country as a stage of multiple acts of violence, where the faces of those who violate are sometimes confused with the faces of those who should be the guarantors of security, who are not infrequently turned into perpetrators. It is unbearable to see the official lie where armed internal conflict is presented as if it were a single internal armed conflict, only a conflict between members of organised crime cartels (drug trafficking, arms trafficking, human trafficking), or a battle between them and the public institutions (federal and local civilians but also military, tucked into police functions that do not constitutionally concern them), or where these public officials are corrupt at the lower levels of the hierarchy and become part of the groups that commit crimes, although this does not arise uniformly in all cases (Guadalupe).

From a different perspective, the reason social movements for peace spread in Mexico was because of a formation of what the activist Alberto Escorcia (2014)[76] calls a 'mobilisation network', that is characterised by not being 'spontaneous' but corresponds rather to the turning point of a small story, starting from a network of relationships of trust and political discussions between the people who make up a social circle. So, connectivity precedes the formation of a

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[76] Ruiz, C. and Escorcia, A. (27 January 2014) #PosMeSalto: la lucidez de las multitudes conectadas, *Sin embargo.mx*. Retrieved from http://www.sinembargo.mx/opinion/27-01-2014/21127 (Accessed 06 January 2015)

community. Escorcia notes that the social fabric has been reconstructed in part by the interaction of social networks. He observes:

> When people started talking about violence, at the same time they began to search for peace; the movement for peace emerged at the peak of the desire for peace. When the pursuit of peace is seen on search engines, this means the people who are seeking peace are interested in finding a solution to the violent reality. People look for a solution, and that connects them in pursuit of a goal that is the common good. [...] When desires came together and became visible is when the movement emerged, and it was not from organisations. This common desire was a pluralistic call that started to talk about violence [...] The violence Sicilia suffered was simply synchronized as a kind of catalyst that brought about talks. It would be good to see a comparison between his speeches and what people had looked for at those moments. Collective intelligence solutions create the same collective longing (Alberto).

Zomeren (2013:85) argues that 'the more strongly individuals appraise external blame for their unfair situation, the more strongly they experience group-based anger and strong motivation to act collectively'. The fact that the levels of impunity in Mexico during the war on drugs have been so bad, and that there have been thousands of deaths and human rights violations, permitted the growth of a national grievance, demanding justice, as an expert states:

> Everything rotates around this breakdown that has led to this level of violence and attacks on rights and physical integrity. The violence, caused by the sense of impunity, is almost unprecedented over many decades. Impunity is the cause of this violence, and what all these groups are demanding in the end is justice. If we had a justice system that worked, that would give justice to the families of the victims, justice for those killed or missing, punishing the perpetrators or at least discovering what happened to their missing relatives, we would not have these demonstrations (Alejandro).

According to the Report on Forced Disappearances (Mexico, 2011:16), there are four main groups of people who are particularly vulnerable to the currently forced disappearances: migrants, journalists, human rights defenders, and women and young people. An interview with an activist reflects the findings of the report in terms of women and migrants:

> The migration issue was affected by the violence of drug trafficking, also the problem of kidnapping of women that have been forced whose recruitment is carried out by organized crime, violating their human rights [...], the issue of violence against migrant children in Mexico increased under Calderón. The entire administration of President Calderón threatens defenders of human rights, placing them in a context of insecurity and violence.

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The NGO 'Caravana de Madres de Migrantes[77]' estimates that in 2010 alone, 10,000 migrants from Central America were kidnapped and at least 800 have disappeared.[78] In the context on the war of drugs, there have been 4,112 murders of women and 3,976 have gone missing in only a two year span (2010-2012). 'The phenomenon of the 'dead of Juarez' has spread throughout the country,' Rodríguez Estrada Yuriria, legal advisor of the National Citizen Femicide Observatory and Catholics for a Free Choice, has said.[79] On this matter, the activist Jamie states:

> The movements arise from people who have lost a family member, as in the situation with the missing and murdered women in Ciudad Juarez. First, the many local associations emerge, and as the numbers of displaced and disappeared people grow, with so many victims around all Mexico, associations such as the Movement for Peace are formed (Jamie).

This part of thesis analysed the causes behind the formation of social movements for peace in Mexico in 2011. It can be concluded that the political context observed by the interviewees helped transform the early mobilisations into massive collective actions. In this form, Javier Sicilia was the ideal facilitator, in that he got the sympathy of an extensive part of the Mexican society affected by the violence and the deterioration of the capabilities of the state to safeguard the security of its citizens. In that manner, the construction of a collective identity condensed the claims into activities that got the attention of the media. This relationship, between social movements and the mainstream media, will be analysed in the next section.

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[77] The Caravan of Central America Migrant Mothers: it is a group of mothers from Guatemala and other Central American countries. Since 2005, for eleven years, as a group, they have followed a journey searching for clues regarding their missing children or other relatives, whom, in some cases, they found.

[78] Unos 10.000 centroamericanos han sido secuestrados en México este año (11 May 2011) *América Economía.* Retrieved from http://www.americaeconomia.com/politica-sociedad/mundo/unos-10000-centroamericanos-han-sido-secuestrados-en-mexico-este-ano (Accessed 03 January 2015)

[79] Martínez, S. (25 November 2012) Más de 4 mil feminicidios y 3 mil 976 desaparecidas, el saldo de Calderón, *La Jornada.* Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2012/11/25/politica/007n1pol (Accessed 08 January 2015)

5.3 The Relationship between Social Movements for Peace and the Media

As discussed in chapter one, on the relationship between the social movements and the media, this part of the thesis will analyse how this relationship is constructed, how activists and journalists feel it could be an advantage and disadvantage, and how the mainstream media relates to social media. One of the most explored conceptions of the relation of social movements and mainstream media looks at, as della Porta (2011) highlights, the relevance of the role of media corporations as regulators of symbolic production, turning out to be both an indispensable ground for any effort towards political mobilisation and an independent foundation of struggle. This is because the media provide a context that influences all the actors involved, and the media is also the foremost indicator for public reaction. In the case of Mexico, the main media, above the radio, the Internet, and newspaper, is television. As a result, most Mexicans are at the mercy of the symbolic production of Televisa and TV Azteca. It is noted that this is due to the social conditions of Mexico: a country where more than half of the population lives in poor economic conditions, without access to education and lacking social awareness. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of equity in the telecommunications sector. There is a practical duopoly between Televisa and TV Azteca, who hold a dominant position (Carrasco, 2012), together controlling approximately 95 percent of the media market.

In this context, where social movements for peace in Mexico cannot access the mainstream media, they have sought out alternative media possibilities to spread their demands, as Carlos, an activist, states:

> In Mexico there are two influential broadcasters. It is their choice if they reach out to us to hear our version of events, we as organisations will not be heard if we knock at the door of official media, and traditional media is difficult to access. Journalists such as Carmen Aristegui, or electronic media such as Epigmenio Ibarra's website Revolution 3.0, or the digital magazine 'Animal político', however, have blogs as an alternative media and we can build a synergy. While traditional media provided coverage of the dialogues for peace, for example, this information could either be correct or misinform the audiences, as they work for specific interest groups (Carlos).

Carlos states that even when mainstream media gave coverage it was not automatically a sign of the 'symbolic production' that empowers a social movement, because that media coverage could misinform the audiences. At the same time, the mainstream media could make

use of multimedia material produced for and published on social network sites, as the Mexicans in Switzerland for Peace group says:

> We have already been contacted by international media, and videos and photos that have been distributed through social networks have been broadcast in the media. Social networks have become an additional source of information (Mexicans in Switzerland for Peace).

For Mosca (2010:10), the Internet simplifies the movements' relationship with the media because press releases, photos, and documents are published on websites that are used by journalists as sources of information for their articles. In this form, the journalist Elia notes that:

> Social networks have become traditional media sources. Social networks have become a thermometer of the issues that concern and worry the citizens and are considered by the media. One can see many themes that emerged from social networks and became the agenda of the media. Networks help to boost the movement to create public opinion, and influencing the mood of the media agenda is one element of several that must come together so that the media do not forget and leave behind the many outstanding issues of the demands of the movements for peace and justice (Elia).

For Earl (2015:43), traditional media channels have been pressured to appear to be involved with social media: '[one] can see a core of tweets from viewers scrolling across the screen on a number of cable news stations'. Newspapers frequently choose stories from online sources, such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter. For the journalist Vanessa, these arguments could be applied in the case of the community guards in Michoacán:

> Facebook allows discussions, and people can request explanations of the community guards. It also can be used to organise actions, to publish when there were clashes, to publish pictures of those who had fallen in battle. Many messages of encouragement from ordinary people are disseminated, and the publishing of such messages shows one possible way to use the available tools to show disagreement with the narrative in the official media, and people use Facebook and Twitter for this purpose (Vanessa).

Cammaerts (2012:122) analyses three interlinked levels of analysis of the opportunities and constraints in terms of mediation to determine the logics of action. The first level of analysis refers to the media opportunity structure and relates to the mainstream media's representation of protest, concentrating on the different actions that activists take to create interest in the media, remarking that the more the demonstrations are unconventional, the less

media attention they will receive. It also refers to the fact that mainstream media could take activists' websites and social network profiles as primary sources, and from them obtain information regarding their activities or claims.

The second level focuses its attention on 'the discursive opportunity structure' and 'strategies of self-mediation', contemplating the creation of counter-narratives and distributing them autonomously from the mainstream media organisations. Cammaerts (2012) suggests that the Internet offers a mediation opportunity to inform with independence, to debate inside the groups, and to find more people with the same common interests. Cammaerts further highlights the potential value of the production of protest artefacts: movements can thereby create an impact through digital photos and the use of video recording devices. Through their photography and films, the activists can spread archives of images and self-representations of their protest activities. The material within symbols and cultural discourses challenge, empower their struggles and allow them to create a collective memory, making possible the transference of knowledge to make an impact on other movements.

The third level relates to the 'networked opportunity structure and addresses resistance practices mediated through technology'. Examples include the influence of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, handheld cameras as counter-tactical tools to register acts of police brutality, the use of YouTube to record visual narratives, direct action facilitated by information and communication technology, such as hacktivism, and the use of the like button on Facebook as a passive form of activism that enables support, the formation of collective identity, and a method of reaching potential sympathizers.

The journalist Rodrigo refers in the following text to the first level of analysis in relation to the media opportunity structure that Cammaerts (2012) mentions, in referring to the mainstream media representation of protest, how the social movement gained representation in the mainstream media, but at the same time how the mainstream media can damage their image:

> Social movements cannot grow without the help of media communication. Social movements need them, for example if they are going to have an event, all media and social movements need to know what information is going to be provided to the media, this means they must have a clear communication strategy. When actors such as Gael García are talking about it, the MPJD has more weight. The media coverage was so important at the beginning of the social movement. Because the coverage was widespread in many media around the time that Javier Sicilia was speaking in national public life about violence, many people could find information about what was happening, and

question whether Calderón's strategy was appropriate at that time. We heard for the first time testimonies of the victims who had had no voices such as Mrs. Herrera (Rodrigo).

Fig. 9. Members of the MPJD with the mainstream media in the dialogues for peace in Chapultepec, July 2011.[80]

The second level of 'the discursive opportunity structure', the strategies of self-mediation, producing counter-narratives and disseminating them independently from the mainstream media organisations, is touched on by the activist Lolita Bosch in reference to the creation of a virtual space for peace in Mexico, and how relevant it is that this space is independent from the state's power and its political interests. She notes:

> I belong to a guild where we have a public voice: journalists and writers, and when the massacre of Tamaulipas occurred I wrote an e-mail to all my colleagues, and I asked them what we can do? [...] We formed 'Our apparent surrender' (NAR) as a space, because it was necessary, and it has created a space that people trust. Today in Mexico, it is a miracle that we do not have a political connection. In the NAR we are a civil society, we are not owners of anything, and this is the way we relate to each other. (Lolita).

For Fuchs (2014b), alternative media is restricted to a limited audience, but for the activist Hermes, making use of this media is viable because the local media keep silent, he

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notes that 'The alternative media helps more than local media, which do not help unless they are told what they have to say. Local media follow the government bulletins'.

Another cause of a limited audience may come from the digital divide. Rucht (2013:260) suggests that in 'the Global South as well as in the western countries, the "digital divide" is still a reality and implies the exclusion of the vast majority of the world population from the accesses to Internet'. The expert Janice states that 'some people have no connection and there's an inequality', with which the journalist Elia agrees, saying that 'the Internet still remains a very restricted space in Mexico.'

The activist Pilar, states that alternative media can counteract official messages, and even rectify their statements:

> Non-traditional media is doing research on peace policy in Mexico. SEGOB [The Mexican Secretariat of the Interior], in its census on missing people, failed to report some of the victims who were known. Since there exist published reports that contradicted their reports, people can notice the inaccuracy, and that is when the status quo changes. The *Proceso* magazine, for example, has been very critical (Pilar).

For Carlos, the power of the state to the control mainstream media is clear, which is the reason they explore the opportunities presented by the Internet to have an effect. Carlos argues that:

> In Mexico we have a media that is controlled by the state, and only organisations or people who have Internet access can try to counterbalance the official media's power. The Internet is useful to make announcements that can alert people or communicate a statement. We do not have the same infrastructure as the digital companies or the state, and while alternative media allow us to communicate, given that it is limited to those with Internet access, we do not have the capacity to offer immediate responses as counterweights to the official media (Carlos).

The third level that Cammaerts (2012) analyses concerns the opportunities for and constraints on 'resistance practices mediated through technology'. In an interview conducted with an activist, Sabina, she explains how the mainstream media stopped giving coverage to her collective group for peace in Mexico via Berlin, and how they then had to learn technological skills concerning the use of new technologies of communication, such as how to edit digital audio. Sabina argues that:

> At the beginning of our mobilisations there were many journalists, but then they stopped

covering the movement. If reporters are not our allies what are we going to do? We had to learn the basic tools of journalism. I took a workshop to learn to edit audio, and we started to make articles to send to the newspapers. Technology made all the difference and it was a change to write our own copy for newspapers. Reporters viewed us suspiciously, and they did not cover the agenda of our actions. We have many ways to communicate: The German television station, we could also get in touch with German journalists, we could use Facebook and Twitter to communicate with Berlin, other cities, and Mexico, though communications with the Germans was face to face or through e-mail, because they are very paranoid about spying. We had correspondence with the newspapers *Reforma* and *El Universal*, and TV Azteca, but when we questioned the German government about the weapons they sell to Mexico, journalists did not understand its social function to make statements on this issue, or were clearly just representatives for the system. We have been welcomed more in German newspapers. If the journalist does not do an article, we do. A TV Azteca reporter covered us as freelance, but we made the news story. The conclusion is that we must use alternative media. We have to create our own media (Sabina).

Mattoni et al. (2012) express the view that these social media practices have caused the construction of the activist's own reflections about themselves, by generating alternatives points of view, contesting 'mainstream and dominant discourses' and playing a role in the 'space of socialization'. Lolita argues that the literature has allowed the empowerment of the people, and indicates that the members of the group have built relationships based on trust:

The literature gives us social empowerment. I think that art is easier to use to communicate, and I have found that it is very easy to understand each other through these modes. All that we've been trying is playing around with these modes, and that is how the NAR is becoming a social movement, because it is a force of the citizens. People caution us, we advise peace processes in several places in our turn, this understanding of peace could make a social movement. We rely on people knowing what they need, we do not know many things and we have to ask others, and without this generation of a common dialogue, we cannot go forward (Lolita).

Loader and Mercea (2011) and Etling et al. (2010) indicate that new media technologies have 'the potential to reconfigure communicative power relations', challenging the monopolistic control of media production and dissemination by the state and commercial institutions.

It depends on the medium, the Internet holds the power to replace mass media. Media can

damage social movements with the criminalization of protest or by reporting false stories. This wasn't always the case in Mexico, and *La Jornada* and the *Proceso* magazine had a very positive effect. But these ideas are circulating in the same very narrow circle. Allow me to question myself: How do we reach audiences of people who cannot access these media? Transforming mentalities is a complex task. Connecting with the suffering of the people is what unites the social movement, while mass media represent the most powerful interests of capitalism. It is far better to create alternative media (Jamie).

Another aspect to take into account is that the relationship between social movements and the media may be unequal and for a short term only (Rucht, 2004). The mainstream media gets to decide if they pay attention to a social movement, being able, should they choose, to either give only damaging coverage or not give any coverage at all. On this point, the activist Jorge states:

> TV often uses data from these people but does not say what would be the essential facts. For example, to denounce some of the authorities who are likely to have ties to organised crime, or the difficulties that families have encountered in finding their missing relatives, that's not what the media makes visible (Jorge).

In addition, the Mexican media has delivered misinformation, as in the case of two students that were killed by the military who the media portrayed as drug traffickers. The dominant media discourse in the media before the MPJD emerged mainly represented the victims of the violence as 'bad people', and that meant for the federal government that they were winning the war on drugs:

> For example, the Monterrey Technological Institute of Higher Studies (ITESM) students that were killed by the military, the media did not hesitate to say that these were drug traffickers. We cannot stop at the information that traditional media give us. The voice of Javier Sicilia differed from the dominant discourse that criminalized the victims. There was coverage on the sensationalism of victims, and there existed an agreement to not talk about violence in the media (Rodrigo).

Pleyers (2014:1) expressed the view that 'the social networks and the Internet have not replaced mass media', noting that alternative and activist media have grasped the largest audiences only when they have linked up with mass media. It is also important to mention that 'personal identity narratives' are replacing 'collective social scripts' and group identities as the centre for social organisation (Poell and Borra, 2012:701). In the case of the campaign 'Pedalling for Peace', we can observe how the story of the violence in Mexico framed in the

case of Carlos Gutierrez concentrated the story on the personal narrative of what he had lived through. The activist Alejandra, from Mexicans in Exile, argues that the mainstream media constructs a reality that may be not synchronous with the chronological happening of events, and consequently mislead consumers as to the precise time that the actions reported on took place.

> One of our members, Carlos Gutiérrez, had to have his legs amputated following the actions of organised crime. We created a campaign, pedalling from El Paso to Austin, Texas, 700 miles in all. We started working with Univision, but we have a reality and the media have another, and they have to sell their story. All in all, we have to work with the media, and we conduct a press conference at least once a month (Alejandra).

Alejandra also wrote for the online magazine borderzine.com[81] for the collective group 'Mexicans in Exile' on the experience of working with the mainstream media in the US (Univision), stating that it had taken years to gain mainstream media coverage and that she is aware of that fact:

> The media gaze is strange, surreal, cameras rolling, microphones in your faces, the excitement that builds around that constructed reality. It is exciting, not because of the fame that comes with it, but rather the notion that the work we have been doing since 2009 will finally be heard, that perhaps something positive can come from all that has been lost (Alejandra).

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[81] Spector, A. (29 October 2013) Day one – Mexicanos en Exilio – pedalling 57 miles for peace and justice from El Paso to Fort Hancock. Retrieved from http://borderzine.com/2013/10/day-one-%E2%80%93-mexicanos-en-exilio-%E2%80%93-pedaling-57-miles-for-peace-and-justice-from-el-paso-to-fort-hancock/ (Accessed 20 June 2015)
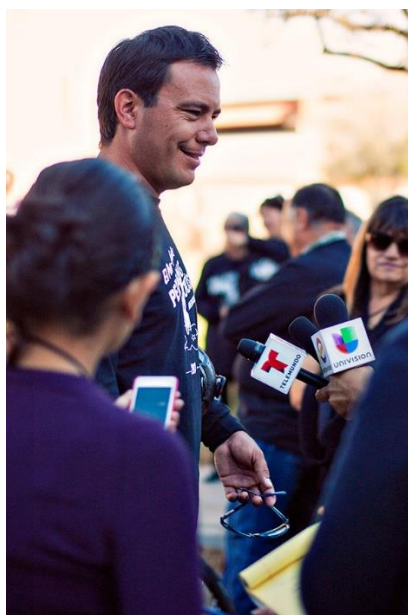
Fig. 10. Carlos Gutiérrez right before departing from El Paso (Alejandra Spector/Borderzine.com).

Milan (2013:1) stresses that these platforms are controlled by 'media and telecoms corporations', for whom the objective is related to their revenues and shared interests, not to 'participation, empowerment, and social justice'. The journalist Rodrigo point to the media co-optation in the coverage of the violence and how bias was evident in support of the government's discourse without any serious analysis of the problematic:

> It seems almost undeniable that the mainstream media is co-opted by corporations' interests, the two broadcasters in Mexico have many interests and their coverage is partial and is heavily loaded towards the point of view of the government. The media coverage was sentimental and did not seek out the causes or change the perception of why people were being killed, or make a deeper analysis. However, they gave a lot of coverage that remained on the surface, they just gave coverage of people suffering (Rodrigo).

Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993:115-116, 121) highlight the relevance of the 'distinctive culture' of the social movements and how it could clash with the 'political culture of the mainstream media'. It is important to mention that the political culture of the Mexican mainstream media is as an ally of the federal government: the amount of money that is received from the state makes Mexico one of the most dangerous places to be a journalist, because of the high rate of repression and censorship. The journalist Elia exposes this in this form:

> The media arrived a little late to the coverage of the violence. 2010 and 2011 were the most difficult years for the media to cover the violence in the country. The violence affected the journalists directly. I think two factors hinder the coverage of violence in

Mexico. The journalists were not ready to count the number of the victims and face the consequences of this environment of violence, though in hindsight we can see now that there were the first steps of several civilian organisations. The press coverage came late to the coverage of violence, when Javier Sicilia's movement made the press aware of the development of a great movement for its media impact, the victims of violence reinforced to gain strong visibility, this image acquired strength through the case of Javier Sicilia. Therefore, the press started to make a move that warned the emergence of other movements, other groups, in other states. A lot of work is still needed to document these groups, especially an evaluation of their work. With the change of the federal government in 2012, these groups and social movements for peace and justice have been weakened (Elia).

Elia indicates that even though the media coverage arrived late for reporting the expansion of violence, there is still an enormous amount of work needed in properly documenting the cases of the victims. As several activists have observed, it was not until the appearance of Javier Sicilia in the public space that the media began to show an interest in the problem.

Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993:124) observe that when a media actor emphasises visual material in its news productions, it becomes more likely 'to produce action strategies that emphasize spectacle, drama and confrontation. Because visual material puts higher premium on spectacle, television is more likely than print media to emphasize it'. Spectacle in media looks for drama and confrontation, and emotional events are attractive to the media in this sense. María González,[82] a mother of a disappeared son, exposes this media reality in her speech, how the media's interest is just in generating spectacle and not providing a genuine effort to help the victims:

> Why has the media left us alone? Why? Why the media do not to provide a wide-ranging coverage on our tragedy? Just because the figures of the executive authorises the media to be here, but nobody pays attention to us, nobody! Nobody! I once wanted to have an interview with Mrs. Laura[83], and her bodyguards closed the door on me and they treated me badly. Why put on these TV programmes? (María González).

[82] Emergencia Mx (11 October 2011) Comisión de víctimas en el segundo diálogo con Felipe Calderón. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YQyzy3LOf8 (Accessed 20 June 2015)
[83] This is a television talk show, conducted by a Peruvian lawyer Laura Bozzo. The version of the same program produced in Mexico took the names of Laura de Mexico or Laura.

Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993) suggest, however, that there are positive aspects to the use of the media, when it is well planned. With significant resources, organisation, professionalism, coordination, and strategic planning, a movement may be able to bring about powerful media coverage of important events and issues.

> A significant part of the movements is their communication. This communication resulted from a strategic need. From the beginning of the movement there were two organisations: Cencos and Separaz. Cencos had particularly focused on communication. Cencos was presided over by Emilio Alvarez Icaza, and their communication was strategically targeted to begin calling certain groups of society to create a convening power [...] several actors who attended the media campaigns were movie celebrities and media experts, that had previously worked in the campaign 'No more Blood'. This is a history of working with journalists and launching campaigns for visibility of both the movement and the problem of the militarized drug strategy (Jorge).

Baringhorst (2008:78) observes that the accomplishment of a collective protest action still also depends on a mass media logic, aiming at a mass media audience based on the mobilising power of large, professionalized and well-known civil society organisations.

> In Mexico there is a great need to be conscious of what is happening, and there is a need for journalism to construct an option of hope with our work. As an example, we wrote a book *Entre las cenizas*, that was a book made concerning the search for a resolution to demands for justice. Journalists have a lot to learn to give space in the media to expose examples of successful actions in the pursuit of justice. For the network "Periodistas de a Pie", it was important to seek the paths of hope not only in the media coverage of the civil society as a victim, but also subjects that propose ways to deal with the problem and for journalists to strengthen the ethical commitment of journalists in relation to what it implies to work for the civil society. This implies changing the discourse to give dignity to the victims and contribute to them transforming into active subject citizens. In this form they have shown in this country that they will not just keep sitting at home and waiting for justice, they have taken to the streets, organised, and even worked with authorities. In some cases, they have done the work of the authorities, and the media have a huge responsibility in relation to this problem (Elia).

Elia puts stress on the professional work of 'Periodistas de a Pie[84]', which is an organisation of journalists which seeks to raise the quality of journalism in Mexico, and to find

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[84] It is a network of journalists dedicated to the social responsibility of journalism: in search of the human face of the news, from a human rights and citizens' perspective.

the 'social dimension in any news story and put a human face on the news; focus information from the perspective of human rights; explain what happens as the story unfolds, exposing causes and proposing solutions.'[85] 'Periodistas de a pie' is an example of how journalism can empower civil society through an ethical commitment that has helped in the transformation of the victims into agents of change.

The activist Roberto states that 'traditional media have played a key role. When the media followed the movement is when there was a greater civil society response, Traditional media also affects the level of the response from the citizenry.' In this perspective, the level of awareness is related to the level of media coverage that the social movement received, and is key to inciting a response from the citizens.

For Bennett and Segerberg (2012), the mainstream media are interrelating with the social networks used by the activists, particularly by encouraging observers or even the activists themselves to contribute to broadcasts and to frequently post news, images or opinions on their websites. The activist Carlos explains in detail the process of working in coordination for a broader communication audience:

> The Internet helps to share experiences. There are organisations that have fairly broad expertise on the use of the Internet, [and] all these organisations have a communications department. Specifically, in the case of Cencos, they offer a great amount of support in the dissemination of information and make the work of our organisations visible. Further, they organise synergised strategies, fully recognising the Internet as a tool for political organisations concerned with human rights. The challenge is to have a culture of documentation, a safe culture, and a culture of complaints, which currently in Mexico often go unreported because of fear or ignorance (Carlos).

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[85] ¿Qué hacemos? http://www.periodistasdeapie.org.mx/quienes-4.php (Accessed 19 June 2015)

Fig. 11. The Mexican poet Javier Sicilia arriving on 3 August 2011 at a press conference at the National Centre for Social Communication (Cencos), Mexico, City, EFE Agency.[86]

For Atton (2003:8), the ideologies and practices of social movement actors are simplified and homogenised by the mainstream media. Instead of exploring the complexities, the media portray as a result an unbalanced and 'structurally undetermined' view of these protests. Mainstream framing devices reduce insightful explorations of social movement activity through normalizing diversities of dissent. The mass media often portrays protest through an inaccurately simplified perspective.

> Extensive media coverage has focused on comprehending these complex phenomena of violence from two narrow fronts: the good ones and the bad ones. When confrontations occurred, the media coverage focused its attention on counting just the number of deaths, this phenomena was called the 'ejecutómetro'. The media coverage from another perspective was quite limited, and the media just paid attention to the immediacy of the facts but without understanding the violence in deeper ways (Elia).

The factors that produce the violence in the context of the war on drugs cannot be summarized in just two simplified dimensions, stating that the 'bad people' deserve to die and trivializing the amount of people killed, while exposing the dead bodies in the media and thereby normalizing the high levels of violence.

> The problem is that not all media is given to coverage which gives a real sense of these movements. It is important to mention that the media play a key role in the collective mind, a very clear example was the General Victims' Law, the role played in the media

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[86] ¿Qué hacen CIA y DEA en México?: Sicilia exige a Gobierno explique supuesta presencia de estas agencias en el país (10 August 2012) *SanDiegoRed.com*. Retrieved from http://www.sandiegored.com/noticias/16916/Que-hacen-CIA-y-DEA-en-Mexico/ (Accessed 10 July 2015)

coverage there was significant, and at least some journalists did contribute in this regard (Elia).

Taking a positive position on media attention on social movements, Carty (2010) and Van Zoonen (1992) argue that the media could allow an effect on the public, through public discourse and the public's wider comprehension of social problems (Kenneth and Caren, 2010:842) and 'decolonize public opinion by expanding and reconstructing public discourse'.

However, one of the risks of media attention is lack of interest, even where journalism should have an obligation to inform the public about the demands for justice, and avoid the trivialization of the issue of violence. For some journalists, that is where they should be working, and the journalist Elia affirms in detail that there is:

> The risk of memory loss in this country. One of the lessons for journalism is to take into account the number of citizens affected, a situation worsened by the extent to which the media overlooks, forgets and leaves behind these issues, to the point that unconsciousness grows again in this country. This cannot be a matter which is forgotten, journalism has a duty to warn, to accompany the citizens and not allow a lapse in the collective memory. It must not be allowed to pass, [...] we need to continue monitoring the implementation of the authorities' public policies, lest the demand for justice be left behind. There was a trivialization of violence, [we] realized that we were not ready, and we have tried to correct out ethical standards when covering violence. While the legislation changes that have occurred have solved some of the issues of the coverage of the march, I think there remains a lack of sensitivity to the issues of violence and victims (Elia).

All in all, the relationship between social movements and the media can be summed up by observing that the more widespread the support for a social movement, and the more their ideas are communicated with marketing strategies, the more space is created in the media for their messages, producing an effect of bringing additional support to them (della Porta and Diani, 2006). The activist Pilar agrees with this point:

> A challenge from a national perspective is economic development. There is a cultural reaction against imperialism, by challenging advertising and marketing, applying them to human rights issues, thereby using a tool of the capitalist system as part of an ideological resistance, using it to sell the cause. Amnesty International makes great campaigns in the form of major advertising campaigns. Very few have applied the European experiences from organisations using the available tools. It is a popular action, to sign a letter, but not enough comes from it. The use of modern techniques can be applied to traditional

activism once you get to use the Internet (Pilar).

As previously analysed, the control that the media exercise over symbolic production is recognised and responded to by the activists and journalists with different approaches. For instance the activists, in the face of the difficulties of receiving broad and unbiased coverage, suggested that digital journalism is an alternative as a public space to inform the public about the social movement; they recognise the existence of high-quality Mexican journalism on the Internet. Additionally, the mainstream media have found sources and the information needed to use them on the Internet, and social media such as Facebook have become public spaces for contention, providing an opportunity to counteract the mainstream media with their own narratives, such as expressing the reality of the violence where the mainstream media present silence and gaps in information.

Social movements for peace in Mexico, for instance the MPJD, have constructed communication strategies to reach massive audiences. One example is the promotion of their media campaign 'En los Zapatos del Otro' by celebrities, the Mexican actors Diego Luna and Gael García amongst others. The Internet is not just a space of contention that is useful for the activists, but it is also a place where people can join in, creating trust ties with a dialogue that goes beyond demonstrations, something that the mainstream media cannot offer, although the Internet is at the same time an unavailable space to a broad audience.

The activists and journalists interviewed concur in their awareness of the digital divide in Mexico as being effectively a limit on the access to more informed and critical perspectives, making the Internet a bubble that could isolate the efforts of the movements if they only express themselves within this sphere, with the potential that the information could just circulate amongst a few interested people. By contrast, Mexican television has practically unlimited scope for the diffusion of its message, as it is still the most accessible medium to Mexicans.

Another issue expressed by the activists, concerning attempts to establish a relationship with journalists, is that they cannot rely on them completely for media coverage, because it could be biased, with narrow visions and misinformed stories; therefore, activists have created their own media, and for that purpose they have learned different media skills to produce their stories.

From the perspective of the journalists, they stressed that reporters as a whole were not prepared in the context of the war on drugs, recognising that there has been a transformation of the coverage of the victims' stories, putting demands on them to create a humanitarian

journalism. This means that in their stories they provide hope without criminalizing the victims, by providing a context for the victims' stories and documenting all the cases of casualties, understanding the responsibility of the media in the creation of public policies on peace in Mexico, the social media as a key factor in the creation of public opinion in the mainstream media, and finally by being conscious of the risk that without continuing coverage the stories could be forgotten.

5.4   Use of the Internet in Social Movements for Peace

This part of the thesis analyses the use of the Internet and social network sites in the social movements for peace in Mexico, the pros and cons of using the new communication technologies for mobilisations and participation, the effectiveness provided by the Internet for collective action and collective identity formation, its impacts on the social movement's emotions in the politicising of the collective identity formation, and the implications of activism through the use of digital platforms.

One of the advantages that the Internet has allowed, according to Loader and Mercea (2011), is the empowerment it provides to citizens to contest discourses, share alternative viewpoints and disseminate their own opinions, thereby making possible 'the development of multiple critical public spheres' (della Porta, 2011:44). In addition, social networking sites provide the opportunity to inform people, as the activist Botan states:

> With no misinformation, people realize what the problem is and try to fix it. Everything is in the information, I think. Journalists are courageous enough to risk their lives for reporting. In the case of the peace movement, the victims are on Facebook, they have been writing on a daily basis, exposing their feelings. When someone reads them, I reflect and think this is the question: How would it feel to be a victim? For example, there are people who love animals, and take lots of pictures of animals, other kids, etc. [...] people convey a clear idea of what harmony is, and maybe try to get in touch through these photos and messages to ultimately make an effect, and possibly a change of consciousness (Botan).

Bennett (2012) argues that the more diverse the mobilisation, the more personalised the expressions often become, typically involving communication technologies that allow individuals to activate their loosely tied social networks. The activist Sabina says that when the MPJD began, she was located in Germany and through social network sites such as Facebook,

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saw different people outside of Mexico start to organise in different forms to show their dissatisfaction with the spread of violence in Mexico. She states that in Germany it was possible to go out to the streets because they represented one of the biggest groups in Europe. She states:

> There were movements in other cities: Barcelona, Paris, Switzerland, Tokyo and London, which together formed the Global Network for Peace. We were the biggest group that went out onto the streets, it was easy to contact each other by these social media, and we were 250 people in Berlin. The social networking initiatives we made greatly streamlined the process of bringing us all together, and doctoral students of the political sciences provided the perspective of how our contributions from abroad may be different (Sabina).

Diani (2001) and Fenton (2008) indicate that online participation comes before offline participation. The key point resides in the construction of new relationships and the building of a community, rather than just the provision of information. The activist Cordelia is precise on this point, affirming that:

> The Internet largely structured our movement because there are not many ways to both reach the public and make something transcending to the virtual ties; without the use of social networking sites. The support you can find on social networking sites is real, although no substitute for face-to-face presence (Cordelia).

Examining the use of the Internet by many social movement organisations, Constanza (2003) observes that they may be used as a resource for collecting specific information relevant to their cause, including information about opponents or targets, information produced by other movement actors, case studies of parallel situations, historical background, theory, economic data, environmental data and media analysis. Sabina, a member of Mexico via Berlin, states that her group undertook a group of studies in which they conducted research on different topics to understand the complexities of the violence in Mexico in the context of the war on drugs. She argues:

> We agreed to do research that nourishes the debates in the public sphere. When the organisation began work with NGOs and political parties for research purposes, we realized that there were other groups in Germany with which they could collaborate. Such agreements began very early with German organisations, and our research has consequences in the academic debate on political lobbying into the agenda of the German parliament who shared an agenda with Mexico, as well as within German organisations that had been working on human rights (Sabina).

Stekelenburg and Boekkooi (2013:220) argue that by lowering communication and organisational costs, new communication technology simplifies 'the formation of mobilizing structures, reduces the cost of conventional forms of mobilization and participation and creates new low-cost forms of participation'. The activist Jacqueline says in this regard that:

> It allows us to reach more people with low-cost and high-speed information. The methods for the dissemination of information allow us to readily disclose information; if anyone is interested, we can get in contact. Also, the Internet is helpful for disseminating invitations to participate in an event, but the risk is that people can get saturated with electronic mails and messages spread on social network sites (Jacqueline).

Neumayer and Raffl (2008:11) argue that 'social software opens up new possibilities' in that global networks and communities can create space for participation. In this manner, the activist Alberto explores the creation of a network with the intent of increasing the visibility of the human tragedy in relation to the disappeared people:

> In the movement we used faltan.mx, a mini network, to make the war in Mexico visible. If we want to create peace, we cannot wait until there is a budget to do something, or certain conditions come together. Looking at the databases of missing names in the trending topics on Twitter, we thought why don't we make a list and put it on a map that can be a tool to put pressure towards a trial for crimes against humanity. [...] Through this map we have been able to detect patterns of the disappearance of girls and women concentrated in the centre of the country. Meanwhile the forced disappearances of journalists and others are usually located in the north. As such, our network has made visible these parallel processes (Alberto).

Ayres (1999) focuses on how the Internet can be characterised by its speed and the way information can be propagated with no geographic restrictions, which has changed the nature of mobilisation and the development of contention. The activist Carlos recognises the benefits of the speed of the flow of information, but at the same time he notes that there is also a higher workload associated with the coordination of all these actions:

> The information flow is very fast, we can not only communicate but also gain visibility. We have a greater flow of information through the use of mechanisms of urgent action that are supported by 73 organisations operating in this network. Strategies aim at collective work, a hashtag on Twitter can generate and facilitate movement support. When individuals begin to be at risk, this is a very important accompaniment for security, digital security and personal safety (Carlos).

However, from an alternative position, for Rodríguez et al. (2014:152-153), 'the speed and efficiency of new technologies overshadows more complex issues, politics, and dynamics', and the pro-technology excitement in the mass media also leads to a propensity to undervalue the organisational capacity of people by placing an emphasis on instrumental goods (Gibler, 2014). Neither the accelerated speed, nor the broad distribution leads to qualitative changes in the processes underlying activism (Earl, 2011:25). The activist Pilar indicates that even while the Internet provides multiple opportunities, the pace of work is still the same with or without new communication technologies, because the speed that is available on the Internet is not reflected in other media.

> The pace of work imposed by the Internet is comprehensive, for example for the US caravan, we needed to organise appointments with the media, while social networks allowed us to thank our allies, and informed us of locations with high public demand. However, the ability to work out the agenda required by the Internet is difficult. While the office closes at 8pm and people go home, the Internet never closes and it continues to generate requirements, the amount of information can come close to the point where it is unmanageable (Pilar).

This confirms that the speed of Internet does not mean that the social movement organisation can act as quickly as the flows of information that the Internet allows. In this manner, regardless of the process that motivated activism, movements still have to coordinate in the traditional form.

Dean (2005:55) explains that communication practices are not equitable, and can risk undermining 'political opportunity and efficacy for most of the world's peoples'. Even without direct Internet action, however, social networking provides a way for us to be aware. The activist Alejandra states that 'most of the people in our association are people who do not have [...] the Internet at home'.

There is a scepticism about the effectiveness of the Internet as a communication tool, and according to Stein (2009) decisions take place in face-to-face communications, print material or other forms of communication, while Pickerill (2006) observes that face-to-face expressions and gestures enrich the discussions of the decision making process, and Kavada (2010) notes that online discussion could lead to confrontation more easily than face-to-face contact. The expert Zara, who works on the drug policy platform of the MPJD, discussed this point, highlighting that:

> We use the Internet to communicate through Facebook pages, e-mails and Twitter. Through these we could call other people to our actions [...] for example the reallocating of the 'Estela de la Paz' as a memorial for the victims of violence in Mexico. Much of the work we do is undertaken through the Internet. I think it works to a certain level, but we also have many people who do not use the Internet. In such cases we use plenaries, as it is important to have face-to-face contact (Zara).

In addition, Loader (2008) explains that complex processes of planning, discussions and the construction of relationships generally take place in physical spaces. This is important because both spaces, online and offline, are entwined to conform to internal and external parts of the communication strategies, and in this sense they complement each other.

> To communicate with organisations in the US we used Skype. The Internet is used by the organisation to link many actors, for example those who were involved in the caravan, and it was instrumental in maintaining contact with allies in the US and Canada so that they are aware of what is happening in Mexico. There are always more limitations on the Internet than meeting face to face, but the Internet has been a useful tool. Without it, it would not have been possible to make the peace caravan in the US. In social network site meetings, the conversations are faster than when you're in a plenary, which can last three hours because of unresolved points. Though meetings through the Internet are more punctual, personal stories of the victims and testimonies are lost, while in the plenary there is always the space for evidence (Zara).

Loong Wong (2001) discusses how one relevant aspect of an activist's work is the ability to act self-sufficiently to transmit information without having to rely on traditional media channels, thereby enlarging their political agency. In this manner, the activist Lolita Bosch explains all the effectiveness that the Internet has provided her collective group:

> The Internet was indispensable, because there are many places we cannot operate. As it is not the same work in different regions of Mexico, our group had to be virtual. The Internet is a space where we can find anyone, because virtuality makes us even. The NAR has become a surprisingly safe place, with no power interests. In Mexico, as you know, the press is closely linked to those in power. What has happened with Peña Nieto is that the PRI has a well established pact of confidence, with large groups such as media corporations. What is emerging in Mexico is an alternative media on the Internet. At the beginning there were three, and now we are almost 80 people. All these people are genuinely working for peace, emotionally concerned about what is happening, and have a capacity for empathy. We are a group of people who are past fear, it hurts more than it

terrifies us. I always say that thanks to war we have found the best of Mexico, Sicilia's interest is true, Rosanna Reguillo's interest is true. Killers, murderers, and members of the military have written in the NAR, we have never rejected anyone based on their ideology, we do not make any hierarchy of voices, just as we make no hierarchy of victims. We think a lot of truth, and in terms of human rights believe that everyone in Mexico has a right to justice (Lolita).

Another aspect to take into account is how activists who are informed via digital communication channels are combining multiple engagements at the same time (Van Laer, 2011). That is the case for the activist Javier, who argues that:

Digital communication channels are faster and facilitate communications, we have our website, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and streaming, all of which facilitate the spread of our messages. We have spread campaigns on Twitter, we use the Internet to communicate our presentations of reports, and have better communication with the media (Javier).

As expressed above, the digital platforms have empowered activists and the victims of the violence to write about their own experiences, in the pursuit of creating empathy and awareness across a broader audience. The heterogeneity of the Internet permits a variety of modes of expression, though we must not forget the point made by the interviewed activists, who highlighted the importance in the first place of face-to-face contact, such as in the plenaries. Digital platforms are not always suitable as a platform for the victims of violence to communicate issues or share their testimonies, either because of the form of the medium or because of the digital divide. But at the same time, the Internet might provide a space for activists to put people together in the same virtual space, in which it is safe to create relationships of trust in the pursuit of peace. One of the risks mentioned for activists in the use of the Internet as a tool to call people to participate is the oversaturation of messages that the capacity of the Internet allows. In this way, people can receive a huge quantity of invitations via social media, but this does not guarantee any active participation. The speed of the Internet is a boon for activists in cases where it is urgent to launch an alert, in a situation where a digital message might create awareness of an injustice or of someone who requires support.

5.4.1 Collective Action Online in Social Movements for Peace in Mexico

As has been explored in chapter two, collective action remains a central category for the analysis of social movements for peace in Mexico, representing an opportunity for connectedness and the identification of potential issues around which to mobilise. The Internet, as a tool for collective action, has brought transformations, challenges and disadvantages that the upcoming analysis will explore.

One of the benefits that the Internet has offered for collective action, as suggested by Bimber (1998:156), comes from the lower costs of organising collective action. This will be particularly advantageous for one group: 'those outside the boundaries of traditional private and public institutions, those not rooted in businesses, professional or occupational memberships or the constituencies of existing government agencies and programs'. However, in the context of the Mexican access to the Internet, this has been represented as a challenge because of the limitations on the use of this communication technology, as the activist Jamie explains:

> Two things are needed to have an impact on the offline world. While the Internet helps spread the message to the people involved about what is happening in Mexico, there are many people who do not have Internet access in Mexico, and it is therefore necessary to find ways to ensure that the information reaches these people. The vulnerable who suffer the most also generate their own movements. The Central American Mothers group uses digital technologies, that after a mother loses her son make them visible helps the imaginary of the Internet, but this not happen in all the cases. (Jamie).

While the Internet has the potential to encourage collective action, Earl (2011) and Kavada (2010:118) argue that these actions are not determined by the structure of the Internet, but by 'the skills, attitudes, and culture of the activists employing them'. Online communication tends to strengthen ties reciprocally between them (Fuchs, 2014b). In addition, 'the identification of a generic other creates bonds of solidarity and thus intensifies feelings of community' (Casquete, 2006:45), thereby playing a key role in the collective identity. The activist Cordelia expresses clearly the human communication that goes beyond the online connection:

> What the Internet has given us is this interaction on social networking sites. By allowing us to have genuine friends, it has made us participants in a social family, it has given us a sense of community that many could not find elsewhere, and it is a new form of

community which has the capacity to handle much more significant work. It helps exponentially in recruiting volunteers, this medium helps people participate more actively, and not wait for a leader to come to dictate ideas. What happens in social networking sites also has parallels offline, I have made a number of trips around the world to strengthen these networks for peace, and I have been able to see people face to face. I have been wearing scarves, and people see them and touch them. This movement goes beyond all the initial promises of #YoSoy132 (Cordelia).

Cordelia also remarks on the fact that through social media they have constructed a community; as Surman and Reilly (2003:39) affirm, 'such efforts are much more about relationships and community than information'.

Neumayer and Raffl (2008) and Faris et al. (2008) argue that the majority of people are quietly excluded from the Internet and therefore can only be influenced by a real-world elite. The use of social software and digital networks for political protest or participation is reliant on the ideologies and cultural and political contexts of its users and developers. The activist Pilar observes how the movement operated in a context of reduced Internet access for most of the people involved, and comments on the cultural context of those participating in the movement:

In Mexico Internet access remains quite limited. The Caravan decisions were taken in plenary, the decisions of the caravan route could be done by the Internet and a fixed telephone to which everyone could call. Propuesta Cívica used Internet communication with other associations in the US, both conferences via Facebook or Skype and external communication. Propuesta Cívica used the Internet to reach audiences easier than through traditional media [...] Brisa Solis was instrumental at the time in convening the traditional media. In Mexico it is very difficult for the population to get access to the Internet, and where the Internet is used, it is used more in Mexico for recreational purposes. Sometimes reporters who are aware of Propuesta Cívica used the Internet for information. The opening to traditional media was by channel 11, they made a small mention, and there have been petitions and letters to Obama. Radio helps, as there are spaces open to civil society in Mexico. The Internet has become crucial, although it provides no means to achieve a full impact outside of the captive audiences. The retweet is amongst the same followers, and some people will be difficult to reach because they are not interested or want to use the Internet purely for recreation (Pilar).

Dean (2005) argues that people can come to think that the content published online is part of a 'communicative action'. Actions such as clicking on a button, signing an online

petition or participating with comments on blogs are, for the author, a surface of activity, implying a deep passivity, and while the actions might demonstrate connectivity, there will frequently be no further in situ actions. The activists Fernanda and another activist explore this idea in their reflections on how the Internet allows people to make promises without commitment:

> The network gives us the advantage of being able to send messages to attract more followers, uncensored messages without a restriction on the information as it is outside of the mainstream media. It also has disadvantages, but we try to compensate for the disadvantages through certain strategies. Some people are receptive but not mobilised: we have many followers, but that does not mean that these people are going to do something. People can show their support, but there is a big difference from that to, for example, collecting signatures in real life, and this is a problem with the Internet. The cyber issue is interesting, as it has great potential but also many disadvantages. We can issue a call to mobilise or demobilise, but people can if they choose only click the like button on Facebook, without going out on the streets, and without necessarily going to do anything. There has been a Mexican tradition of not being mobilised. People are afraid to move to do something else, many people tell us 'If I'm with you, I will do something'. What we want is for people to collect signatures, and from a 'like' to undertaking action is a substantial difference. In a way, the use of networks could be a danger, people think that being an activist is just clicking on Facebook, or liking a cause. People need to read more of the practices of both sides; we will see where that leads us. For people to mobilise makes a big difference (María Fernanda).

> E-mail is a very useful tool for our organisation, particularly the subscription system. There is, however, a passive activism, just pressing a button or giving a like. This exposes a lack of commitment, because by doing this people are not in contact with the victims. Being in contact with the reality really changes the perspective. (María Fernanda).

The activist adds an important point for consideration when he notes that, people have face-to-face contact with the victims, their commitment reaches a different level, as opposed to those that have just been passive on the social network sites, supporting a cause just by clicking on a button. From another point of view, Karlos, a lawyer with expertise on issues of human rights, states how the Internet facilitates the interchange of ideas and people working as a team, although he warns that in the legal domain, online posts calling for action could have no effect:

> To be connected without being in the country is an advantage. The Internet also succeeds

as a channel of direct communication with people who have common themes connecting their ideas. Common themes and objectives unite projects. The online denunciations if something occurs should not be expected, however, to be effective in legal terms. It is unreasonable to believe that the publication of a bad act will by itself lead to prosecution. (Karlos).

One of the most well-known forms for promoting collective action in online spaces is the publishing of 'reports, photographs or video images online,' by which 'a whole new range of people can share in the excitement in the run-up of an action or after a protest event took place as a result of which support may develop' (Van Laer, 2007:7). As the activist Janice explains, personal identity narratives have been posted online, especially by the mothers and relatives of the people disappearing:

> The most noticeable aspect is that the families of the disappeared put the picture of the relative who has disappeared on Facebook. All virtual manifestation precedes a collective contact with other forms of the organisations for peace, such as the MPJD. It is an important thing, monitoring the continuity of the connections with the victims who are the heart of these demonstrations. The struggle continues (Janice).

Fig. 12. This is the picture published on the Facebook profile page of 'Buscando a Héctor Rangel Ortiz', one of the missing people. Relatives are requesting information to help find him, as well as displaying a financial reward from the Mexican government.

In the conceptualisation of Rodríguez (2011:3), the 'citizens' media' communication processes enable civilians to reconstruct traditional unities and create new ones; by reappearing

within public places that have been the site of terror events, people consolidate collective actions. 'ICTs trigger communal processes to bring civilians, one step at a time, out of the isolation and terror imposed by armed violence and back into the public sphere'. In this form, one example of citizens' media created by the MPJD can be seen in the second anniversary of the death of Javier Sicilia's son, on 28 March 2013. The event consisted in planting a tree where his son's body had been discovered. This act was a re-signification of a horrifying place, a re-becoming of a place with hope and life. An image of this event was published on Twitter:

Fig. 13. '@hectorrgonzalez: Javier #Sicilia planta un árbol en #Ocotepec en memoria de su hijo asesinado hace dos años en #Morelos' (Twitter).

Another example of citizens' media is the case of 'La Gallera' in Tijuana, Mexico. This area was built for disappearance and forgetfulness. It is estimated that these mass graves have 17,000 litres of human remains disintegrated in acid. Here a structure of horror arose, designed specifically to erase the identity of victims. In the land that has been donated, the organisation 'Unidos por los desaparecidos' built a memorial, a holy field, to remember that what happened

there should never happen. A plaque was laid on 22 February 2014, by relatives of disappeared people, neighbours of the Maclovio Rojas, and institutions such as the Autonomous University of Baja California (UABC) and the RECO group, with the aim of demonstrating to Mexico that it is possible to change the meaning of pain.[87] The Facebook page of 'Asociación Unidos por los desaparecidos de Baja California' published a series of photos from the demonstration, of which one is shown below:

Fig. 14. Memorial for the victims in 'La Gallera', Tijuana, Mexico. Asociación Unidos por los desaparecidos de Baja California (Facebook).

Rheingold (2008:237) highlights that the most important question about the future of expanding collective action through the use of the Internet and mobile communications is 'the degree to which trustworthy and accurate information can be distinguished and screened from misleading news'. Without the ability to do this, the positive effects of these influential technologies may be reduced and turned again themselves. The journalist Vanessa explains how the challenges of false information can affect the journalists who take information from Facebook, and also how misleading sources can provoke a communication crisis amongst the citizens:

> The Facebook group Tepalcatepec Community Police is the official organ of
> communication that the community police use. The police often use social networking
> information from traditional media, and in the same Facebook page they post traditional

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[87] Franco, D. (30 June 2015) Tijuana que no se repita, *Televidencias*. Retrieved from
https://televidencias.wordpress.com/2015/06/30/tijuana-que-no-se-repita/ (Accessed 13 October 2015)

news media. It is all a part of the responsibility of the journalist to confirm or cite when the source on Facebook was taken from the vigilante groups. There have been cases where misleading information is reported and this has generated a crisis (Veracruz), even the governor sanctioned these supposed terrorists. Without social networks, these people might not be known. [...] The hashtag #reynosafollow protects people in this way: when they cannot fight the cartels, at least they can protect. Peace scarves are also used through the NAR, to make all this human tragedy visible (Vanessa).

All things considered, the activists communicated that genuine relationships and sympathy lie behind their online interactions, identifying the Internet as a helpful tool for obtaining volunteers. It is also important to mention that most of the decisions taken within the groups are done in the plenaries, in face-to-face interactions. Although the Internet is used to organise actions, even when people have access to it and are receptive, there is no inherent impact on the generation of active participation. One of the experts remarked that for undertaking legal actions in a situation of injustice, proofs and facts of the case are necessary, and more significant than just demanding action through social media by any kind of legal petition. The concept of citizens' media (Rodríguez, 2013) is essential for collective action in movements for peace in Mexico, to re-signify the places where acts of violence and horror have occurred. Finally, the Internet and social network sites have functioned as spaces to publish information related to people that have been disappeared and to share relevant information for society that the mainstream media do not publish.

5.4.2 Collective Identity Online in the Social Movements for Peace in Mexico

Collective identity in this thesis is considered a category for analysis inasmuch as it is indispensable in the process of constructing an action system, and for any guarantee of the continuation of the social movements for peace in Mexico. Its elements are considered, such as the movements' cognitive definitions of ends, means and field actions, and their shared languages, rituals, practices, and cultural artefacts. Also examined are the forms in which communication relationships are established, their communicative channels, negotiations, and information and communication technologies. Finally, emotional investments in the maintenance of the collective identity will be considered (Melucci, 1996).

Collective identity may be promoted through the Internet through a distributed population and can inspire sensitivity between persons by making them feel that 'they are members of a larger community by virtue of the emotions, grievances, and feelings of efficacy they share' (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013:221). The activist Lolita express it in this form:

> With the Internet comes promotion. The mothers of the missing relatives in Monterrey have access to the Internet, and while without the Internet they have no force, access to the Internet gives them support. We can monitor them, to see if they need help, and so we know where to go. That becomes a problem, a community problem. The Internet has a memory that none of us have, and then we can do things like map the missing, a job that was performed by thousands of volunteers in the network (Lolita).

The following figure shows an image of a solidarity campaign called #AmiMeFaltaRoy, launched by Fuerzas por Nuestros desaparecidos (as) en Nuevo Leon in January 2014 on Facebook. The purpose of the campaign was to demand the return of Roy Rivera Hidalgo. The campaign included a demonstration in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, on 11 January, remembering that it had been three years since his disappearance. Stekelenburg and Boekkooi (2013:221) affirm that 'social media sites offer several opportunities to display an identity, for instance, by adopting or donating a site or by placing [a so-called twibbon – a logo] specifically designed to place on social media sites [and] offer people the chance to visibly display these cases to the virtual networks with which they identify'. In the case of #AmiMeFaltaRoy, people from around the world shared a picture of themselves, showing solidarity with the cause. All in all, these actions 'offer people the chance to visibly display these cases to the virtual networks with which they identify' (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013:221). Moreover, for Milan (2011):

> This hashtag-style collective narrative is flexible, real-time, and crowd-controlled. It connects individual stories into a broader context that gives them meaning. This is not very different from the role played by "real-life" groups in relation to individual participation in a movement. In turn, it scores very low in organisational control.

The classical form of organising, as with old social movements which had a membership, has been transformed in the new scenario of social media, establishing new forms of solidarity and collective action. Harlow (2012:210) argues that social network sites 'strengthen collective identities, which potentially could lead to forms of collective action that might not have occurred had it not been for social networking sites in the first place'.

Fig. 15. Social media campaign #AmiMeFaltaRoy, January 2014 (FUNDEL, Facebook).

In the same form, for Barassi (2013), the issue of identity is central to the understanding of the connection between social media and mass protests. Milan (2011) states that 'anyone can easily identify with the network of individuals engaged in the protests as the collective identity is built on minimum common denominators and ephemeral 140-character slogans rather than ideological strongholds'. The activist Alberto expresses these ideas, saying that:

> The creation of hashtags, slogans or associated terms, are organised not under a person, but are the result of this convergence of ideas. Slogans or hashtags are the articulators where there is a realization of the objective embodied through solidarity and manifested with a slogan, not necessarily a clear concept outlining a joint action. The slogans containing the names of the movements for peace with dignity effectively self-organised (Alberto).

For Snurb (2014), the hashtag as a protest tool supports the voicing of a collective identity, it enables more than a simple distribution of information and the conducting of discussion. People 'have a shared connection, determined by what they care about; social media

provide a shared resonance, and tweeting and retweeting helps negotiate what it means to be part of this movement, which is characterised by multiple voices and multiple values'.
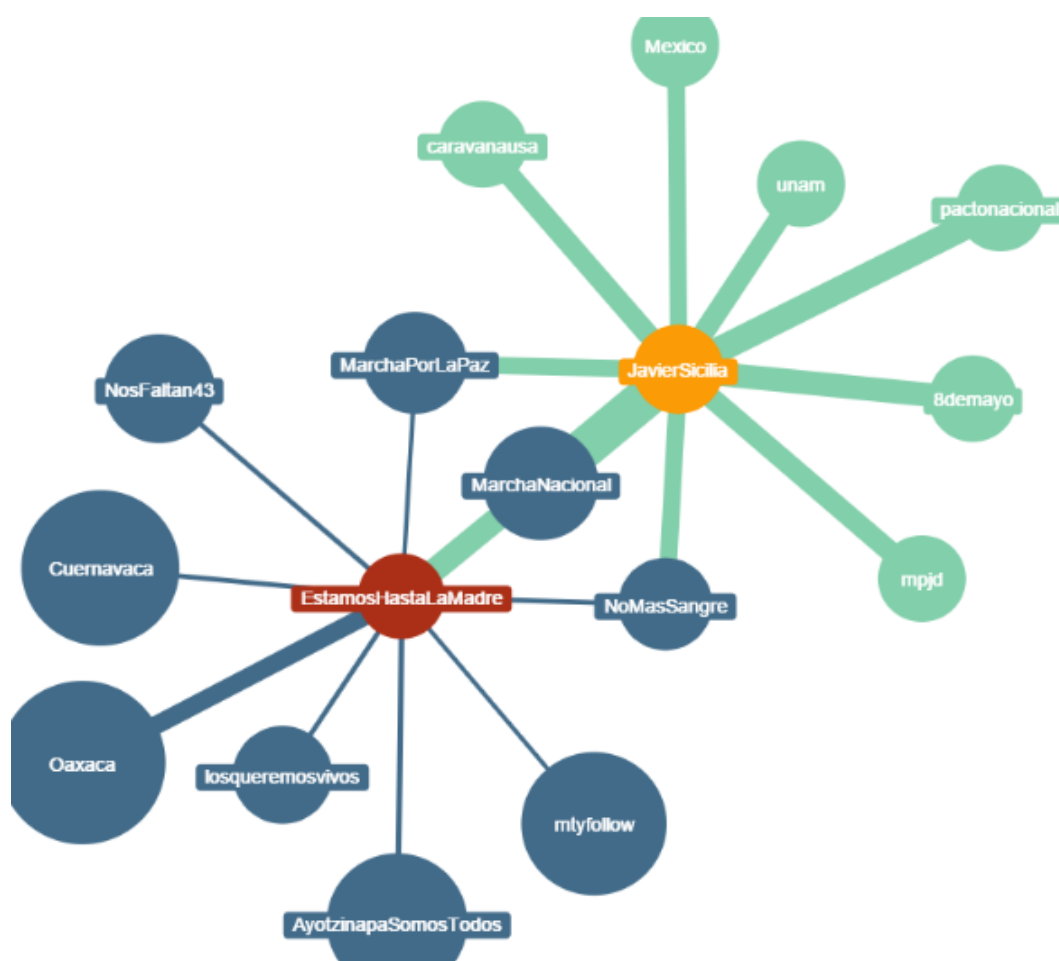

Fig. 16. Graphic of hashtags related to the mobilisation for peace in Mexico 2011.[88]

The figure above shows the main hashtags related to the mobilisations for peace in Mexico from 2011-2015, such as #nomasangre[89], #JavierSicilia, #MarchaPorLaPaz[90], #EstamosHastaLaMadre[91], #caravanausa, #8demayo, and recently from 2014-2015 #AyotzinapaSomosTodos[92]. Around these hashtags are stories of support, invitations to demonstrations for peace, claims of justice, etc., surrounding the different voices of solidarity.

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[88] Top 10 Hashtags related to #EstamosHastaLaMadre, http://hashtagify.me/hashtag/estamoshastalamadre (Accessed 17 November 2015)

[89] It signifies 'no more blood'.

[90] This signifies in English: 'demonstration for peace'.

[91] It means, 'We've had it up to here' or 'We're fed up with this'. It is a Mexican expression that Javier Sicilia used to show his discontent and weariness of the violence in Mexico when his son was murdered on 27 March 2011.

[92] It means 'We all are Ayotzinapa'. It is a solidarity expression that demonstrates empathy for the cause of 43 missing students in Iguala, Guerrero in 26 September 2014.

For Rotes (2013:300), identity has been renovated under the impact of social and technological shifts, meaning that identity has become: 'multiple, fluid, and or fragmented, it may be doubted whether identity is still a glue capable of holding social movements together'. The activist Sabina argues that:

When one takes it seriously there is less liquidity at the borders of identities. If it is true that these borders are very porous, creating identities with double commitments, I do not see a problem. If the agenda becomes Germany/Mexico, I see it as a positive sign of understanding. If the commitment is clear, one can wear many caps (Sabina).

For Bailey (2008), the Internet as an alternative medium also provides the opportunity for groups to reconfigure the identity on their own terms, to create their own story, recover their own voice, and rebuild their self-portrait as a community and a culture. The Mexicans for Peace in Mexico from Switzerland, through the activists Carlos Pericat and Hermes, explains this idea:

Using these platforms, it is very easy to find out interested people and encourage them to be partakers of change – with the aim of improving the conditions of our nation – and to inform others to spread the ideology of a new way of thinking and acting for our own good. What we want is to intervene and not impose, we do not impose anything, but propose our views and our explanations of what we have to do as Mexicans abroad (Carlos Pericat).

The Internet, whether through social networking sites, the digital portal of the NAR, or communication by Facebook, is the communication channel to defend our ideas, organise to disseminate our ideas for building peace, and counter the ideas that the state makes up to excuse the violence, and the idea that violence should only be talked about when convenient for the powerful groups (Hermes).

For Beutz (2009:227), the construction of collective identity relies on the ability of the group to create a 'shared definition system' through revisions of 'self-re-evaluations of shared experiences, shared opportunities, and shared interests'. The expansion of such a shared definition system requires the kind of communication that occurs in small groups. The activist Roberto explains this construction of collective identity, saying that:

In the case of the movement it has been important to maintain an identity. The meeting between victims from the Mexico and the US was so important for this identity because this meeting was like looking in a mirror for the victims who have suffered. When those from the US met with victims of Mexico, while they did not speak the same language

they understood the pain. When they found out, for example, that their relatives had been killed with the same type of weapon, empathy and friendships were created. Similarly, identity is constructed by common migration issues with various countries – Latin Americans understand the problem. When the MPJD tells the stories it always tries to put the identity of the victims first. When the identity of the person is known, you take away the argument that we had approached the victims just to publish something. We also had moving friendships and closeness with various photojournalists (Roberto).

Fig. 17. Caravan for Peace USA (Facebook Caravan4Peace CaravanaXLaPaz).

In the viewpoint of Taylor (2013:48), emotions are central for the construction of a collective identity. In this way, the new collective identities that permit people to make their own histories in 'culturally diverse societies may result in polarization and radicalization'. In addition, Goodwin et al. (2001:9) affirm that 'what is difficult to imagine is an identity that is purely cognitive yet strongly held. The "strength" of an identity, even a cognitively vague one, comes from its emotional side'. For the MPJD, emotion played a key role in the construction of their identity. In figure 18, Javier Sicilia is seen during the meeting at Chapultepec Castle, crying and hugging the mother of a son killed in an encounter with the authorities.[93]

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[93] García, I. (29 July 2011) El Congreso está ciego y sordo ante el dolor y la muerte, reprocha Sicilia, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/07/29/el-congreso-esta-ciego-y-sordo-ante-el-dolor-y-la-muerte-reprocha-sicilia (Accessed 02 May 2015)

It is the position of Beutz (2009:227) that the development of collective identity is permitted in small groups, which is critical to the long-term influence of social change movements. If the collective identity is strong, 'the movement can garner support and power because the participants feel that they are all working toward common goals, have defined opponents, and have an integrated sense of being that is incorporated into the movement ideologies'. In the context of the movements for peace, it is through social media that the mothers of disappeared relatives can gain this legitimisation to communicate their cases:

> Facebook allows them to appear as a legitimate group and has opened the space for the participation of new groups, mostly of victims. Victims are making great use of social networks, to disseminate cases and to connect with other groups. In the case of the MPJD, it connected with the more professional group Cencos, which had full-time professionals to help disseminate information. MPJD's strength has always been in the usage of communication tools. The MPJD used the Internet to show solidarity with other groups, including its 17 subgroups, which each operated differently. The breadth of groups provided a platform for art and culture. For actors who launched the campaign 'En los zapatos del otro', a very professional campaign that included ads, is used a different strategy than the forms of Internet use by the caravan in U.S to mention one example. The peace movement is a movement of movements, it had all kinds of people, from those doing ads to those who hardly know how to use the Internet sharing photos on Facebook (Janice).

From the beginning of the demonstrations in April 2011 to the Caravan to the US in August 2012, Javier Sicilia was often shown hugging people, especially victims and authorities. In this form, the grievances were shown in the public space, shaping the collective identity of the MPJD. Doorns et al. (2013:63) argue that grievances may be central to the politicising of collective identity, 'they should be experienced as widely shared among in-group members'. In addition, the authors discuss that 'organizers play a key role in how people determine who they are and what political meaning they should attach to their identity' (Doorns et al., 2013:65). Furthermore, the collective identity may continue in public activities such as demonstrations, thus providing some continuity to the movement over time (Diani, 1992). In addition, a political message was expressed in the pain of the victims such as Javier Sicilia, 'the personal pain made in public has become an expression of critique against the Mexican government, which offers no legitimate political response in the eyes of the public' (Maihold, 2012:190).

Fig. 18. The poet Javier Sicilia and Gabriela Cadena Alejos, mother of a murdered son, during a meeting with the authorities (Cuartoscuro).

For Collins (2001:27-28), the emotional dynamic is a key element in a highly mobilised social movement, describing such groups as 'collective effervescence'. One of the elements is the 'symbols of the group, encapsulating the memory of collective participation'. The connection with these logos permits individuals to maintain their feelings of dedication when they are absent from the group. One example of this is the following image taken in Paris on the 8 May,[94] showing people congregating in the 'National March' convened by Javier Sicilia.

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[94] Movilizaciones de la Zezta Internacional 7 y 8 de mayo en el mundo. Marcha por la Justicia y contra la Impunidad (8 May 2011) *Colectivo Yollotlanemilistli*. Retrieved from http://yollotlanemilistli.blogspot.mx/2011/05/movilizaciones-de-la-zezta.html (Accessed 11 June 2014)

In addition, Collins (2001:27-28) suggests that 'behaviours toward emblems are tokens of respect for the group; hence the emblems are touchstones for loyalty and targets for external challenge, the focal points around which confrontations with opponents are most easily generated'. In the demonstrations of the MPJD, these emblems are the photographs of the disappeared people. In the following image, María Herrera, who has suffered the disappearance of four of her sons, carries an image of each (Jesús Salvador, Raúl, Gustavo and Luis Armando)[95] on 10 May 2013 in the second National March of Dignity in Mexico City.

Fig. 20. One mother without celebration on 10 May 2013. As aspect of the march in Paseo de la Reforma (Photo: Carlos Ramos Mamahua).

Taylor (2013:47) affirms that social movements practice 'emotion rituals' to strengthen solidarity and self-transformation among participants, to cultivate activists, and to challenge and influence elites and authorities. Social movements have a habit of meeting with representatives of the other social movements involved in their areas. More established social movement organisations might take a consultancy role on such occasions, and they sometimes develop common interests. In addition, social movements can create ties of co-operation that can take various forms, 'from consultation, to incorporation in committees, to delegation of power' (della Porta and Diani, 2006:235).

In a well-known case of feminicide in Hermosillo, we embroidered in the meeting with the authorities, and we were negotiating with international experts for proper

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[95] Camacho, F. (11 May 2013) Marcha de la dignidad, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2013/05/11/politica/002n1pol (Accessed 05 February 2015)

categorization of this kind of feminicide. We have open communication with the authorities, we released information, giving arguments in alternative media and corrections of the official media. We used the strategy of embroidery against the reaction of the authorities, working together with other communication channels. It is difficult to attack women who embroider, which is one of the differences from the other campaigns in the movement. In the current marches where there is repression, we see exhaustion manifesting itself. Embroidery provides new ways of communicating and shows tenderness. The aesthetics of embroidery are symbolic of a reconciliatory message. Our embroidery is a seed of reconciliation in a situation where the state is responsible (Hermes).

Fig. 21. Handkerchiefs in the Congress (Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico).[96]

As can be seen, the collective identity for social movements for peace in Mexico is expressed in different forms. One of the paths followed by the group is to inspire support through sensitivity and empathy. Another involves the creation of memory tools, such as hashtags for disappeared people on Twitter, communicating solidarity through the use of social media in different parts of the world and connecting the individual stories in a decentralized form without control of the informational flows. It is through social networking sites that the collective identity is negotiated, creating a resonance, through multiple voices and values, in a fluid manner that is characterised by a clear commitment, portraying their own stories as a way

[96] Ceniceros, H. (2 November 2013) OCTUBRE EN SONORA: LOS YORIS VANIDOSOS, *Nuestra Aparente Rendición*. Retrieved from http://nuestraaparenterendicion.com/index.php/estamos-haciendo/estado-de-la-republica/sonora/item/2038-sonora-en-octubre-los-yoris-vanidosos?fb_action_ids=547306225337710&fb_action_types=og.likes (Accessed 30 June 2014)

of strengthening the identity. As shown above, emotions played a central role in the maintenance of the collective identity displayed in the public sphere, such as crying and hugging amongst the victims and by using emblems, such as photos of their disappeared relatives. These actions gave legitimisation to their demands, and have been displayed in the same form on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, allowing the movement to maintain a permanent collective effervescence, to make echoes in society and with the authorities.

5.4.3 Surveillance of Digital Activism in Social Movements for Peace in Mexico: 'Who is Our Aggressor?'

The Mexican government amended Article 6 of the constitution in 2013 to make access to the Internet a civil right. Conversely, criminals have targeted bloggers and online journalists who report on organised crime, issuing intimidations and at times murdering online writers, according to the Freedom House report of 2015.[97] The Telecommunications Law, approved in July 2014, includes sections that may threaten privacy. Article 189 of the law forces telecommunication companies to provide users' geolocation data to police, military, or intelligence agencies in real time, and without a court order.[98] All things considered, the use of the Internet by social movements for peace in Mexico means this issue deserves further exploration.

According to Baringhorst (2008), protest organisers have to plan actions behind closed doors and cannot talk about them on Internet forums, mailing lists or social network sites as these are already part of the everyday observation procedures of big companies and the government. Bennett and Segerberg (2011) affirm that 'there are several possible reasons for the limited set of technologies effectiveness' that can be applied to the exchange of information on the Internet. For the activist Roberto, it is important to keep the planned actions secret before communicating them prior to a demonstration.

> As the mainstream media began to give visibility to the MPJD, social networks were
> useful for the safety of the same organisation. We experienced in the caravans two or
> three problems where the use of the Internet allowed us to respond to assaults and protect
> our members. On Twitter we created the account @hastalamadre, and when we opened

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[97] Freedom in the world, Mexico 2015, https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/mexico (Accessed 19 November 2015)
[98] Artículo 189-190 de Ley Federal de Telecomunicaciones y Radiodifusión.

the webpage for announcements of actions and other messages, victims and other people wanted to join us and other groups were created, such as the Xalapa for Peace group, and Acapulco for Peace. We communicate with our allies through social networks and the movement remains alive. The level of activity among social networks is related to the actions we take and the actions that we call for. We have constant activity prior to action (Roberto).

A crucial aspect that needs to be taken into consideration is that social media are part of commercial platforms that could censor activists' communications or can be under surveillance by the police, or even subject to infiltration (Fuchs, 2014b). The activist Lolita Bosch expresses the issue of the importance of anonymity by stating:

> Access to anonymity is a vital issue in Mexico. Many of the things that we do publish are under a pseudonym or anonymous, or when in Tijuana there was a sit-in with some people that were sent them two convoys of federal, they wrote to us at the time, gave us names, they made a video so we could confirm that they were there. All this can be done through the Internet. The voice is amplified because we are also working with other groups for peace, especially in Latin America and Europe, and have come to present our stories to many places, although sometimes it oversimplifies life, we suffered a lot because we are following several conflicts for example, the conflict in Michoacán or a kidnapping in Tabasco (Lolita).

An additional issue is in relation to the exposure to infiltration by opponents or police, as the webpages, e-mails, and social networks are monitored by intelligence officers (Rotes, 2013). Cordelia explains that:

> The risks are in relation to privacy, and we risk infiltration because we do not pay attention; because we have optimism we do not realize these possibilities. Another serious issue is over the mixing of public and private life. Facebook is a tool related to oneself and that is a risk. In Monterrey they have made a law to regulate cyberbullying, and as such legislation grows, we will see a structure that wants to silence. Another risk is the trivialization by Facebook, of a matter that is serious and of general popular interest (Cordelia).

Another risk in this form comes from the position of Fuchs (2014b), who states that alternative social media affords autonomy for critical voices, but can suffer from a lack of public attention and visibility. They are challenged with a structural form of 'censorship and discrimination immanent in capitalism that benefits large, resourceful, profitable, visible

corporate media at the expense of alternative media' (Fuchs, 2014b:160). Alberto, an activist, warns on this issue that:

> The massive spying on social networks via software like FinFisher increases the severe harassment of Twitter bloggers and journalists who do not have this training. The executions in Reynosa, Tabasco and Veracruz, give an example of the censorship of social networks and the detention of innocent persons (Alberto).

For Mosca (2010), the possibilities of the Internet to inform and mobilise people in the streets is overemphasised; in his findings the author states that people do not think the Internet could replace face-to-face communication even though it increases the probability and occurrence of communication between isolated individuals. The activist Hermes states that 'the Internet allows communication but can also isolate us from reality. A fascination with the Internet may end up isolating us'. (Hermes).

In addition, for White (2010a), there is a belief that the Internet may in fact reduce the participation in activism, because of the digital activism which presents a form of political engagement that depends only on a matter of clicking a few links. Such 'engagement' can present an illusion that using the web can change the world. Mejías (2012) affirms that the interruption of the Internet is another issue to consider. States or corporations can simply 'switch off' the Internet in order to deny access to the resources activists have been relying on. The activist María Fernanda highlights the risks she sees:

> The challenge is that people can do more than give a like on Facebook. The risk is more than simply spying on us: our website itself one day disappeared, we could not get to our site, and we had to recover our domain, a process that was full of obstacles. Espionage exists to know who we are and where we are, and can be very dangerous (María Fernanda).

An additional underlying risk to the embrace of the Internet is that the use of digital tools does not diminish the ability of the state to fight against leaders and disrupt social organisations (Loader and Mercea, 2011, Etling et al., 2010:45). Carlos shows this concern:

> It is an issue that is making a lot of noise, some of our online accounts – including email – have been hacked. Cyber police can spy on us, and the information can be monitored. On 1 December 2012 there was the emergence of repression on social networks. A lot of information were showing pictures of this. Nowadays, there are new regulations on demonstrations (Carlos).

Having explained the risks that the use of the Internet and social network sites entails for activists, Pickerill (2006:276) notes that there is a growing knowledge and awareness of how activists need to protect their online activities, protect their data and develop new tactics which will take their opponents by surprise. Lolita notes the risks of using the Internet:

> The Internet is not as safeguarded as we would like, we are tracked more than we would like and it is very difficult to trace the attacks against us. The Internet is not anonymous, and activists are closely watched (Lolita).

In the same form, Milan (2011) suggests that there is still low awareness of the risks in terms of cyber surveillance and the repression of dissent that 'these technologies and platforms expose activists to, and many people seem to ignore that social media can also become a tool of social control'. The activist Sabina argues in this respect:

> The risks are not very different from what we would be exposed to through traditional media, such as espionage. We have to be aware that we are being observed, and while we are not committing any crimes, we have decided to assume that we are being spied on, the information we use is not classified information. There is a lot of paranoia however. (Sabina).

The activist Pilar confirms that their organisations are quite aware of Internet surveillance, stating that there is a necessity for professional capabilities to deal with these risks:

> We suffer from a lack of the necessary digital security capabilities to oppose cyber espionage against journalists and human rights defenders [...] we are only minimally prepared, our organisations have few resources to withstand a hack due to a lack of expertise and technical knowledge. The network offers literacy workshops on digital security, but our question is: Who is our aggressor? We do not have sufficient security protocols (Pilar).

Finally, the activist speaks of 'a risk from the easy access to our location. Certain authorities have begun to suppress certain freedoms of expression. We hope it will not get to us.'

In summary, amongst the activists interviewed there is a high level of awareness about the consequences of being under surveillance by the government or the private sector. Some actions that the activists have taken include keeping some information secret when they plan demonstrations. Anonymity is a vital resource to protect. There is also awareness about how

social network sites such as Facebook expose the self, and that this may lead to a risk of exposing personal information or being infiltrated. Another current threat facing online activism is the use of software programs such as FinFisher by the government to spy on activists and citizens.[99] A wide range of aggression could be suffered by the activists, from imprisonment to execution. Along with these real-life dangers arising from the use of the Internet, there are those specific to the digital realm, from hacked e-mails accounts and websites, the tracking of activities through online material exposed in social network sites, to interruptions of their electronic communications. The activists have stated that though they are not committing any crimes they must still assume they are being keep under surveillance, and have noted the lack of skills, expertise and technical knowledge needed to track the attacks, with the inevitable question in this context being raised: 'Who is the aggressor?'

5.4.4 Brief Note on the Transnationalisation of Social Movements for Peace in Mexico

A relevant issue concerning the use of the Internet for social movements for peace is to question to what extent transnational activism is possible for the social movement for peace in Mexico. Cammaerts (2005:71) observes that face-to-face contact is still an essential element for mobilisation, noting that 'social factors, such as trust and the importance of face-to-face contact in a social setting cannot be ignored, although size of the country and of the organisation does influence the degree of virtuality'. The activist Lolita Bosch makes a deep reflection on this issue, arguing that:

> Everything is going very slow, it took seven years of war which nearly we have been working since four years, we talked about this war from the 'casa de la moneda' in Chile to Colombia, and in New York, where there is a collective of 'bordando por la paz' as in many parts of the world, People have a hard time understanding that we are at war. We have to assume, given the degree of impunity afforded to forces in Mexico that this is a very long process and so we move gradually. We believe that we are living in a war, by the death rate and by the degree of impunity. 30% of the Mexican population understands that we live in war, I think a considerable amount of our work go beyond and make a real impact. All our work commits us to be a responsible voice, this process is slow, imagine outside of our groups, for example, just two weeks ago some international journalists

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[99] Molina, T. (7 October 2013) Sigue activo el programa de espionaje cibernético FinFisher en México: Citizen Lab, *Wikileaks en La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://wikileaks.jornada.com.mx/notas/sigue-activo-el-programa-de-espionaje-finfisher-en-mexico-citizen-lab (Accessed 10 January 2015)

have become aware that what is happening in Mexico is more or less similar to what happens in a civil war, but unfortunately economic interests prevail. Until there is international interest, the world will not know what we have experienced, and we will not be a subject of interest until it affects their interests, as happened in Colombia. People looked at Colombia because they were abducting presidential candidates and foreign entrepreneurs and killing the children of Canadians. When it affected people who were making money from the war it changed everything. (Lolita).

In her perspective, Lolita says that one of the reasons that there is no possibility of a huge response to the Mexican violence in the context of the war on drugs is that less than 30% of the Mexican population understands that Mexico is in a state of war, which alters the socio-political context that determines to what extent the transnational activism could spread globally. Other factors that can limit transnational activism may be 'the unequal distribution of access and capabilities, the commodification of information, conflicts of interest at a local, national as well as global level and thus structural power relations within society' (Cammaerts, 2005:72).

In a related position, on the structural power relations that Cammaerts (2002) refers to as necessary to facilitate successful transnational activism, the expert Alejandro offers a complex reflection on the causes that have made the success of the social movement for peace in Mexico's attempts to affect a transnational agenda difficult:

My hypothesis is related to the type of victim. You generally need to frame the situation so that you can generate this international solidarity, the strongest type of victim produces the strongest resonance. For victims to generate international visibility it is essential that they are perceived as vulnerable and innocent. In Mexico's case it can be hard to present the victims as vulnerable and innocent. This can be done in the case of innocent migrant children, but it is difficult with young men or adults. The stereotype has been so often presented by official narratives that they went into criminal activities that it is difficult to generate an international movement. Another cause is the prohibitive scaffolding of drugs, when there is a problem such as drug trafficking, the resonance is no longer as clear, because it is a normal thing a state is obliged to face. So, while the Mexican government's response is coercive, in the case of the violence we are experiencing, most NGO's have not assessed the widespread violence as an issue of human rights, but have instead focused on the issue of the disappearances, which is seen as an emergent issue by international organisations like the UN and the OAS. When the perpetrators of violence are non-state actors, activism is complicated. International organisations do not have the

regulatory framework to deal with violence generated by non-state actors [...] All these narratives are embedded with organised crime and drug trafficking. When that's no longer an issue for the United States it will no longer be an attractive subject for governmental actors, because it is immediately linked with security threats. National security will always win over human rights. The most other countries do is pressure internationally. It will be more difficult for Western democracies to bring Mexico to task for its approach to the issue of drug trafficking, rather than for violating a human rights protocol (Alejandro).

Beyond the use of digital tools, the socio-political context of the social movement in Mexico does not have a favourable framework and the opportunity structure has not been effectively favourable to empower a transformation of the status quo of claims for justice. The movement has been obstructed because there has been an international normative understanding that focuses on combating the issue of drug trafficking since the policies of the Nixon government in 1971.[100]

5.5 Quantitative Analysis of YouTube Comments on the Social Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity

At the beginning of the analysis for this thesis, I studied the most viewed videos from YouTube, in the framework of the MPJD because I found they have comments which could be used as material for this analysis. I documented all this data, systematically categorising it in an Excel document. The comments were categorised according to the main topic discussed in each statement. From the five YouTube videos selected for this thesis, I selected the inflammatory comments, aggressive online comments defined as 'conduits of discrimination, abuse and misinformation for political extremists again targeted outgroups' (Calfano, 2015:273).

The analysis of the comments showed the public sympathy for the MPJD and their empathy for the emblematic victims of these mobilisation groups, or against political actors or government who could be viewed as guilty of the violence in Mexico. The analysis also shows expressions regarding the necessity of awareness for social change in Mexico.

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[100] Vulliamy, E. (24 July 2011) Nixon's 'war on drugs' began 40 years ago, and the battle is still raging, *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/jul/24/war-on-drugs-40-years (Accessed 09 June 2014)

In relation to the analysis of Facebook page usage by movements for peace in Mexico, the results exposed the publication of links from newspapers that are related to the mobilization groups, including news stories framework on the war on drugs in Mexico or information on related issues, i.e. defenders of human rights, analysis reports, victims' stories, as a frequent part of the social media practices of these groups.

These result denote a heterogeneity of Facebook use that depends upon the socio-political context of each region, such as in the case of 'Colectivo paz Xalapa Facebook page': its main use is to advertise demonstrations. This may suggest that this region of the country is one of the emblematic places where violence has brought disturbing consequences for the citizens' daily lives   in the high rate of missing people- people who have disappeared. This could suggest a citizenry with a more visible tendency to protest on the streets. Another example of this socio-political context is the high rate of journalists' deaths which has risen to seventeen killings since 2000.

The analysis of comments in news stories related to the MPJD, a quantitative analysis created on the Facebook page of the *Proceso* magazine around the MPJD, shows the opinions regarding the causes of the violence in Mexico in the framework of the war on drugs, presenting as main topics: the corruption, a pessimistic position on the possibility of generating social change in Mexico and criminalising the victims. In the YouTube videos, the analysis of comments shows the blaming of Mexican politicians with special reference to Felipe Calderón. The results also suggest that as people questioned why the victims had not received justice, this, the lack of justice, is the   main issue to be addressed.

In addition, the Twitter account used by the MPJD for the quantitative analysis, complemented the results of the Facebook page uses of the MPJD and the MPJD webpage uses. This part of the analysis aimed to check if there was any significant difference between the comments published online. The results suggested the main usage of this Twitter account was to publish news' stories in the framework of the social movement for peace in Mexico.

It is in the analysis of the uses of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity's webpage, where the social movement publications are mainly about social justice claims and information on the Caravans organised as a part of their repertoire of contention that consists of what people know they can do when they want to oppose a public decision they consider unjust or threatening . All in all, through all the sections analysed from the comments written on Facebook pages, it seems that Facebook didn't represent at the time adigital platform used

for the demonstrations for peace in Mexico, especially in the news stories section. However, the Facebook pages for peace publications highlighted that this digital platform can be used to call for a demonstration.

Individuals contributing on social media have played a decisive part in communicating information about the movement and in providing comments that help the movement's process of self-reflection. 'The "likes" and comments served as useful metrics for the activists running the social media accounts of the movement, allowing them to evaluate the movement's resonance and success' (Kavada, 2015:9-10).

Herring (1996: 159, 165-166) argues that any group whose interactions take place in the public domain can be observed by researchers without explicit announcement and solicitation of consent from participants. In this manner it was methodologically possible to collect all the following data for analysis.

The first video analysed is a press conference given by Javier Sicilia on 31 March 2011 in Cuernavaca, Morelos, after the murder of his son and six others, four young men who were neighbours and close to his son Juan Francisco and two adults who were with them when they disappeared only to be killed in the municipality of Temixco. This video was published on 1 April 2011 by a digital media platform called 'Morelos Diario'.[101] The video produced 174 comments, and was viewed 32,233 times.

The distribution of the comments were: flaming comments 32% (55), comments supporting Javier Sicilia 13% (23), opposing Javier Sicilia 11% (19), comments that the government is guilty of the violence in Mexico 10% (18), spam comments 7% (12), comments that Mexico needs a change 7% (12), other 3% (6), opposing the war on drugs3% (6), supporting Felipe Calderón 3% (5), supporting the legalising of drugs 2% (4), saying that the US is part of the problem of violence 2% (4), saying they do not believe in social movements for peace 2% (3), comments 'society is responsible' 2% (3), comments 'politicians are guilty' and 1% (2) , offering solidarity with Mexico 1% (2).

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[101] Ofrece Javier Sicilia rueda de prensa tras homicidio de su hijo (1 April 2011). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANlmyIoDX_Q (Accessed 08 June 2015)
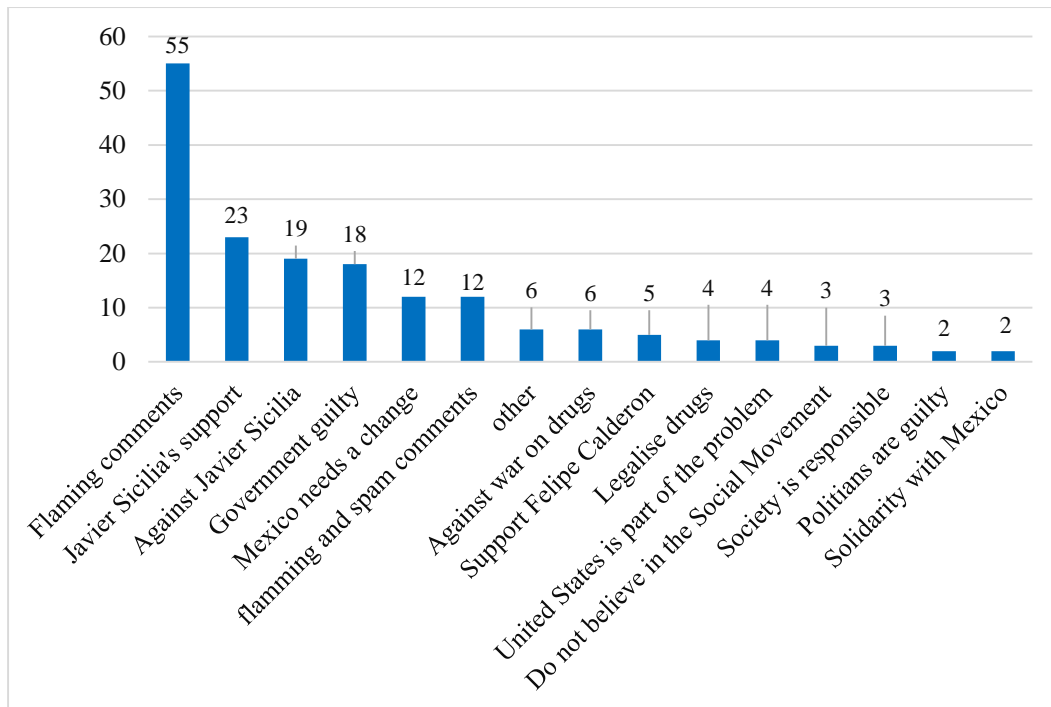
Table 1. 'Javier Sicilia offers news conference after son's murder (YouTube).

The second video analysed was the testimony of Nepomuceno Moreno, a member of the MPJD who was killed in September 2011.[102] This video was published on 21 September 2011 by the collective group 'Emergencia Mx', which defines itself as a digital platform that 'offers a much more accurate and different approach to that offered by the television media who are part of the uncompetitive and undemocratic status quo'.[103] There were 82 comments for analysis, and the video had 66,044 views.

The comments were: 26% (21) flaming comments, 16% (13) touched by the story of Nepomuceno, 13% (11) saying that Mexico needs a change, 12% (10) expressing solidarity with Nepomuceno, 9% (7) concerning social injustice, 7% (5) expressing doubts about the innocence of Nepomuceno, 7% (5) saying that society is responsible and 3% (2) each for those opposing the war on drugs, saying that Mexico is overwhelmed by the violence, and spam.

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[102] Testimonio de Nepomuceno Moreno (11 September 2011) *Emergencia Mx*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BRW9QeMzV3M (Accessed 09 July 2015)

[103] Emergencia Mx (31 March 2011), https://www.youtube.com/user/YABASTANOMASANGRE/about (Accessed 08 July 2015)
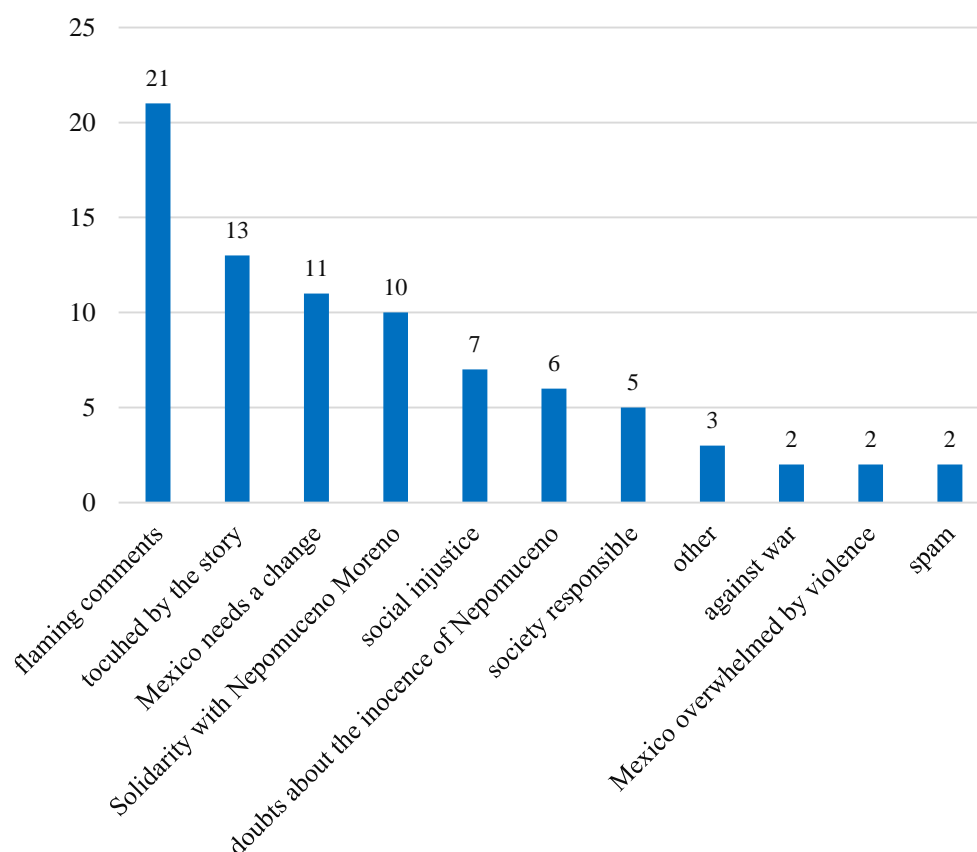
Table 2. Nepomuceno Moreno Sonora testimony denouncing the disappearance of his son and probable execution as well as the negligence of the authorities of his state (YouTube).

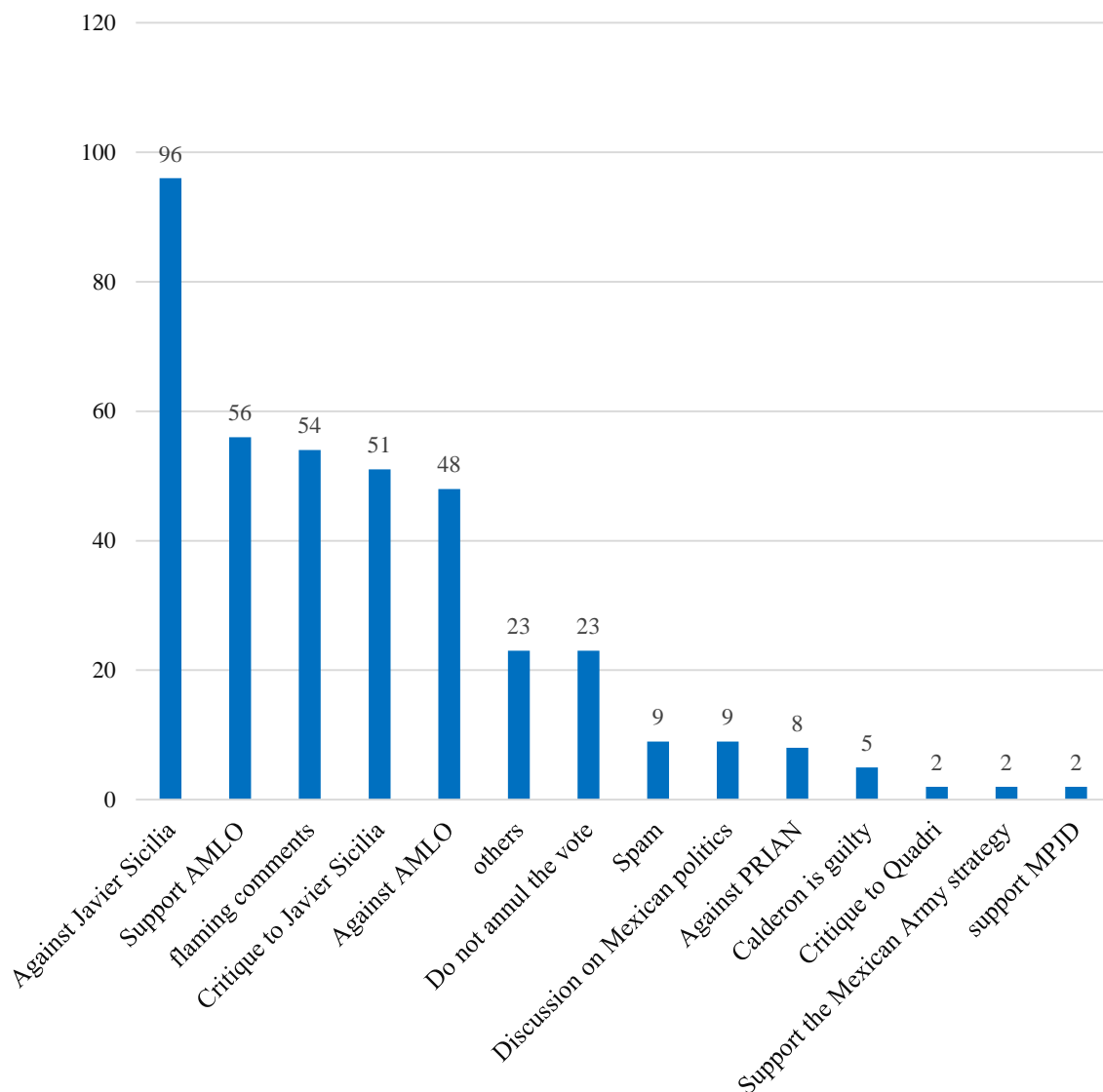The third video analysed was an interview on CNN between Javier Sicilia and Carmen Aristegui about the encounter of the MPJD with the presidential candidates on 28 May 2012.[104] This video was published on 29 May 2012 by a user called Ramón Nuño. There were 388 comments and the video had 35,883 views.

The results were: 25% (96) against Javier Sicilia, 14% (56) supporting the candidate Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador, 14% (54) flaming, 13% (51) critiquing Javier Sicilia, 12% (48) opposing Andrés Manuel Lopez, 6% (23) other, 6% (23) saying not to annul the vote, 2% (9) spam, 2% (9) discussion of Mexican politics, 2% (8) Against PRI-AN, 1% (5) saying Calderón is guilty, 1% (2) critiquing Quadri, 1% (2) supporting the Mexican Army, 1% (2) supporting the MPJD.

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[104] JAVIER SICILIA CON CARMEN ARISTEGUI, TEMA: REUNION CON CANDIDATOS (28 May 2012). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XklnjsRND1o (Accessed 09 October 2014)

Table 3. Interview on CNN between Javier Sicilia and Carmen Aristegui, about the
encounter of the MPJD with the presidential candidates on 28 May 2012 (YouTube).

The fourth video analysed was a spot produced by the collective group as a part of the
'El Grito más Fuerte' campaign for the MPJD. The video is called 'Ponte en los Zapatos del
otro',[105] a title that signifies empathy with the cause of the MPJD and with the disappeared
people. The video was published on 30 January 2012 and has 170,090 visits and 421 comments.

The results were: flaming comments 27% (99), expressing empathy with the campaign
19% (73), opposing the PRD 39 (10%), spam 5% (18), saying they do not believe in the social

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[105] Cinematrack Canal Oficial (30 January 2012) En los zapatos del otro. Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRvWx0fNvxE (Accessed 08 September 2015)

movement 5% (18), opposing the war on drugs 4% (16), suggesting society is responsible 4% (16), supporting Calderón's strategy 4% (16), saying the government is guilty 4% (16), supporting AMLO 3% (13), saying PRI-PAN is guilty 3% (13), saying that politicians are guilty 2% (9), commenting on the Televisa actors 2% (9), saying that Calderón is guilty 2% (9), other 2% (8), saying Mexico needs a change 2% (8), expressing solidarity with Mexico 1% (5), on social injustice 1% (3), pro-peace comments 1% (2), saying the video should be massively spread 1% (2) and urging people to vote for presidential elections 2012 1% (2).
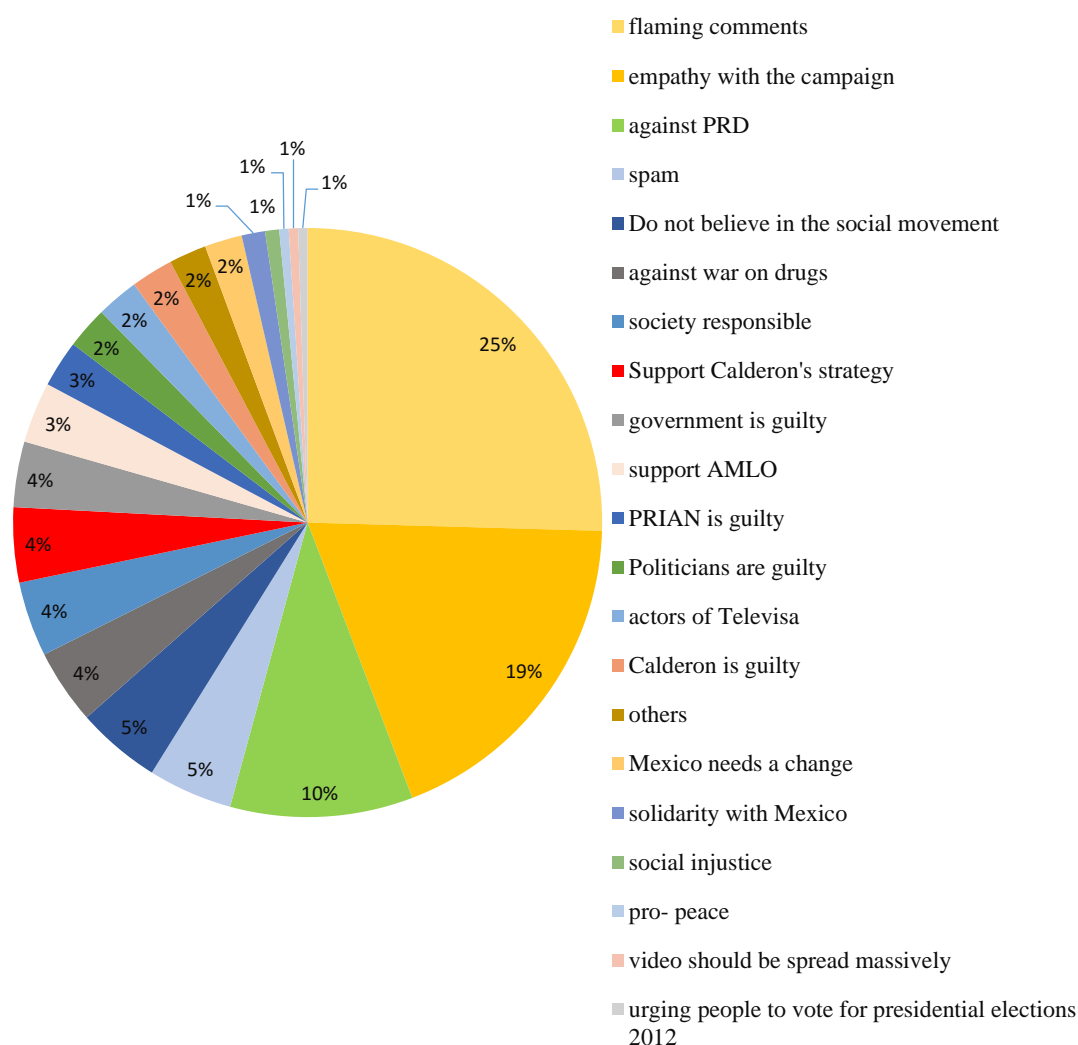
Table 4. En los Zapatos del Otro (YouTube).

The fifth video analysed was a spot by a group of Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) students posted on YouTube,[106] in which they call for a demonstration to remember Jorge Antonio Mercado and Javier Francisco Arredondo, who died on the morning of 19 March 2010 in a clash between soldiers and suspected members of organised crime in the capital of Nuevo Leon. During the clip of just over 2 minutes, the students are put "in the shoes" of Jorge Antonio and Francisco Javier, and do a story from their perspective about what happened that March morning at the entrance of the campus of ITESM. In this respect, the video reminds students that members of the militia who by "mistake attacked killed two students", and that later investigations into the case exposed so many irregularities that it has not been possible to clarify what happened. The video was published on 10 March 2012. I analysed 93 comments and the video has 93,158 views.

The comments were: 10% (9) against ITESM, 3% (3) against the Mexican Army, 9% (8) saying the government is guilty, 14% (13) making claims for unity, 11% (10) claiming justice, 5% (5) expressing pride in being at ITESM, 5% (5) supporting the Mexican Army, 40% (37) supporting the movement for peace and 3% (3) other.
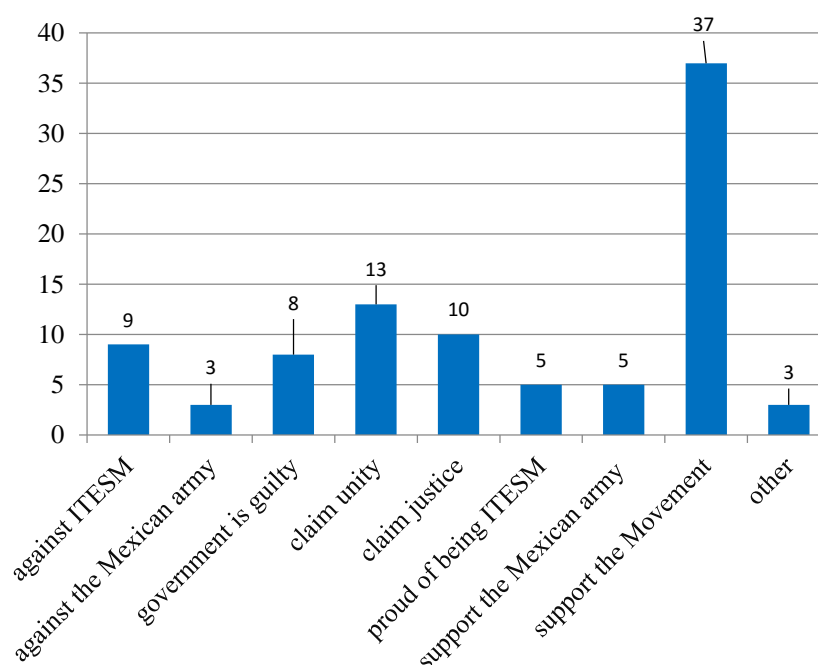

Table 5. 'Los Estudiantes del Tec Nos Ponemos "En los Zapatos del Otro"' (YouTube).

[106] Asamblea Tec (10 March 2012) Los estudiantes del Tec nos ponemos 'En los zapatos del otro'. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=814QBp_pQW4 (Accessed 09 June 2013)

In summary, after analysing the five videos, the most published type of comments are attacks between the users, or flaming comments. This result is unsurprising in the context of the first report from the Monitoring Observatory on Citizen Media 2012,[107] where flaming is detected as a negative aspect of social network sites, including political cyberbullying, violent speech and attacks on public actors or people identified as enemies. The second most frequent group of comments expressed empathy with Javier Sicilia and support for the 'En los zapatos del otro' campaign and the MPJD. The most common negative comments were those opposing Javier Sicilia and suggesting that the government is guilty. All in all, it can be seen that there is a polarisation in the comments between those believing the government's actions are the right ones, and those supporting the movements for peace. In the following section I conducted a qualitative analysis of the video comments on YouTube.

5.5.1 Qualitative Analysis of the YouTube Video Comments

Social media 'as a language and a terrain of identification, becomes a source of coherence through which symbols are shared, a centripetal focus of attention, which participants can turn to when looking for other people in the movement' (Gerbaudo, 2014:266).

For Bennett (2012:21), 'the more diverse the mobilisation, the more personalised the expressions often become'. People can activate their loosely tied social networks through communication technologies. Being part of a social movement implies the sharing of different political and ideological backgrounds; in this manner a wide range of interpretations of the protests' agenda is possible (Maireder and Schwarzenegger, 2012:189).

In this way, for Meek (2011:8), YouTube allows the expression of comments as a form of participation, and through user-generated content may create collaborative spaces to create and promote the dissemination of information. All in all, YouTube is a place of relational communication, and has helped the process of self-mediation as it relates to the production of protest artefacts (Cammaerts, 2012). At the same time, it is important to take into account that there is a 'danger of communicating to a small and marginalized public without paying any attention to foster upward channels of communication to the formal democratic system'

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[107] 1er Informe OMCIM sobre la observación de redes sociales en el proceso electoral 2012, (5 June 2012), *OMCIM: Los medios y las elecciones 2012 México.* Retrieved from https://elecciones2012mx.wordpress.com/1er-informe-omcim-sobre-la-observacion-de-redes-sociales-en-el-proceso-electoral-2012/ (Accessed 01 July 2013)

(Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993:116). It is one of the powers of the Internet that through social media practices 'fears, desires, anxieties, conflicts, denials [and] repressions' can all be delivered (Dahlgren, 2014:200).

The next phase of this study undertakes a qualitative analysis of the comments posted on YouTube previously analysed quantitatively (see section 5.5). In this form, I collected the comment types most frequently published, specifically three categories: 1. Comments against Javier Sicilia, 2. Comments against President Felipe Calderón for his strategy in the war on drugs, and 3. Comments in support of the social movement for peace in Mexico.

5.5.2 The Privileged Victim of the Social Movements for Peace in Mexico: Javier Sicilia

As previously examined, the key role Javier Sicilia played in the MPJD was the media coverage he attracted (see chapter four). This part of the chapter focuses on a qualitative analysis of the user comments on YouTube previously selected from the comment categories of five videos analysed in the section above, specifically those which have expressed their criticism of the leader of the MPJD, Javier Sicilia. This section explores a critical view of the utopian image of Javier Sicilia as the best agent to promote the change needed in Mexico.

One of the comments often published was in relation to how Javier Sicilia was a privileged victim who received beneficial treatment from the powerful, based on the fact that he was listened to on several occasions by President Felipe Calderón. Some of the users asked what kind of privileges Sicilia has that he is attended to at such a high political level, with one expressing that:

> Is Javier Sicilia a special citizen and other victims are not? Do other victims not feel? Is the pain of Sicilia more valuable than the pain we feel every day? There are parents who have lost children, mothers who have been killed leaving orphaned children, children who have lost parents. One cannot just set up a march and magically things work out. The next day, after the arrangement and media coverage, will we be left a different Mexico? No! We must all, as a society, stand before the mirror and see what we are doing wrong! (Carlos Alberto).

This comment was expressed in the context of the first demonstration of Sicilia, which went from Cuernavaca to Mexico City from 5 to 8 May. In the same form, 'social and business

organisations of missing relatives, human rights activists and parents of Durango, Coahuila, Jalisco and Morelos expressed their opposition to the march from 5 to 8 May to leave Morelos with the poet Javier Sicilia.'[108] The organisations expressed their rejection of the demonstration because of the stated belief that it may have been the biggest political manipulation of violence and insecurity in Mexico. All in all, this demonstration was seen by some people as having as its goal a pact between Sicilia and organised crime.

Another perspective which perceives the leader of the MPJD, Javier Sicilia, in a negative light, raises the question of whether he would have done anything, had he not experienced his tragedy:

> Unfortunately, if this had not happened, if the son of Sicilia had not been in that group of boys killed by gunmen, then they would all have passed by as if nothing had happened. I wonder, how many of those killed every day are innocents? They are innocent people and the government passed them off as 'bad people'. Why does the government not hear the parents of all the youth killed by the failed 'war on drugs'? (Dey).

The comment demands of the Mexican government an explanation as to why the other victims of violence in Mexico are not listened to, and why it has failed to recognise that innocent people have been killed. Javier Sicilia himself states that 'ignoring the victims is to deny democracy and can generate new forms of authoritarianism',[109] and that 'the victims are the suffering face of the nation and any policy that seeks to rebuild the state must include women and all citizens'.[110]

Moreover, following the National Pact that Javier Sicilia proposed in the demonstration of 8 May in which 200,000 people participated, there were critiques that suggested that it is useless to promote its proposals because the problems are the criminals and not the honest population, with one comment addressing Sicilia directly:

> Mr. Sicilia, with all the respect you and your family deserve: I'm from Sinaloa, and like you have lived the experience of losing a son. I have unfortunately lived the tragic experience of losing a child under the same circumstances of 'violence', and in my

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[108] Torres, R. (4 May 2011) Arremeten contra la marcha de Javier Sicilia por la paz, *El economista*. Retrieved from http://eleconomista.com.mx/sociedad/2011/05/04/arremeten-contra-marcha-javier-sicilia-paz (Accessed 01 June 2014)

[109] 'Ignorar a las víctimas es negar la democracia': Javier Sicilia, (19 March 2014). Retrieved from http://www.canalcapital.gov.co/blogs/ignorar-a-las-victimas-es-negar-la-democracia-javier-sicilia/ (Accessed 19 October 2014)

[110] Ibíd.

opinion it is not necessary to call for a national pact as you proposed, because honest people, honest workers, who can be supposed to be the majority of Mexicans, are not the problem. The real problem is the sick people who murder for a little money, the drug dealers and corrupt politicians. It is useless to make a national pact between the honest population, when the problem is these animals. I'm sure I could not imagine joining this cause! We need action, not fear, and we need to remove those who do not serve from political power. The real problem is the narcos, they are the offenders, and political corruption makes them unmanageable animals (Enrique).

As noted, one of the common critiques of Sicilia is to question why he did not raise his voice in the context of the war on drugs before his son was killed. Such critiques commonly compare his case to that of Alejandro Martí, a millionaire entrepreneur whose son was killed in August 2008. An example of such comments notes that:

This is a bit like the Martí case: before the kidnapping and murder of his son, he did little against violence or to demand action of the government. It is very painful how he lost his son, and I find what you have been doing since they killed your son important, I find it hypocritical that you do not first look in the mirror and recognise that, before the tragedy, Sicilia does not look anything like the social fighter for human rights and against corruption and crime that he has become now. My question is, where was Sicilia before the death of his son? (Oscar).

The negative user comments in reference to Javier Sicilia had a number of broad areas of criticism. Some asked why he has the power to confront President Calderón, given that there are thousands of victims like him, who have lost a relative in similar conditions because of the violence. Some user comments identify themselves as victims, asking Sicilia why he did not do something earlier before he suffered a tragedy. Other comments reject his plans, identifying the politicians corrupted under the influence of organised crime as the actors responsible for the Mexican tragedy, and that consequently while there are innocent people who have suffered the consequences of the war on drugs, the necessary change will come from society, not just from demonstrations.

5.5.3 The War on Drugs by Calderón's Government as a Failure

During the government of Calderón, one of the popular slogans most often used in the campaign 'Let's clean Mexico'[111] contained the phrase: 'So that the drugs do not reach your children', which was used as a justification for the national security strategy he followed to combat organised crime. In March 2011, a Mexican cartoonist created a cartoon of the slogan adding below it the words 'we are killing them'. This cartoon was created after a massacre of students in Villas de Salvarcar, Chihuahua, following which President Calderón affirmed that they were criminals.[112] I mentioned this story because it is an example of the public rejection of Calderón's strategy in the war on drugs. Not only was this refusal expressed in the media, but it also came from the users on social network sites, for example:

'We are working against violence that is happening in the country - come on!!!! What the president of death has sold as fantastic ... has only provoked death. Calderón, go!!!! No more promises!!!... Your administration has served only to cause death, injustice and social condemnation ... the crime continues, buying weapons from the Americans while doing the same crimes, and follows us. They are fighting like cats, killing each other as the 'boss' obtains his gains (Mario).

At the start of the mobilisations for peace in Mexico in January 2011, some intellectuals and artists expressed their opinions in the newspaper *La Jornada*,[113] when the 'No more Blood' campaign was launched. The political scientist Víctor Olea affirmed:

The failure of the purely military and police-driven attempt to defeat organised crime is clear. What should have happened is the work of intelligence, prevention, and the economic dismantling of criminal gangs. Without these the victory of crime in Mexico is assured. That's why Felipe Calderón expects a spectacular defeat and harvest every day. And worse: this red stain on the country could enclose an absolutely unacceptable appeasement.

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[111] Calderón, F. (2 July 2007) El presidente calderón en el evento "Limpiemos México" Estrategia nacional de seguridad. Programa en zona de recuperación, *Presidencia de la República*. Retrieved from http://calderon.presidencia.gob.mx/2007/07/el-presidente-calderon-en-el-evento-limpiemos-mexico-estrategia-nacional-de-seguridad-programa-en-zona-de-recuperacion/ (Accessed 08 August 2015)

[112] Villalpando, R. (9 February 2010) Gómez Mont ofrece disculpas por palabras equivocadas de Calderón, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2010/02/09/politica/003n1pol (Accessed 07 July 2015)

[113] Mateos et al. (11 January 2011) Aplauden intelectuales la campaña ¡Basta de sangre!, *La Jornada*. Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2011/01/11/politica/002n1pol (Accessed 09 July 2015)

Fig. 22. 'Para que la droga no llegue a tus hijos… TE LOS ESTAMOS MATANDO'.

(www.monerohernandez.com)

Another Facebook user focused on the high numbers of deaths, the high levels of poverty, and all the principles broken by Calderón, saying:

> Mexico has more deaths per day than a country in war, the unemployment rate is rising, and over 25 million Mexicans live in total poverty, and their ranks are growing [...] There are high levels of starvation. Calderón has violated and trampled the people, he has mocked the people, there is no rule of law, and he has violated the principles of the constitution, the guarantees and the rights of citizens. Felipe Calderón has usurped the government and has produced a lousy paper proclaiming himself the president of employment, and he has led the people to bankruptcy and disaster. That is Calderón (Victor).

The following picture was published on the Facebook profile page of the 'No more Blood' movement, with a finger pointing to the figure of Calderón. The photo was entitled 'The Guilty', and the post saw comments such as: 'out!', 'puppet of drug trafficking and crime' and 'Please, Mr. President, enough! We do not want to continue with this situation. Will you not stop until one of your children is killed?'

Fig. 23. El Culpable (Facebook No + Sangre).

An additional, user describes Calderón as the man responsible for the thousands of deaths in the context of the war on drugs, stating that:

> His intolerance and incompetence have caused thousands of deaths. Calderón will have to pay sooner or later. Calderón says he sleeps peacefully, this is because he lives surrounded by an army of bodyguards, but he does not dare to walk alone in the city. The only certainty is that he is unashamed. With so much evidence against Calderón, it is not possible that he continues to be free. The administration of Calderón will be remembered as one where violence and impunity prevailed.

Another user suggests that Calderón has converted the problem of drugs into a problem of national security, when it should really be seen as an issue of health:

> As much as one can try to distance Calderón from the devastation of the war on drugs, the conclusion is: the deaths are Calderón's fault. Without getting into specific numbers, simply ask people about the situation in the country. A fair evaluation of the implemented strategy would see the constant fear of violence in the country. He has converted a health problem, drugs, into one of national security. The strategy he has followed has become counterproductive, as the navy and the army on the streets have committed more human rights violations (María).

In addition, negative comments on Calderón's administration present reasons that the strategy he implemented was wrong, and examine the fatal consequences which the strategy produced:

> The strategy followed by Felipe Calderón was definitely wrong. When will he understand

that when you kill a capo of any cartel ('spoiled' or not), instead of having one less, we add two, three, four or more ... Why? Simply because drug trafficking is like a hydra, you cut one head off and more emerge. If you kill a big boss, you get small cartels that are much more difficult to fight, they don't have a vertical structure and criminals who were under one command before end up 'independent', becoming more dangerous for the population (Alfredo).

An additional negative critique seen in the comments on Calderón's administration suggests that Calderón launched the war on drugs to gain legitimacy with the help of the US government, arguing that:

Calderón's goal was not to end the drug cartels or anything that affects its financial structure. This was a masquerade of the government. They wanted to legitimise Calderón's office and keep the army on the streets, not to defend the population but to keep them fearful and indoors in complete inaction. The problem was that everything become uncontrolled, with disastrous results, and now this diminutive coward has escaped to the US where they are giving shelter to these bastards. All rats and murderers are hidden and rewarded by the US (Jaime).

Fig. 24. Cartoon by Monero Hernández. (www.monerohernandez.com)

Finally, other users suggest that President Calderón communicates discourses that have no credibility, noting the spread of shootings in several parts of Mexico:

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Since Calderón took power, the government is more corrupt, there are more drugs, impunity, cynicism and misrepresentation by our governors. In Acapulco and the port of Veracruz there are shootings every day. All local media and the governors know, and all are fools that have no authority and have done nothing for years. All are in collusion with drug traffickers, and nothing else. Calderón gives messages suggesting that we believe in his speech, and nobody does anything (Lázaro).

As can be noted, the expressions of the YouTube commentators have the same framework as the discussions of the MPJD, placing in the centre of the debate President Felipe Calderón, indicating his responsibility for the war on drugs that has left devastating consequences: deaths, injustice, unemployment, poverty, violations to the Mexican constitution, intolerance, incompetence, impunity, a strategy based on fear and violence, with an army and navy that have violated human rights, and a strategy based on killing drug cartels yet without any effect on the number of criminal gangs. These online expressions in the form of YouTube comments have uncovered a complexity in how ordinary people have understood the repercussions that the Mexican society has suffered as a result of the war on drugs, and how their discussions on the topic reflect those within the social movements for peace in Mexico.

5.5.4 The Relevance of the Social Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity in Mexico according to YouTube Commentators

As explained in the quantitative analysis of the YouTube comments (see section 5.5), the third most frequent comment group expressed support for the MPJD; this section will analyse this group of comments. I collected the comments that express support for the movement, detailing their thoughts on the situation of violence and the importance of protest in the context of the upsurge of demonstrations for peace in Mexico. One comment expresses this in the following form:

Clearly protests help. Who said that the protests were the solution? They are part of the process. In protests people get educated politically, lose the fear and prejudice, know each other and recognise for themselves the potential stored in the masses and the organisation, or at least are beginning to achieve this. Of course they are not magical or divine, but they are teachers and accelerators of consciousness. So care must be taken for what it is we go to protest, and that the efforts and steps have been routed correctly. Sicilia and the whole movement marked the difference between the state and organised crime (Juan).

Juan affirms that the peace protest in Mexico functions as a form of liberation and a process of learning to leave behind fear and preconceptions, affirming that the conglomeration of people may have the potential to reach higher levels of consciousness. In this form, the protest is beneficial, but the protest itself is not the solution to the problem. Another user states that the peace protests could be the commencement of a different Mexico, recognising the potential of the honest Mexican people:

> My hope is that all the deaths and pain that have been generated are not in vain, that this protest marks the beginning of a different Mexico. We are proud of being Mexican, we work honestly and we only want to live in peace. Calderón: go home to rest (Lorena).

Walgrave (2013) states the idea that people involve themselves not only because they are being requested to or are embattled, but also because they agree with the causes advanced by the movement. Jorge expresses his perception of the agreement to join the cause:

> Excellent experience. In Toluca the protest began at 12:30, gradually people began to arrive asking, 'Is this the peace protest?' We walked up one of the main streets of the city to the centre. Families and people of all ages and social backgrounds attended. All silent, raising posters. We did not know, but we had something in common: the pain, the anger, the need to demand that the government change its 'strategy' against drug trafficking. Everyone wore their stories, their reason for being there. Today, all were one (Jorge).

A significant element recognised in the support of the peace protest relates to the collective identity, which has been defined by Taylor (2013) as made up of shared common interests, solidarity and an emotional connection with a broader community. Emilio affirms this idea, arguing that:

> The protest is to try to unite all Mexicans, to not be indifferent, to not wait until it happens to us. If you can show solidarity with the cause, it may not do any good, but if you just sit at home ignoring everything that happens, you do not help (Emilio).

Another essential element that Van Laer (2011:164) states, is that no matter if the people have digital tools or not, when they are 'deeply angry about an unjust or unwanted situation,' or when they 'feel strongly connected and sympathize with a particular cause, these people will take to the streets'. Eduardo expresses this in this way:

> We joined this protest to gather the Mexican people and call for a national protest at a fixed time and in all corners of the country to call for an end to this failed war of Calderón. This man has militarized Mexico to legitimise himself, and there are cases where social

protest has been repressed. We should not be afraid and we should not keep silent (Eduardo).

In a different perspective, the peace protests were looking to express the grievances that the Mexican society was living under, stating the key issues that have allowed the development of an increasing level of violence in Mexico:

> We do not believe that magically we will upend the violence, corruption, etc., but it is the way we as a society tell the government that the actions they have taken are wrong, that their war or however they name it was poorly planned, that the methods by which they tackle crime are wrong. We are fed up with being afraid, and there are cases where it is better to do something, useless as it may seem to some, than to do nothing (Mariana).

For Gerbaudo (2013), there is a manifestation of leadership in the initial phase of contemporary social movements, one or more people who function as central to the process of mobilisation. This was clear at the uprising of the massive peace protest in Mexico:

> Sicilia represents the glut of thousands of Mexicans, without opportunities, suffering from corruption and poverty everywhere. It is good that someone had the courage to speak out, because the next time it will not be a protest. It will be a revolution because the people will no longer accept this. Not only are we hungry, we are also sick and what follows is the anger at the inability of those who should lead the nation. The drugs are a manifestation of it, as are the unscrupulous politicians ruling the country (Javier).

It is well recognised with Javier Sicilia, that the fact that he is a public figure meant the media gave him a voice to become the source of demands for actions against the fatalities that were occurring in Mexico. Dolores asserts that:

> I respect Mr. Sicilia, but not everyone with his pain (the loss of his son) becomes a source of energy for demanding justice; the only advantage he has is that he is a writer, a public figure, and that some media gave him a voice to express himself. It is for this reason that many people who have had the same experience of losing a loved one have joined his movement: Mexico wakes up and demands that the authorities fulfil their obligations (Dolores).

For the most part, as analysed above, the YouTube user comments showed support for the peace demonstrations in 2011, stating that it could help, that the masses, when organised, can be 'accelerators of consciousness'. The commentators stressed the good features that Mexico has in its society, recognising how the protestors' grievances are united through a

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strongly formed identity to seek a change in Calderón's strategy in the war on drugs. In this form, an active Mexican society is needed, knowing the state's repression of demonstrations. In this manner, it is necessary in the opinion of the YouTube commentators to remark on what the Mexican government is doing wrong, as its 'poorly planned' strategy has brought as a consequence a tired and scared Mexican society.

5.6   Uses of Facebook Pages by the Movements for Peace in Mexico

The MPJD have had a Facebook page since 2011, with 12,209 likes on its page.[114] The analysis was performed on the 298 posts published by the MPJD from 21 July 2011 to 17 July 2013. The results show that 121 posts (41%) correspond to information published in newspapers, 101 posts (34%) contain information and invitations to demonstrations, 58 posts (19%) are created by the MPJD itself, 11 posts (4%) deal with issues of social justice and 7 posts (2%) provide information to promote the MPJD.
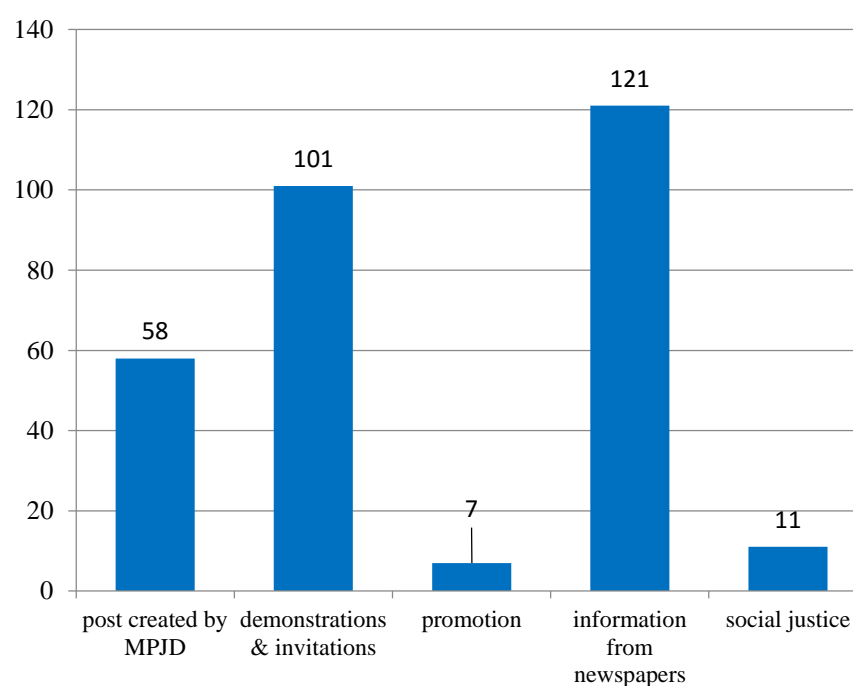
Table 6. MPJD Facebook page.

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[114] Movimiento por la Paz con Justicia y Dignidad. Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Movimiento-por-la-Paz-con-Justicia-y-
Dignidad/124809987605763?sk=timeline (Accessed 01 June 2014)

5.6.1 México Vía Berlín Facebook Page Uses

The México Vía Berlín Facebook page was created in 2011 and has 1,786 likes on its page. The analysis of the posts published covered 65 posts from 1 April 2011 to 13 July 2013. The results are: 23 posts (36%) corresponding to information created by the collective group, 17 posts (26%) containing information and invitations to demonstrations, 17 posts (26%) covering articles in newspapers and 8 posts (12%) dealing with promotion activities and invitations to conferences.
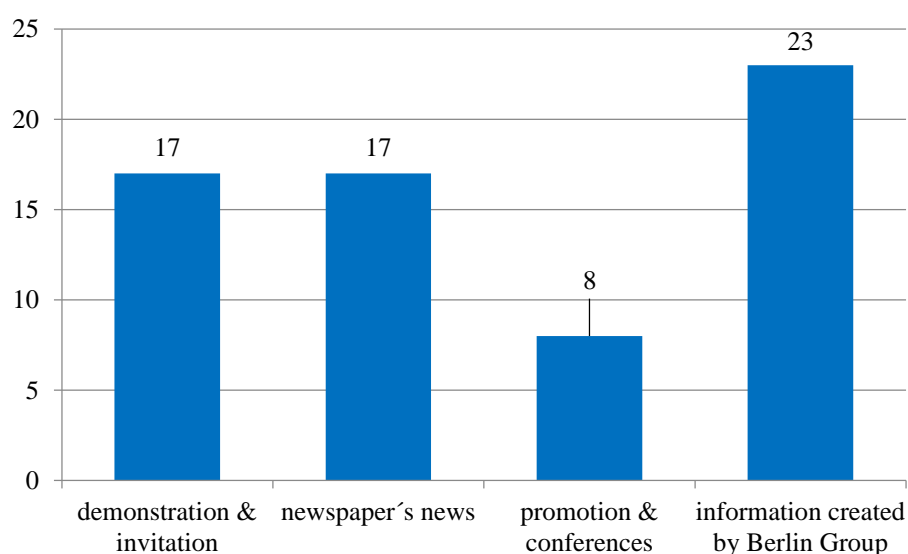
Table 7. México Vía Berlín Facebook Page Use.

5.6.2 Mexicanos En Suiza Por La Paz (MexSuiPaz) Facebook Page Uses

The 'Mexicanos En Suiza Por La Paz (MexSuiPaz)' Facebook page started in 2011, and has 358 likes on its page. The analysis looks at 61 published posts from 16 August 2011 to 21 April 2013. The results are: 30 posts (49%) dealing with invitations to participate in demonstrations, 25 posts (41%) dealing with newspaper articles, 4 posts (7%) promoting its Facebook page and conferences and 2 posts (3%) looking at social justice claims.
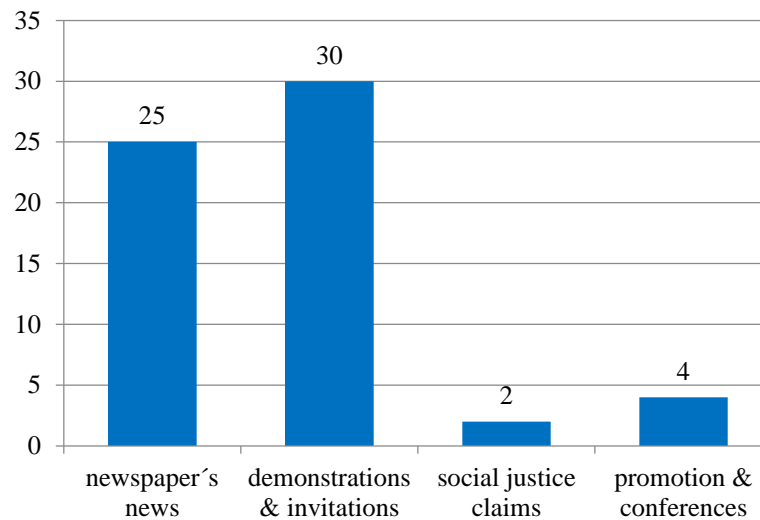
Table 8. Mexicanos En Suiza Por La Paz (MexSuiPaz) Facebook Page Use.

5.6.3 Global Network for Peace in Mexico (Japan) Facebook Page Uses

The Global Network for Peace in Mexico (Japan) Facebook page started in 2011, and has 452 likes on its page. The 88 posts analysed were published from 2 August 2011 to 17 July 2013. The results are: 34 posts (39%) concerning articles in newspapers, 21 posts (24%) looking at social justice claims, 19 posts (21%) issuing invitations to demonstrations, 7 posts (8%) on promotion and conferences and 7 posts (8%) dealing with information shared by the MPJD.
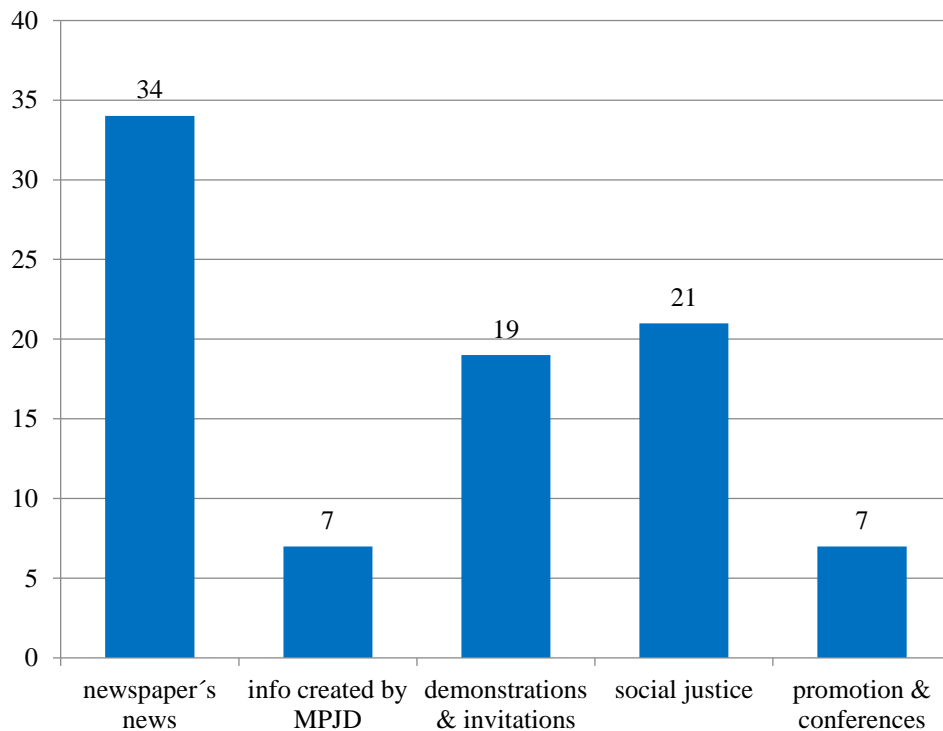
Table 9. Global Network for Peace in Mexico (Japan) Facebook Page Use.

5.6.4 'Mexicanos en Holanda por la Paz en México' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Mexicanos en Holanda por la Paz en México' Facebook page was started in 2011, and has received 2,169 likes. The analysis of the posts covers 89 posts taken from 6 May 2011 to 11 July 2013. The results are: 60 posts (68%) dealing with newspaper articles, 25 posts (28%) concerning invitations to demonstrations, 3 posts (3%) sharing information from the MPJD and 1 post (1%) concerning promotion and conferences.
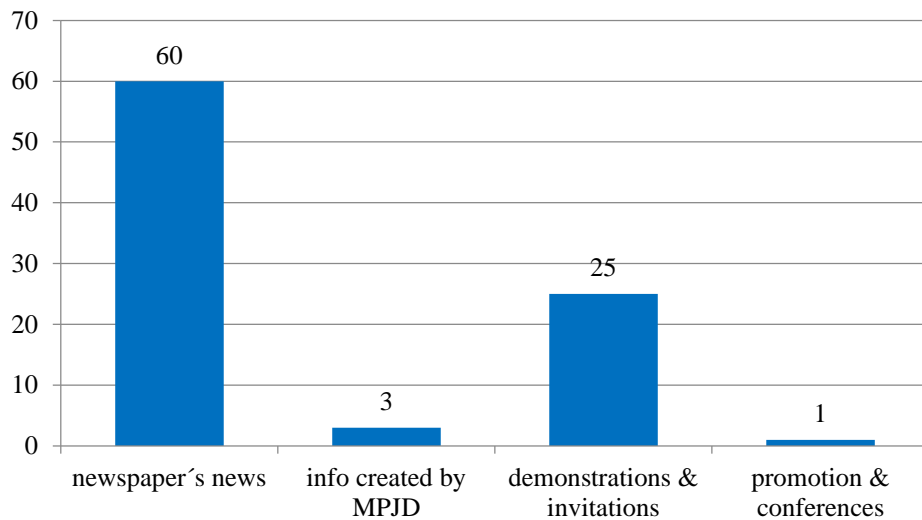
Table 10. 'Mexicanos en Holanda por la Paz en México' Facebook page uses.

5.6.5 'Sinaloa por la Paz' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Sinaloa por la Paz en México' Facebook page started in 2011, and has 641 likes. The analysis looks at 101 posts published from 26 May 2011 to 11 May 2013. The results are: 78 posts (77%) looking at newspaper articles, 11 posts (11%) inviting people to demonstrations, 6 posts (6%) conveying information produced by 'Sinaloa por La Paz', and 6 posts (6%) dealing with promotion and conferences.
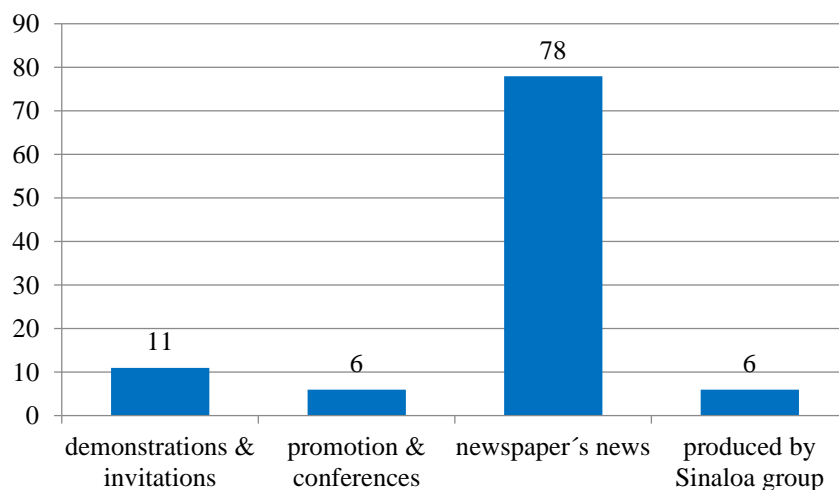
Table 11. 'Sinaloa por la paz' Facebook Page Use.

5.6.6 'Colectivo Paz Xalapa' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Colectivo Paz Xalapa' Facebook page started in 2011 and has 1,931 likes. The analysis covers 47 posts from 9 September 2011 to 29 June 2013. The results show: 33 posts (47%) were invitations to demonstrations, 7 posts (11%) dealt with social justice claims, 5 posts (9%) were newspaper articles, 1 post (2%) contained information produced by the 'Colectivo Paz Xalapa' and 1 post (2%) dealt with promotion and conferences.
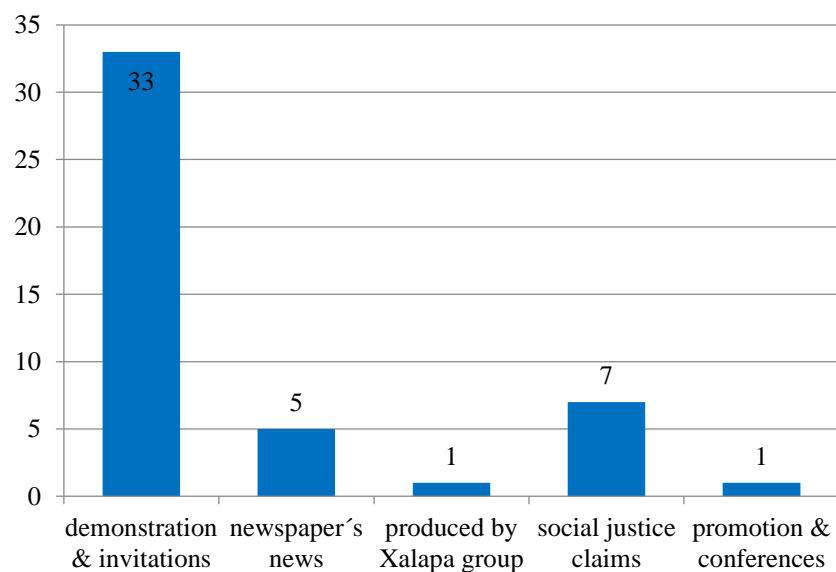

Table 12. 'Colectivo Xalapa por la Paz' Facebook Page Use.

5.6.7 'Zacatecas por la paz MPJD' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Zacatecas por la paz MPJD' Facebook profile started in 2011 and has 1,393 friends The 25 posts being analysed are from 31 May 2011 to 11 June 2013. The results show: 19 posts (76%) give invitations to demonstrations, 3 posts (12%) look at newspaper stories, 2 posts (2%) were produced by Zacatecas por La Paz MPJD and 1 post (4%) looks at a social justice claim.
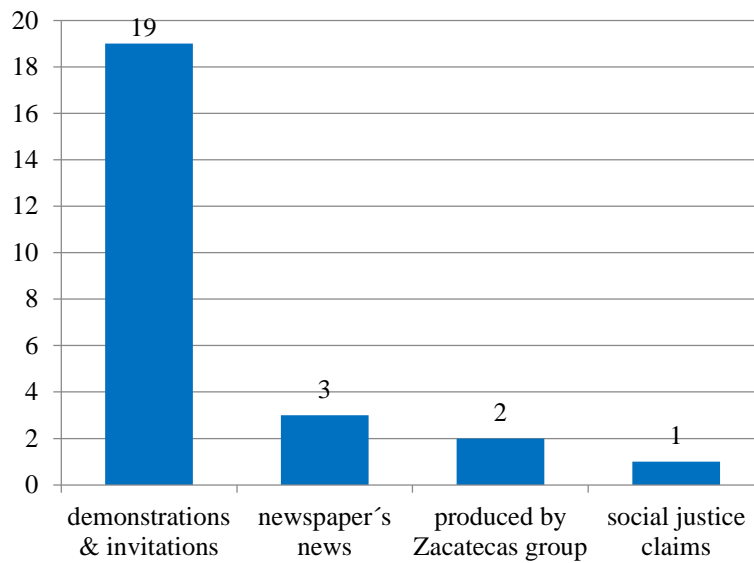
Table 13. The 'Zacatecas por la Paz MPJD' Facebook profile.

5.6.8 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' Facebook page started in 2011 and has 3,789 likes. The post analysis looks at 134 posts from 6 January 2011 to 24 July 2013. The results show: 103 posts (77%) produced by the NAR, 14 posts (10%) looking at newspaper stories, 14 posts (10%) concerning invitations to demonstrations, 2 posts (2%) considering social justice claims and 1 post (1%) dealing with promotion and conferences.
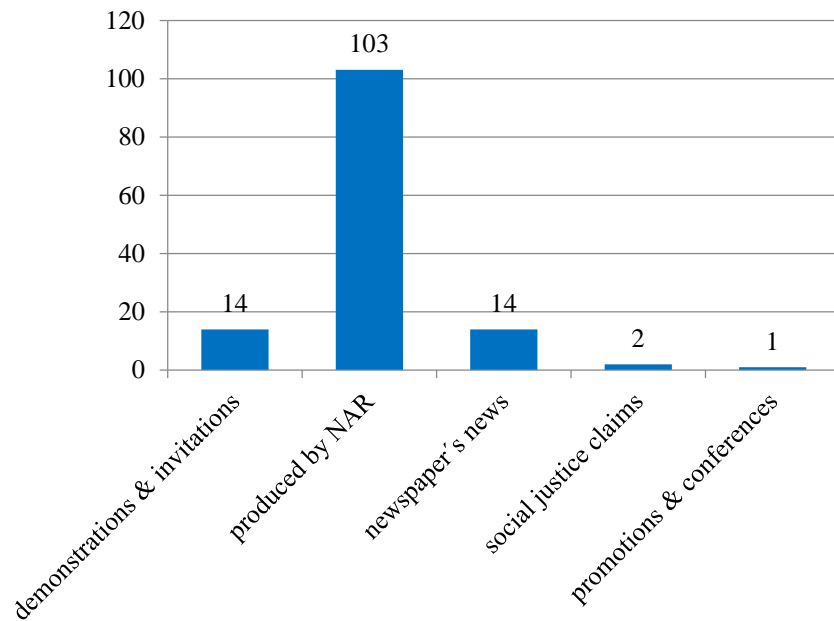
Table 14. 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' Facebook page.

5.6.9 'Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos en Coahuila' Facebook Page Uses

The 'Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos en Coahuila' Facebook page started in 2010, and has 3,054 likes. The 47 posts analysed were published between 4 June 2011 and 23 December 2013. The results show: 18 posts (38%) investigating social justice claims, 14 posts (30%) produced by FUNDEC itself, 7 posts (15%) giving invitations to demonstrations, 4 posts (9%) dealing with promotion and conferences, 2 posts (4%) concerning reports and 2 (4%) looking at newspaper articles.
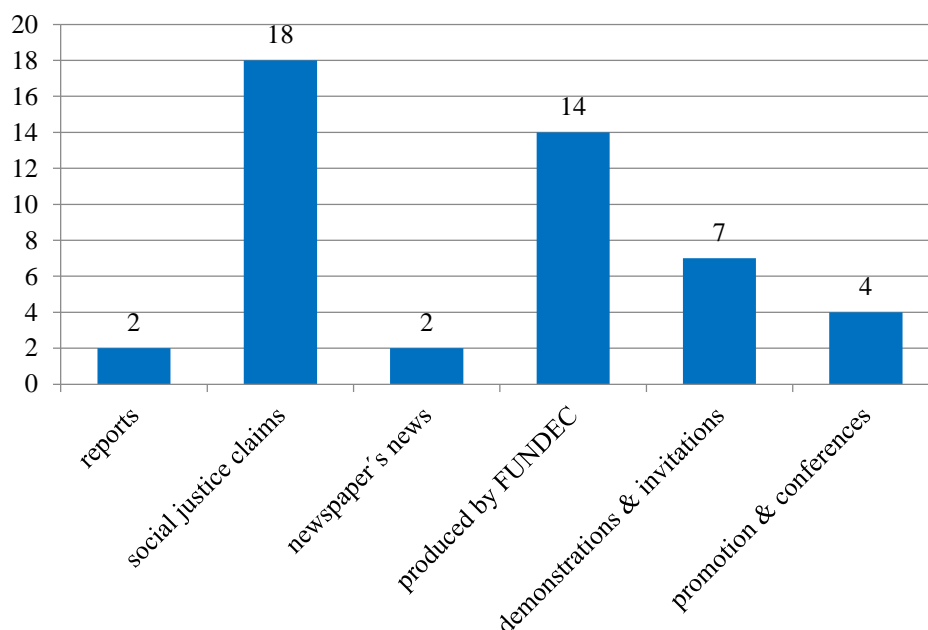
Table 15. 'Fuerzas Unidas por Nuestros Desaparecidos Coahuila' Facebook page.

In summary, after analysing the posts published on the Facebook profile page of these ten collective groups, four outside of Mexico, in Spain, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Germany, and six based in Mexico, the most frequent posts published were:

1. Information produced by newspapers: This indicates that these Facebook groups have a tendency to publish news stories from newspapers by posting the links to the news articles. The content of this information is related to the social movement, for example statistics connected to issues of security and violence, and stories exposing failures of justice, critiques of the political status quo in relation to the war on drugs, or news stories covering their own demonstrations.

2. Invitations to demonstrations: The Facebook pages analysed create virtual callings to attend protests on the streets, with the information of the place, date and hour, and a brief description of the demonstration's objective.

3. Information produced by the collective groups (MPJD, Mexico vía Berlín, Sinaloa por la paz, Zacatecas por la paz, FUNDEC, and NAR). This information could be varied, for example, the case of 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' is emblematic because this group invites scholars, journalists, writers and victims, to present their thoughts, reports, and feelings in relation to the violence in Mexico. A group like the MPJD has its webpage

where it publishes announcements and press releases, and calls for demonstrations, and all this information is then republished on its Facebook page, including multimedia material, interviews, photos from streets protests and meetings with the authorities, and photos of disappeared people. For this and similar groups, Facebook pages function as extensions of their main websites.

Given these points, Denning (2001) identifies five activities available to social movement activists through the Internet: collection of information, publication of information, dialogue, coordinating action, and lobbying decision-makers. In the above analysis, dialogue and lobbying decision-makers does not appear as an online activity in any of the Facebook groups examined. This is not surprising in light of section 5.4 of this thesis, which examines the uses of the Internet, and in which the activists who were interviewed explained that the social movement's dialogue, lobbying and decision-making is mostly done through face-to-face interactions, for several reasons, such as the occasional unavailability of the Internet and the nature of the issues arising from the victims' demands and needs.

Finally, Mosca (2010:10) states that although the Internet does not enable relationships with public institutions, 'it seems to be more effective in targeting and linking to other groupings [...] as the analysis shows, movements' websites are very informative providing articles, papers and dossiers, conference and seminar materials, bibliographies and updated news'. This reflects the circumstances of the Facebook groups for peace in Mexico analysed above.

5.7   Analysis of Comments of News Stories on the Social Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity

One of the obstacles I have found during the collection of data was the lack of comment discussions on the Facebook profile pages previously analysed, that is, in the collective groups of the social movements for peace in Mexico. Earlier studies have noted that structures of interaction, dialogue and creative expression are usually lacking, not just from movement websites (Stein, 2009), but also political campaign websites (Foot and Schneider, 2006). In addition, Treré and Cargnelutti (2014:195) argue that the MPJD developed activities on social media that reduced the participation of people on the wall of MPJD on Facebook to, in most

cases, merely giving a like without making any comment, that is, the minimum level of public engagement with the published information. As such, for the purpose of this study, I had to search other Facebook profile pages that produced content. In this form, I found comment discussions on the Facebook profile page of the political magazine *Proceso*, from which I collected 739 comments.

Moreover, in this phase of analysis I recovered 17 news stories from the political magazine *Proceso*, which covered the MPJD in their most contentious moments. The stories picked for this analysis were published from 1 April 2011 to 23 June 2011, with the exception of one news story from 16 August 2012, when the MPJD begun its US Caravan. The news stories were collected from *Proceso*'s Facebook page, which has 3,269,331 likes, and because these news stories were published on its Facebook page, the users of Facebook were able to publish comments. For the purpose of this study I collected the comments from the chosen stories.

5.7.1 News story 1. 'Javier Sicilia called on parents of victims of drug trafficking to come together'

On 1 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story entitled 'Javier Sicilia called on parents of victims of drug trafficking to come together',[115] generating 30 comments. 5 posts (17%) discuss corruption in Mexico, 5 posts (17%) do not believe in change for Mexico, 4 posts (13%) say the victims of the war on drugs are guilty, 3 posts (10%) support Javier Sicilia, 3 posts (10%) call for a national social movement, 2 posts (7%) say anyone could be a victim while 5 posts (10%) contain other comments.

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[115] Convoca Javier Sicilia a padres de víctimas por el narco a unirse (1 April 2011) *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=266699 (Accessed 01 June 2015)
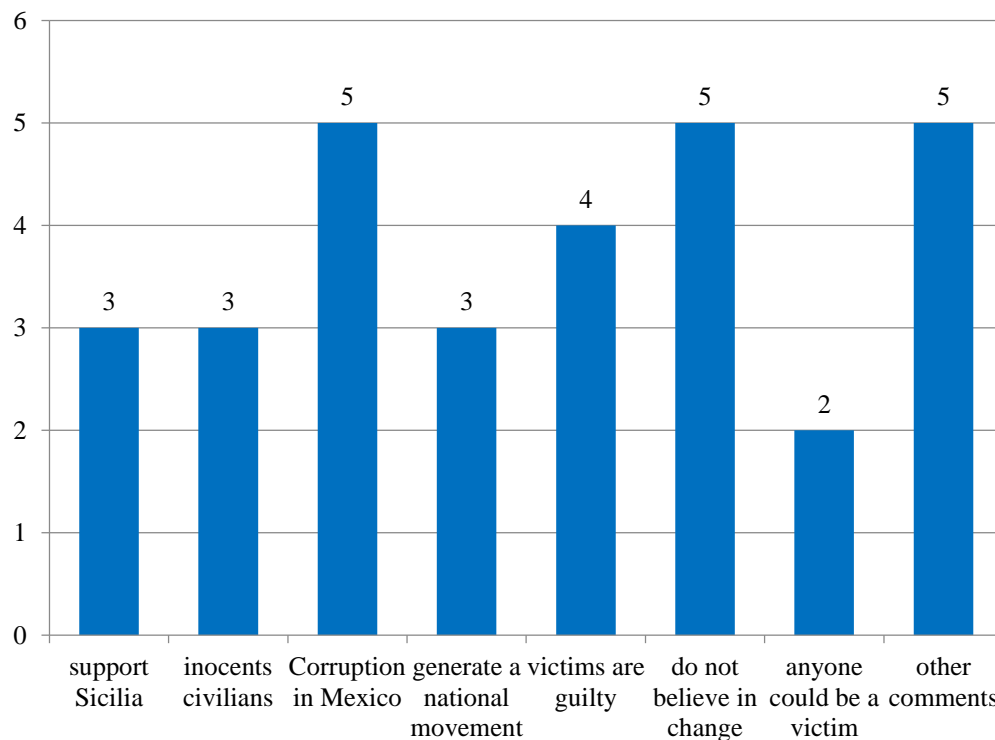
Table 16. News story 1. 'Javier Sicilia called on parents of victims of drug trafficking to come together'

5.7.2 News story 2. 'Sadness in Morelos, Javier we are your family!'

On 1 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Sadness in Morelos, Javier we are your family!'[116] generating 18 comments. 2 posts (11%) support Javier Sicilia, 4 posts (22%) say politicians are guilty, 2 posts (11%) write of the terrible situation in Mexico, 2 posts (11%) say people are apathetic and 8 posts (45%) contain other comments.

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[116] Miranda, E. (1 April 2011) El duelo en Morelos: ¡"Javier...somos tu familia", *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=266978 (Accessed 05 July 2015)
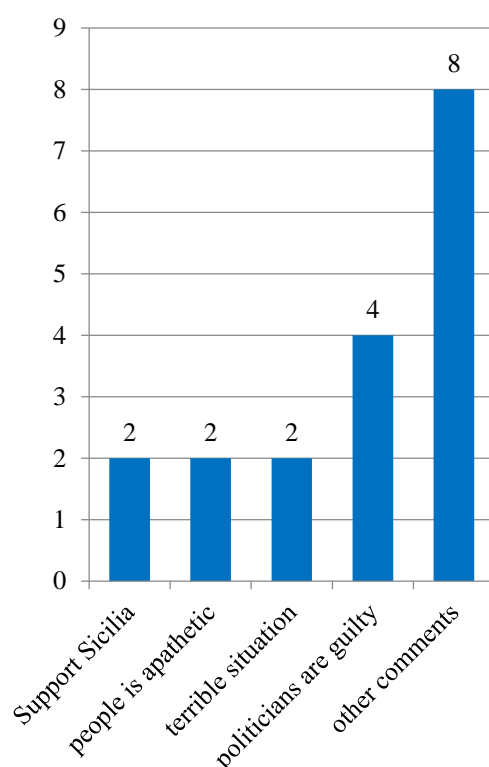
Table 17. News story 2. 'Sadness in Morelos, Javier we are your family!'

5.7.3 News story 3. 'Javier Sicilia: Open letter to politicians and criminals'

On 4 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a letter written by Javier Sicilia, which calls for a demonstration by the citizens' networks of Morelos for national unity, saying that citizens must break the fear and isolation caused by the inability of politicians and criminals. The letter was published with this title: 'Javier Sicilia: Open letter to politicians and criminals',[117] and generated 38 comments. 17 posts (45%) offered support to Javier Sicilia, 11 posts (29%) spoke of the terrible situation in Mexico, 2 posts (5%) called for a unity between the government and society, 2 posts (5%) said that politicians are guilty and 6 posts (16%) contained other comments.

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[117] Sicilia, J. (3 April 2011) Javier Sicilia: Carta abierta a políticos y criminales, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=266990 (Accessed 15 June 2015)
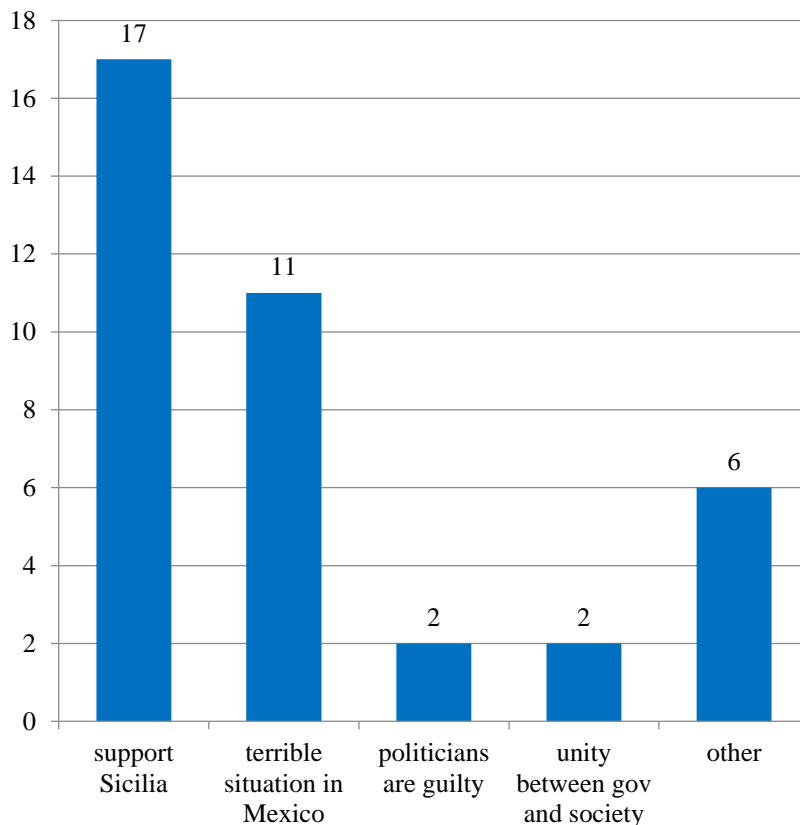
Table 18. News story 3. 'Javier Sicilia: Open letter to politicians and criminals'

5.7.4 News story 4. 'Javier Sicilia and Felipe Calderón meet'

On 6 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Javier Sicilia and Felipe Calderón meet',[118] generating 57 comments. The results show 25 posts (44%) against Felipe Calderón, 10 posts (18%) questioning why Sicilia is supported and not the other victims, 6 posts (11%) calling for change in the strategy of the war on drugs, 5 posts (9%) supporting Sicilia, 4 posts (7%) consisting of other comments, 2 posts (3%) supporting the war on drugs, 2 posts (3%) suggesting that society is responsible and 3 posts (5%) joking at Calderón's expense.

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[118] Rodríguez, A. (6 April 2011) Se reúnen Javier Sicilia y Calderón, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267508 (Accessed 20 June 2015)
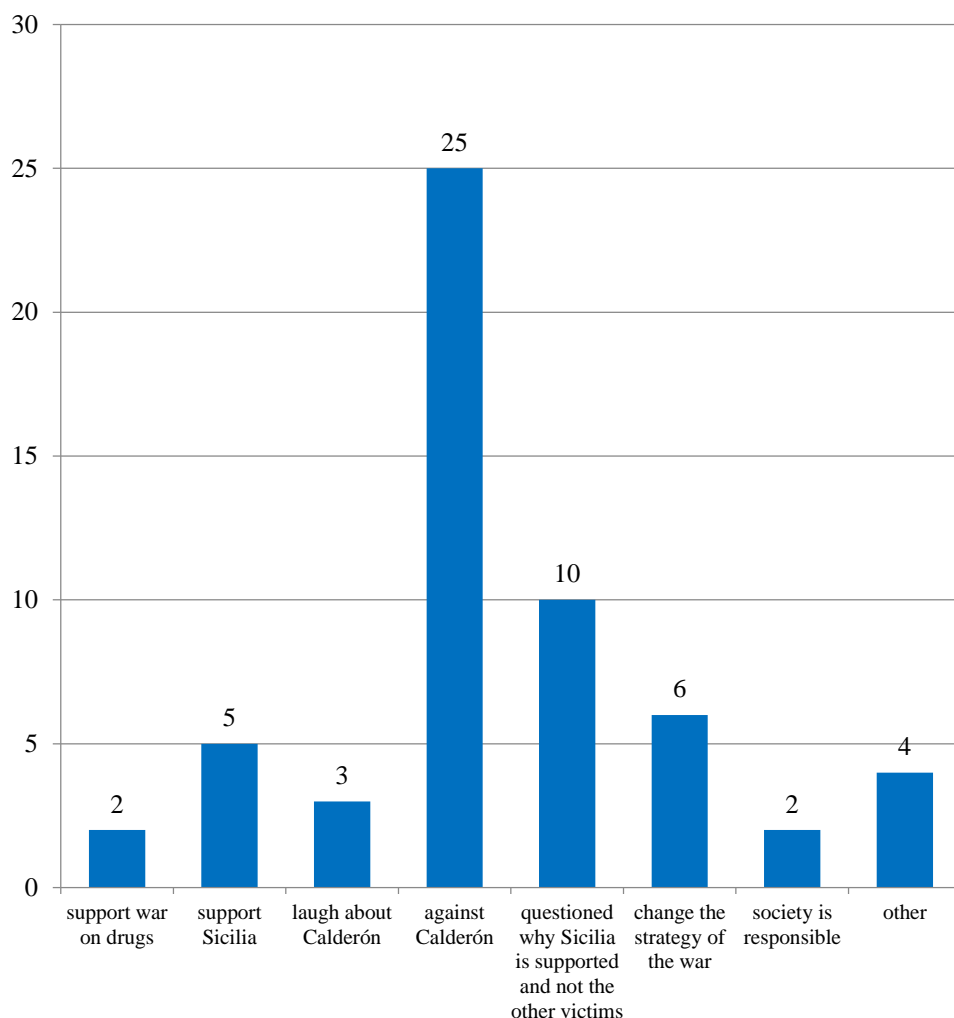
Table 19. News story 4. 'Javier Sicilia and Felipe Calderón meet'

5.7.5 News story 5. 'Calderón offers to resolve the murder of Sicilia's son'

On 6 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Calderón offers to resolve the murder of Sicilia's son',[119] generating 143 comments. 49 posts (35%) opposed Calderón, 47 posts (33%) questioned why the victims have not had justice, 22 posts (15%) demand justice for Mexico, 15 posts (11%) joked about Calderón, 3 posts (2%) said that politicians are guilty, 3 posts (2%) supported Sicilia and 3 posts (2%) contained other comments.
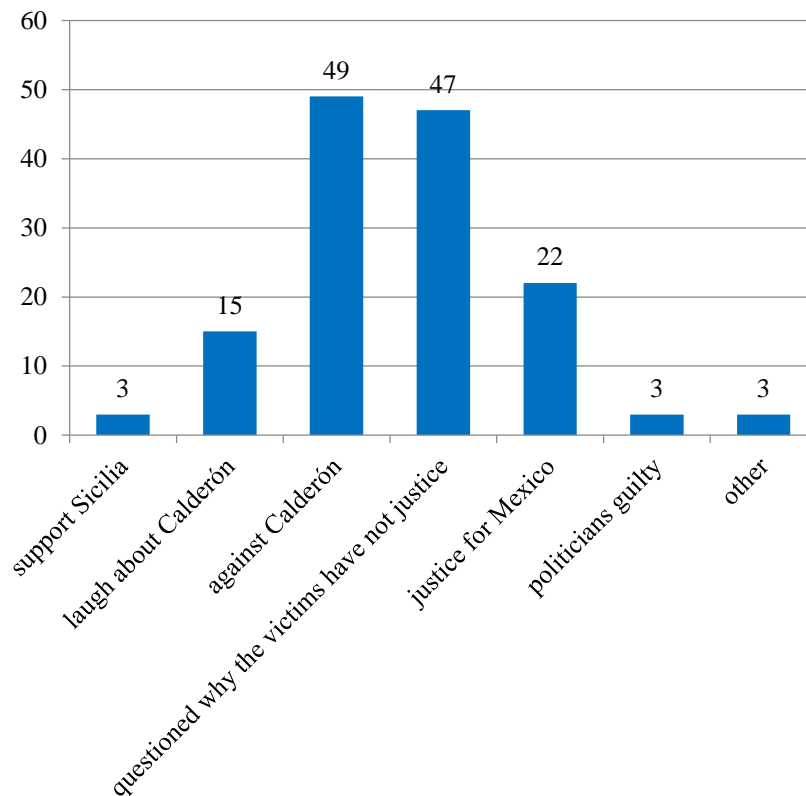

Table 20. News story 5. 'Calderón offers to resolve the murder of Sicilia's son'

5.7.6 News story 6. 'No more Blood, thousands demand in Mexico City'

On 6 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'No more Blood, thousands demand in Mexico City',[120] generating 43 comments. 10 posts (24%) support the demonstration, 10 posts (24%) oppose the demonstration, 4 posts (9%) support Sicilia, 4 posts (9%) question the lack of justice for the victims, 4 posts (9%) say that education is needed in Mexico, 4 posts (10%) suggest that politicians are guilty, 2 posts (5%) accuse the media of creating fear, 2 posts (5%) say that society is individualistic and 2 posts (5%) consist of other comments.

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[120] Turati, M. (6 April 2011) 'No más Sangre', reclaman miles en la ciudad de México, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267560 (Accessed 30 July 2015)
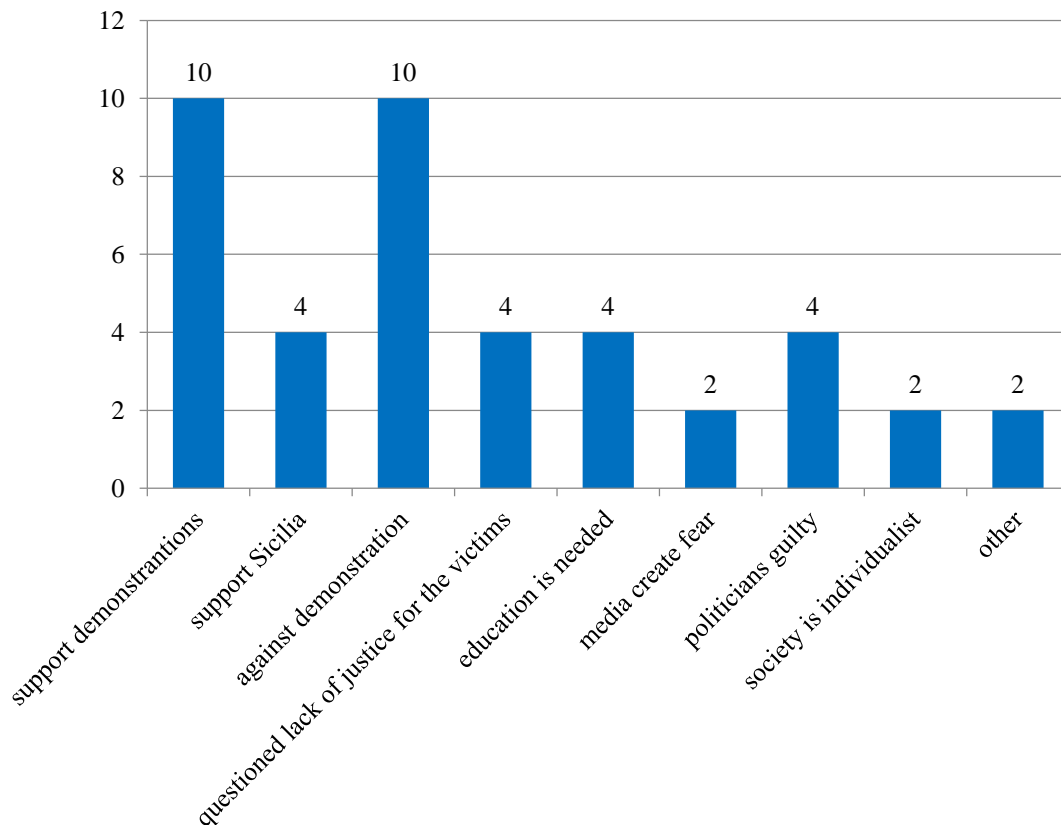
Table 21. News story 6. 'No more Blood, thousands demand in Mexico City'

5.7.7 News story 7. 'Sicilia starts a sit-in, and calls for justice for the death of his son'

On 6 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Sicilia starts a sit-in, and calls for justice for the death of his son',[121] generating 33 comments. 9 posts (27%) concern a lack of justice, 8 posts (24%) say politicians are guilty, 8 posts (24%) say Mexican society needs to change, 5 posts (15%) laugh at Sicilia, 2 posts (6%) laugh at the demonstrations and 1 post (3%) supports Sicilia.

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[121] Gil, J. (6 April 2011) Iniciará Javier Sicilia plantón; exige la captura de los asesinos de su hijo, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267562 (Accessed 15 August 2015)
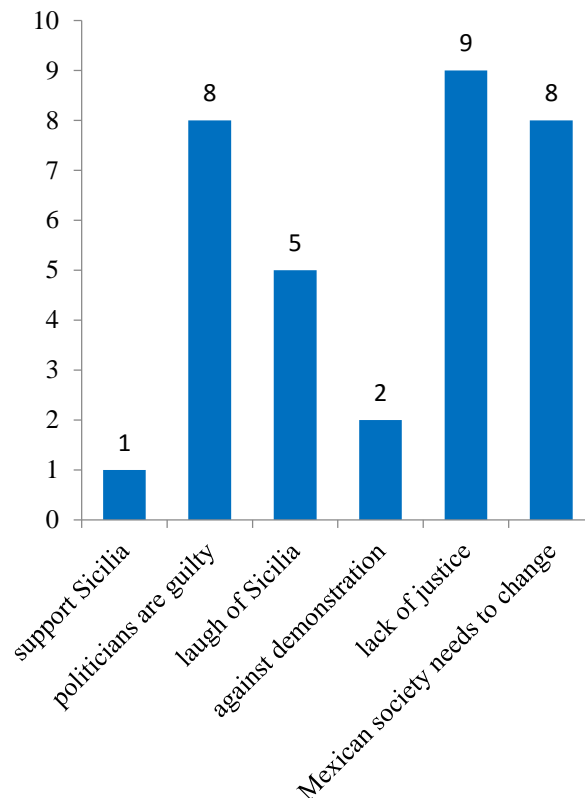
Table 22. News story 7. 'Sicilia starts a sit-in, and calls for justice for the death of his son'

5.7.8 News story 8. 'Sicilia calls for a national pact'

On 8 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Sicilia calls for a national pact',[122] generating 51 comments. 11 posts (22%) support the demonstration, 8 posts (15%) oppose Sicilia, 7 posts (14%) say Calderón is guilty, 6 posts (12%) say that society needs to show solidarity, 5 posts (10%) consist of other comments, 4 posts (8%) say the government is guilty, 4 posts (8%) say that deals should not be made with drug traffickers, 2 posts (4%) support the war on drugs, 2 posts (4%) say that society is guilty, and 2 posts (4%) say the situation needs to change.

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[122] Convoca Sicilia a un pacto nacional (8 April 2011), *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267672 (Accessed 16 August 2015)
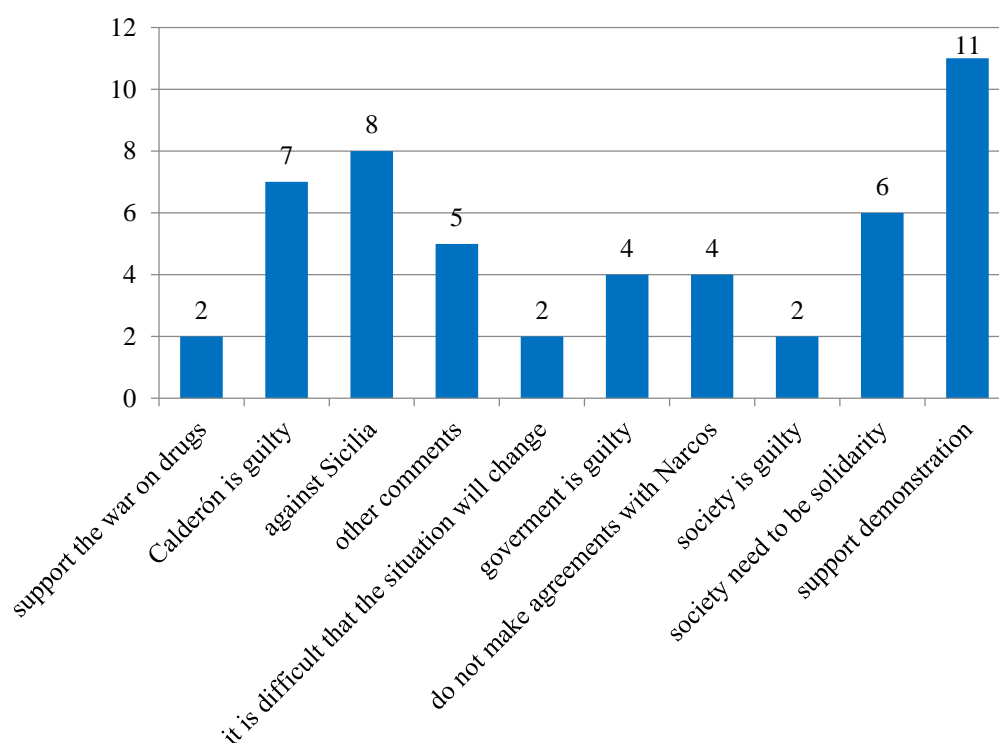
Table 23. News story 8. 'Sicilia calls for a national pact'

5.7.9 News story 9. 'Sicilia calls for Calderón to request the resignation of García Luna'

On 8 May 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published a news story: 'Sicilia calls for Calderón to request the resignation of García Luna',[123] generating 39 comments. 21 comments (54%) oppose Calderón, 7 (18%) oppose García Luna, 7 (18%) oppose Sicilia, 3 (8%) accuse the Secretary of National Security of being involved in the drugs trade and 1 (2%) supports the demonstrations.

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[123] Gil, J. (8 May 2011) Sicilia exige a Calderón la renuncia de García Luna, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=269443 (Accessed 17 August 2015)
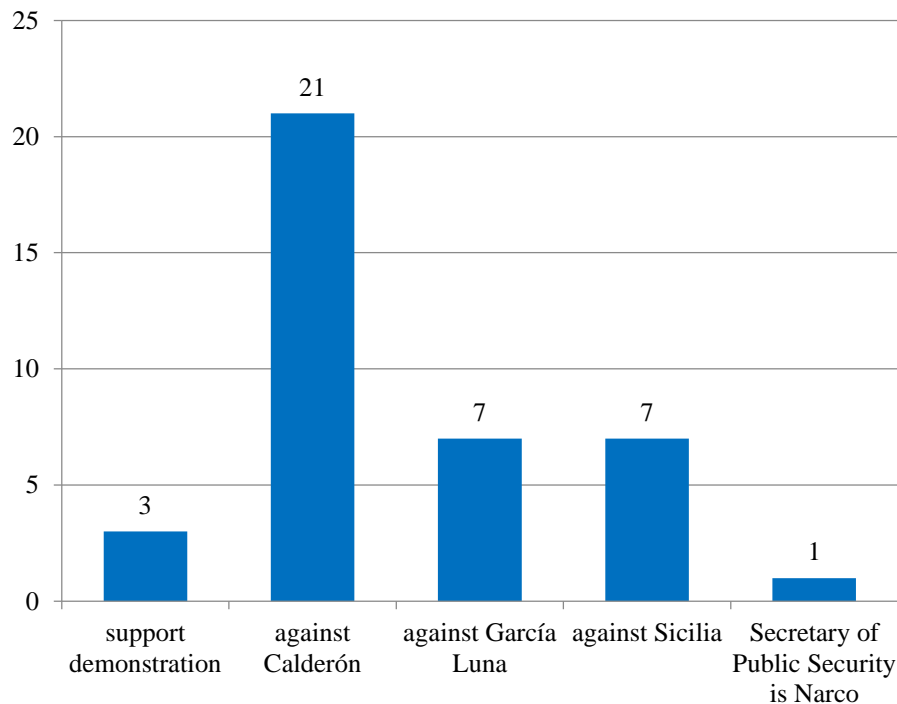
Table 24. News story 9. 'Sicilia calls for Calderón to request the resignation of García Luna'

5.7.10 News story 10. 'Sicilia: Calderón, listen to the people. Cuernavaca: a horror tour'

On 11 April 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the article: 'Sicilia: Calderón, listen to the people. Cuernavaca: a horror tour'[124], generating 28 comments. 8 comments (29%) say that Calderón is guilty, 5 (18%) that politicians are guilty, 5 (18%) oppose Sicilia, 4 (14%) say that Mexican society needs to display solidarity, 2 (7%) say that Mexican society is guilty, 2 (7%) support the demonstrations, and the other 2 comments (7%) fit in none of these categories.

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[124] Gil, J. (11 April 2011) Cuernavaca: el tour del horror, *Revista Proceso*, Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267725 (Accessed 19 August 2015)
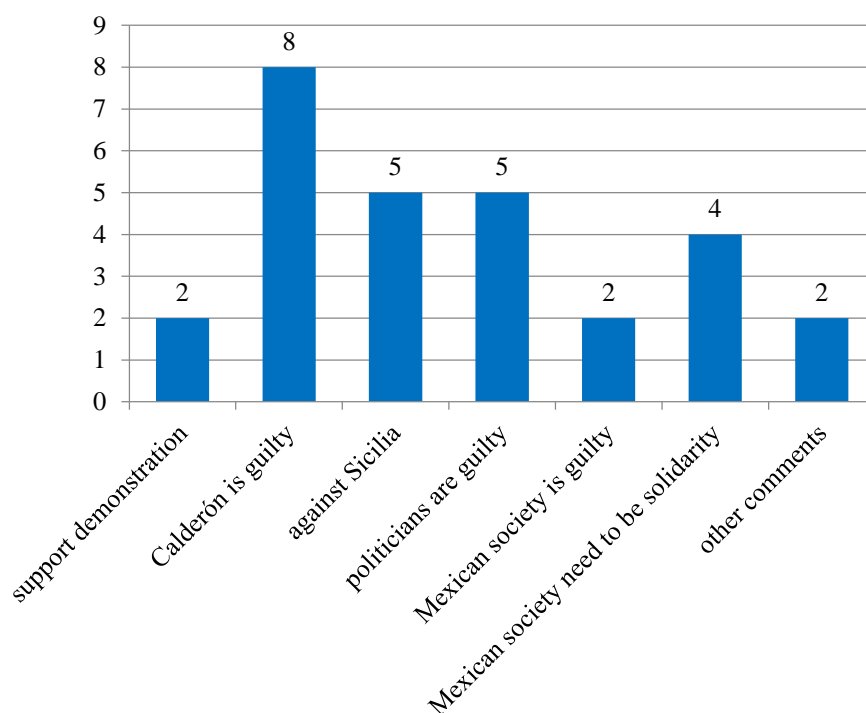
Table 25. News story 10. 'Sicilia: Calderón, listen to the people. Cuernavaca: a horror tour'

5.7.11 News story 11. 'On the eve of the March for Peace, Calderón defends anti-drug strategy'

On 4 May 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'On the eve of the March for Peace, Calderón defends anti-drug strategy',[125] generating 29 comments. 21 comments (73%) opposed Calderón, 3 comments (10%) supported the demonstration, 2 comments (7%) supported the war on drugs and the remaining 3 comments (10%) fit in none of these categories.

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[125] Rodríguez, A. (4 May 2011) En vísperas de la Marcha por la Paz, defiende Calderón estrategia antinarco, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=269292 (Accessed 20 August 2015)
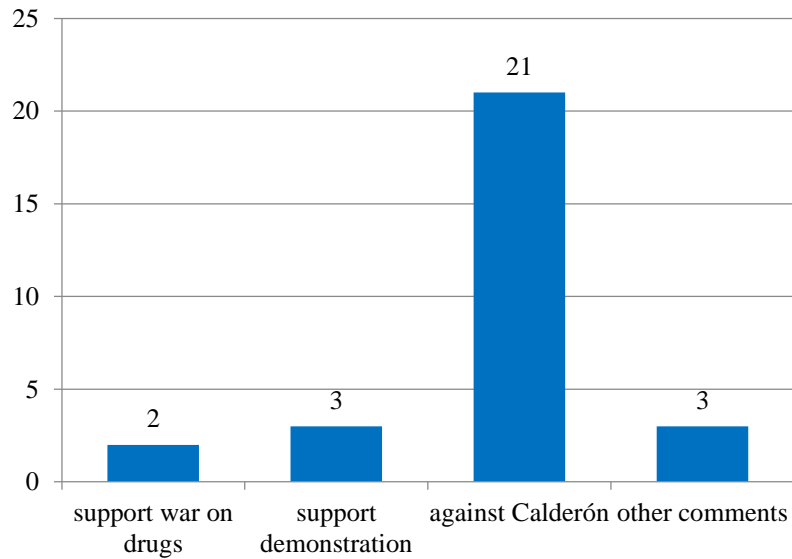
Table 26. News story 11. 'On the eve of the March for Peace, Calderón defends anti-drug strategy'

5.7.12 News story 12. 'The President "did not listen to me": Sicilia'.

On 4 May 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'The president "did not listen to me": Sicilia',[126] generating 55 comments. 29 comments (53%) opposed Calderón, 12 (22%) supported Sicilia, 4 (7%) opposed the demonstrations, 4 (7%) said that politicians are guilty, 3 (5%) opposed Sicilia, 2 (4%) said that education is needed and 1 (2%) supported the war on drugs.

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[126] 'The president "did not listen to me": Sicilia', (5 May 2011). Retrieved from
https://www.facebook.com/revistaproceso/posts/10150168011652923 (Accessed 21 August 2015)
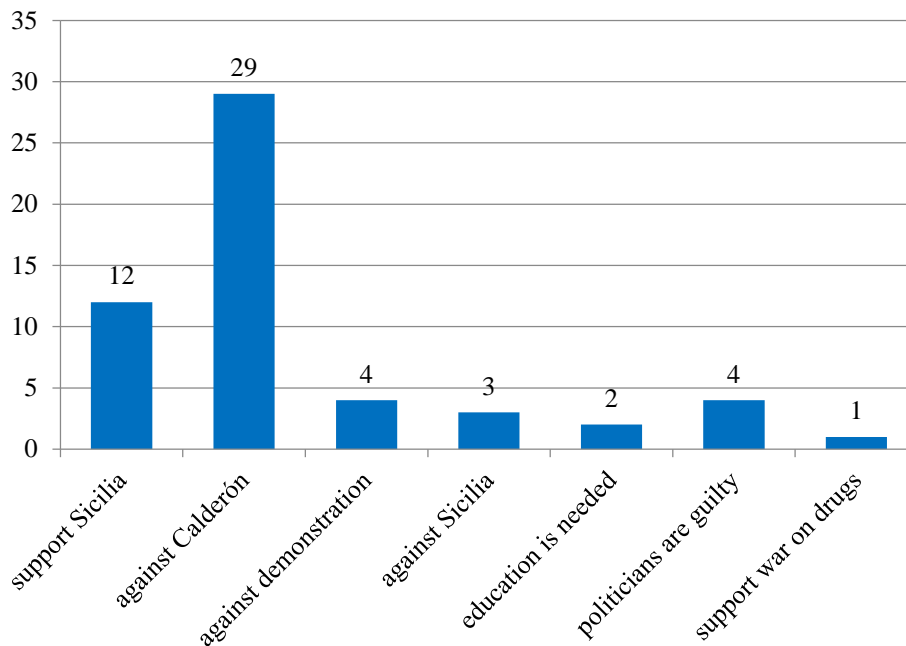
Table 27. News story 12. 'The president "did not listen to me": Sicilia'

5.7.13 News story 13. 'Calderón invites peace demonstration participants to dialogue'

On 9 May 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'Calderón invites peace demonstration   participants to dialogue',[127] generating 55 comments. The results were: 22 comments (76%) opposing Calderón, 3 (10%) opposing García Luna, 2 (7%) opposing the demonstrations and 2 (7%) supporting the demonstrations.

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[127] Rodríguez, A. (9 May 2011) Invita Calderón a participantes de Marcha por la Paz a dialogar, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=269643 (Accessed 22 August 2015)
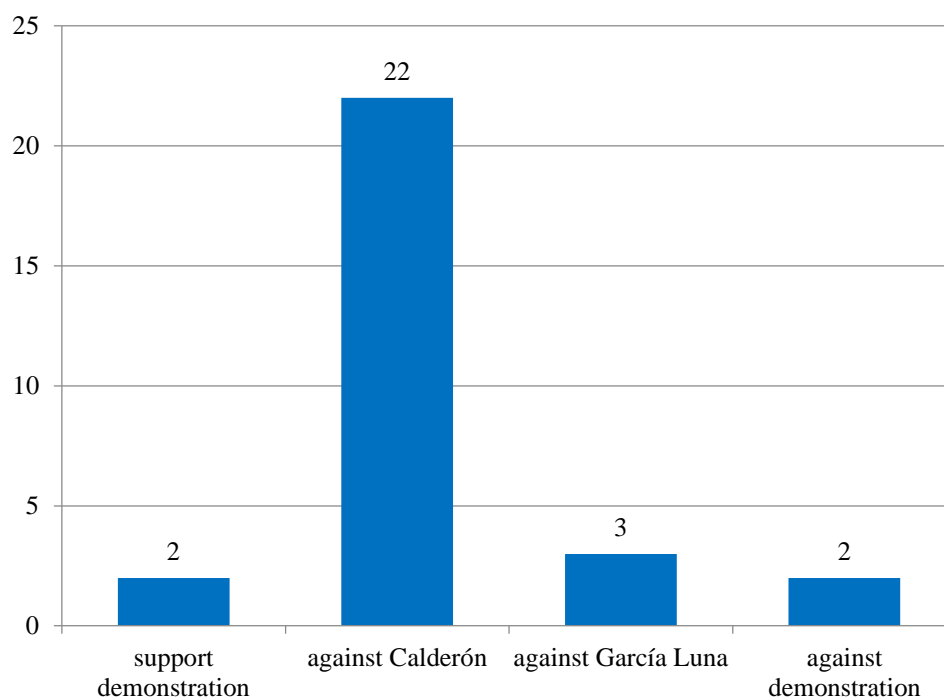
Table 28. News story 13. 'Calderón invites Peace demonstration participants to dialogue'

5.7.14 News story 14. 'The government must deliver justice to all victims of organised crime'

On 25 May 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'The government must deliver justice to all victims of organised crime',[128] generating 30 comments. 16 comments (53%) observed that the government is unpunished, 6 (20%) opposed Sicilia, 2 (7%) said that demonstrations are not useful, 2 (7%) supported Sicilia, 2 (7%) said the strategy needs to be changed, 1 (3%) said that education is the solution and 1 (3%) supported the war on drugs.

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[128] Gil, J. (25 May 2011) 'The government must do justice to all victims of organized crime', *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=270816 (Accessed 24 August 2015)
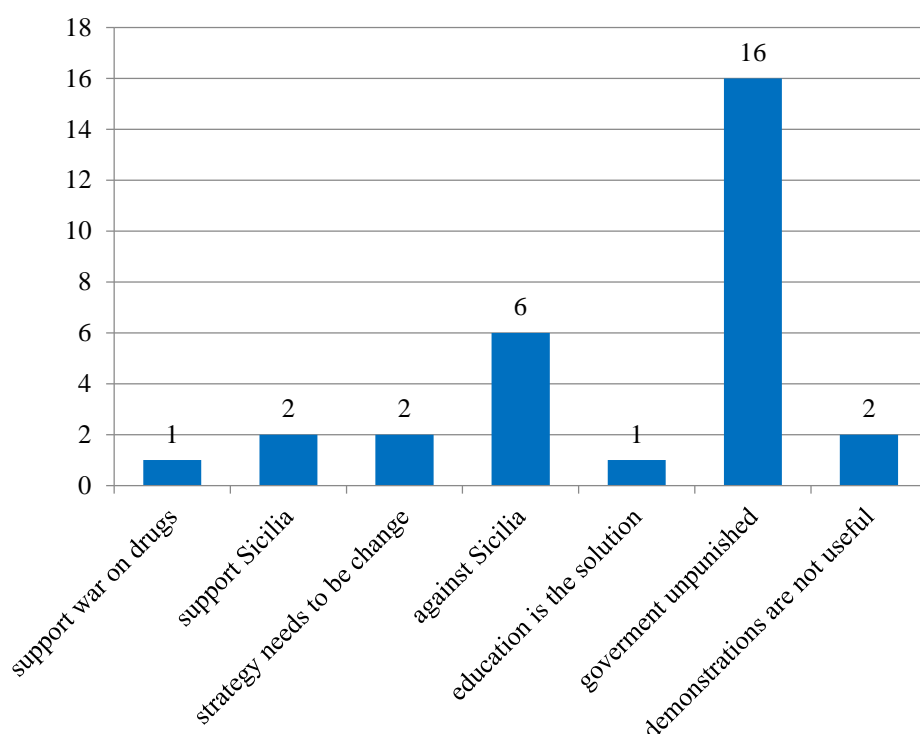
Table 29. News story 14. 'The government must ensure justice to all victims of organised crime'

5.7.15 News story 15. 'Do we look like collateral damage? The president defends his strategy'

On 23 June 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'Do we look like collateral damage? The president defends his strategy',[129] generating 31 comments. 20 comments (65%) opposed Calderón, 3 (10%) supported Calderón, 2 (7%) opposed Sicilia, 2 (6%) called for civil disobedience, 2 (6%) comprised other comments and 2 (6%) said the US is part of the problem.

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[129] Gil, J. and Rodríguez, A. (23 June 2011) Sicilia a Calderón: '¿le parecemos daños colaterales?'; El presidente defiende su estrategia, *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=273651 (Accessed 22 August 2015)
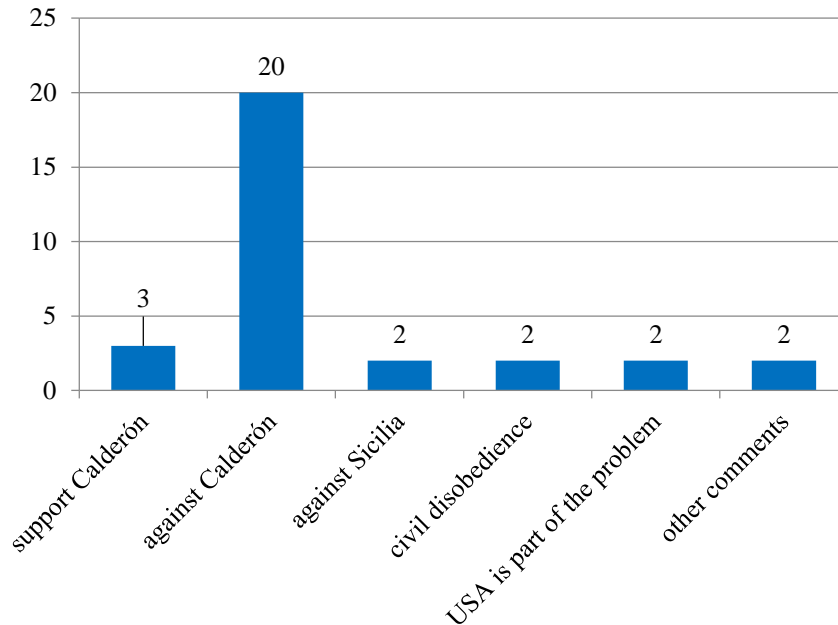
Table 30. News story 15. 'Do we look like collateral damage? The president defends his strategy'

5.7.16 News story 16. 'The war on drugs goes on, concludes Calderón'

On 23 June 2011 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'The war on drugs goes on, concludes Calderón',[130] generating 29 comments, of which 27 (93%) opposed Calderón and 2 (7%) said that the government is corrupt.

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[130] Gil, J. and Rodríguez, A. (23 June 2011) Pide Calderón perdón por víctimas pero insiste en estrategia antinarco*, Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=273673 (Accessed 25 August 2015)
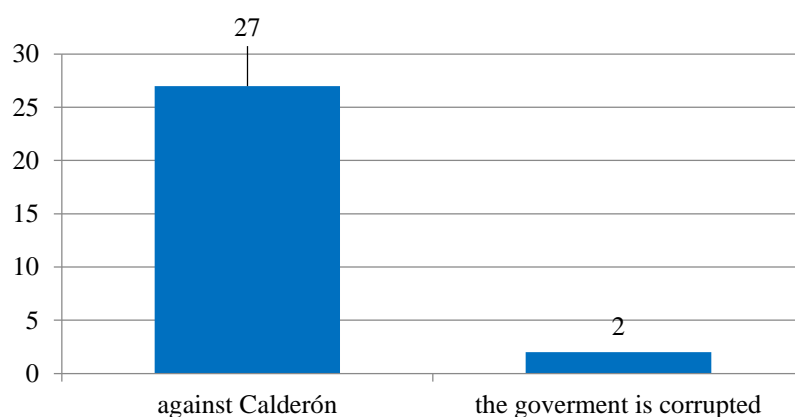
Table 31. News story 15. 'The war on drugs goes on, concludes Calderón'

5.7.17 News story 17. 'Sicilia Criticises Sheriff Arpaio for his Racist and Discriminatory Policy'

On 16 August 2012 the magazine *Proceso* published the news story: 'Sicilia criticises Sheriff Arpaio for his racist and discriminatory policy',[131] generating 73 comments. 30 comments (41%) support the social movement, 23 (31%) oppose Sicilia and 21 (28%) oppose Sheriff Arpaio.

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[131] Gil, J. (16 August 2012) Recrimina Sicilia al sheriff Arpaio su política racista y discriminatoria, *Revista Proceso.* Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=317216 (Accessed 24 August 2015)
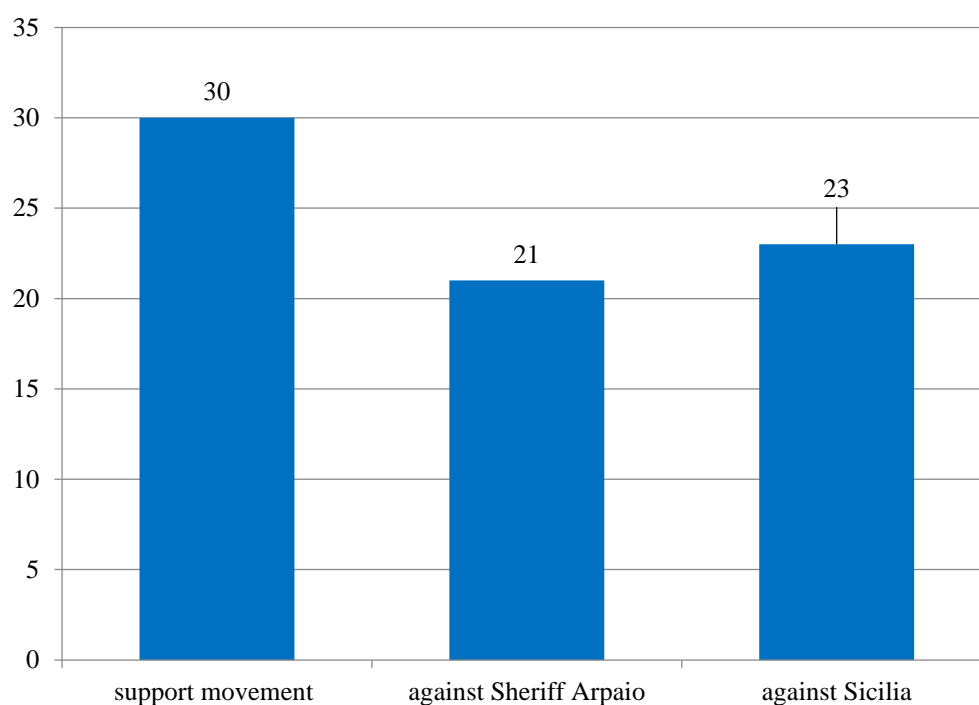
Table 32. News story 17. 'Sicilia criticizes Sheriff Arpaio for his racist and discriminatory policy'

In summary, the most recurrent comments of the 17 news stories published on the Facebook profile of the political magazine *Proceso* fall into ten subjects:

1. Opposing Calderón: comments of this fell into a few groups, some demanded President Calderón go on trial, while others suggested either that he does not represent Mexican society, that he damages Mexican society, that he only listens to US entrepreneurs, or that his military strategy simply pursues the legitimisation of his presidency.

2. Opposing Javier Sicilia: predominantly these comments misunderstood Javier Sicilia's call for a national pact.[132] Some users' comments showed a belief that Sicilia was asking the criminals to create a dialogue to remake the Mexican social fabric, where Sicilia in fact intended to unite essential representatives of civil society to create the planned pact. The other comments opposing Sicilia predominantly asked why he did not do anything before his son was killed.

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[132] Convoca Sicilia a un pacto nacional (8 April 2011) *Revista Proceso*. Retrieved from http://www.proceso.com.mx/?p=267672 (Accessed 15 August 2015)

3. Supporting the peace demonstrations: user comments expressed sympathy for the peace demonstrations and their aims, such as showing the authorities the will of the Mexican citizens, listening to the citizens' voices, and increasing empathy, thereby protecting future generations.

4. Support for Javier Sicilia: users commented their support of Sicilia in short phrases, such as: 'Your pain is our pain', 'Solidarity with him', 'Solidarity with all the Mexican people who do not have access to justice', 'We are with you Sicilia, let's make the change', 'I hope there are more Sicilias' and 'Sicilia represents how lots of Mexicans are tired of this situation'.

5. Demanding a change in the strategy of the war on drugs: the most common sentences found on this topic were: 'changing the current strategy might give better results', 'This war does not belong to us', 'This war has been exported', 'There is a need to demand that the government change its strategy' and 'Attending the peace protests is a way to manifest our rejection of the current strategy against the war on drugs'.

6. Lack of justice in Mexico: in the comments on this subject, the common phrases were, 'We have suffered from the injustice provoked by drug trafficking and the government', 'It is fine that Javier Sicilia has access to justice, but what about the others?' and 'There is an urgency for reforms in law enforcement and the judicial process'.

7. Politicians are guilty: example comments on this topic were: 'Everything is a result of bad government, there should be a revolution to deal with all the corrupt politicians', 'There is no political class, we are in the hands of mafias that have legitimised themselves and appropriated the institutions that govern us', 'The political class will not do anything', 'We should not deal will the politician class, just with the people' and 'The government, politicians, clergy and businessmen are responsible for this chaos'.

8. Corruption in Mexico: comments related to this included sentiments such as: 'Corruption is at all levels of the government', 'Until the corruption is eradicated, this situation in Mexico will continue', 'We need to exercise our rights, there is so much corruption' and 'The enemy is corruption that we let happen and promote through doing simple things that are not acceptable'.

9. Terrible situation in Mexico: the comments mentioning how terrible the circumstances are in the country were expressed as, for example: 'How terrible that innocent people just die like that', 'President Calderón incited this terrible war', 'It is terrible that Mexico is filled with

blood', and 'Just having a meeting between the MPJD and the Mexican authorities will not solve the problems'.

10. Mexico needs a change: primarily, comments on this topic contained sentiments such as: 'Who is willing to give his/her life for a change in Mexico?' 'The big changes come from great revolutionary mobilisations in which lives have unfortunately been lost', 'Our country has a failed government and we need to make change happen', 'Let's get united to create a change', 'What can we do to act against violence in Mexico?' and 'Mexico urgently needs a change'.

As with the previous analysis on the YouTube videos, a variety of comments can be seen, and a polarisation is notable, both in support of and against President Calderón and the movement leader Javier Sicilia. The comments on the news articles, however, showed a decrease in the appearance of flaming comments compared to the YouTube videos, and what is clearly relevant is the complexity expressed in several comments that explored the causes and consequences of the war on drugs. Such comments suggest that the online space of Facebook is becoming an environment wherein ordinary people communicate their opinions on an issue that has devastated thousands of Mexican families in a conflict caused by uncontrollable violence.

5.8   Analysis of the Uses of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity's Webpage.

The MPJD has its own webpage,[133] and for the purpose of this study I analysed 557 messages published on its webpage from 15 April 2011 to 9 September 2013. 181 messages (31%) were notes from the MPJD (demands for justice), 101 (18%) concerned caravans, 70 (13%) demonstrations, 41 (7%) meetings with the authorities, 31 (6%) press conferences, 28 (5%) the General Victims' Law, 20 (4%) news stories, 17 (3%) activist meetings, 15 (3%) press releases, 16 (3%) campaigns, 14 (3%) other comments, 7 (1%) online petitions, 6 (1%) pronouncements of the MPJD, 5 (1%) the National Security Law, and 5 (1%) the anniversary of the MPJD.

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[133] MPJD webpage, http://www.movimientoporlapaz.mx (Accesed 10 April 2012)
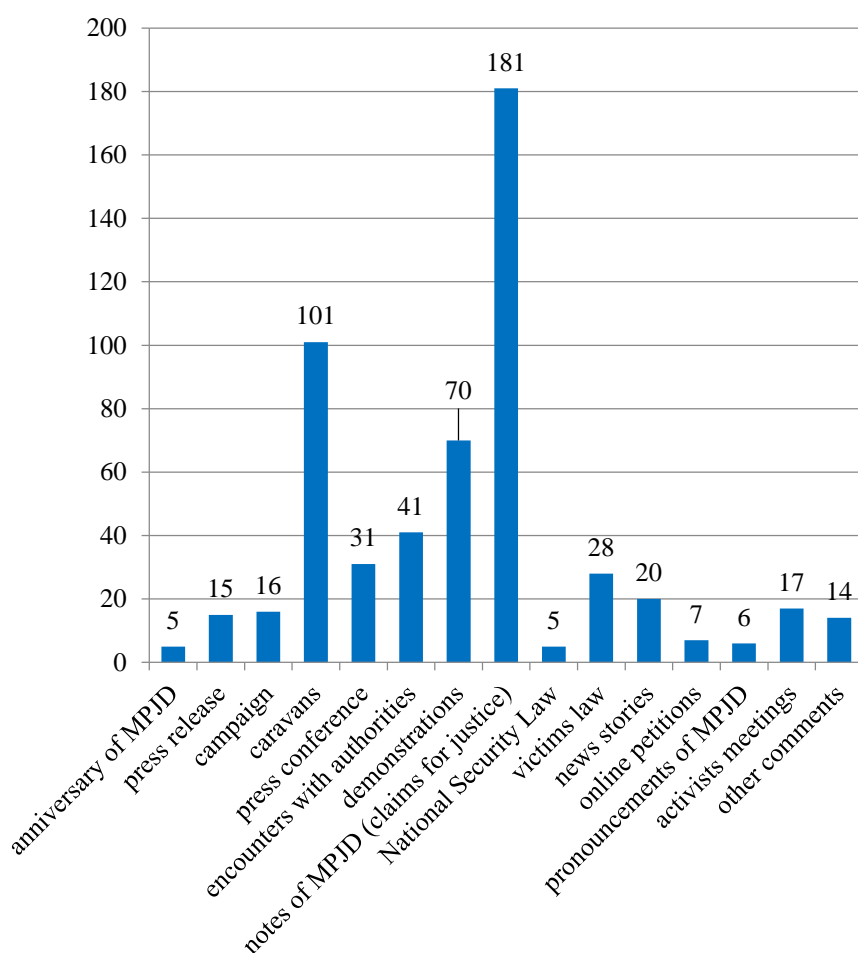
Table 33. Uses of the MPJD website page.

In summary the most recurrent topics on the MPJD's webpage were:

1. Notes of the MPJD (demands for justice): The most common notes published on the webpage of the MPJD, these include texts which clarified disappearances and killings, by, for example, naming victims, giving texts of victim testimonies, texts of speeches by Javier Sicilia, texts of demands for a halt of the strategy used in the war on drugs, texts fighting corruption and impunity, and letters written by the victims.

2. Caravans: As explained in chapter four, the caravans were among the most significant of the remarkable repertoire of actions of the MPJD, with two in Mexico and one in the United States. Information regarding these caravans was published on the MPJD's website, and included such information as: itineraries, dates, activity programmes, reports from the caravans, images and videos.

3. MPJD peace demonstrations: The main notes published on this topic were: calls to attend demonstrations, notes on the people and organisations that will participate, reports following the peace demonstrations, programmes of activities for the demonstrations, images of the events and notifications and images of international peace demonstrations.

4. Meetings with the authorities: As examined in chapter four, the MPJD had a meeting with President Calderón and Mexican authorities, and following the meeting the main points communicated by the MPJD (the testimonies of victims and human right defenders) were published on their webpage. This material from the first encounter covered the testimony of 23 victims, a photograph gallery and a link to the live broadcast of the event.

5. Press conferences: The MPJD called a number of press conferences to provide key information on their activities, demonstrations, and encounters with authorities. Javier Sicilia lead these press conference, and they successfully attracted the media's attention.

6. The General Victims' Law: One of the movement's achievements came through their constant activism undertaken to get the General Victims' Law approved in 2012. In this regard, the MPJD published information about the purpose of this law, audio and video from the approval of the law and articles covering the promotion of the law in activities and demonstrations.

7. News stories: Stories published in the Mexican newspapers, such as *La Jornada*, *El Universal* and *Reforma*, were published on the MPJD website in regards to topics such as their rejection of the National Security Law,[134] reflections on Sicilia in the magazine *Proceso* and all other issues connected to the MPJD.

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[134] Arvizu, J. (26 April 2011) Activistas exigen frenar Ley de Seguridad, *El Universal*. Retrieved from http://archivo.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/761560.html (Accessed 20 August 2015)

8. Activist meetings: The MPJD published information of resolutions taken in meetings with their members.

9. Press releases: These included the texts released by the MPJD in relation to expressing their solidarity with other causes, videos, announcements of actions and mobilisations, texts of support from other social movements such as the EZLN, and international press releases from groups outside Mexico.

10. Campaigns: The MPJD were involved in a number of campaigns, such as the national campaign against forced disappearance, for which their posts provided extensive information, including the regulatory framework and the historical and current context of the issue, or the 'Un peso por la paz' campaign, which aimed to support the MPJD economically. Another campaign for peace was 'Un Minuto por la Paz', which was called to protest against the war through all available artistic and cultural activities, and the MPJD used their website to provide information about Mexico's difficult situation, the alternatives for solving the issue, and give invitations to demonstrations. The campaign '¡Alto al Contrabando de Armas!' aimed to stop the massive illegal traffic of weapons in Mexico, while the campaign 'En los zapatos del otro' was an attempt to create awareness of the victims of the war on drugs, and the campaign 'Sí a la Ley de Víctimas' had the purpose of getting the approval for a victims' law in Mexico by which the state would have to compensate the victims of the violence in the context of the war on drugs.

11. Online petitions for the campaign '¡Alto al Contrabando de Armas!': collecting signatures to send with a letter to US President Barack Obama, demanding that he take any measures at his disposal to stop the smuggling of weapons into Mexico.

12. Pronouncements of the MPJD: These were largely messages to support the mobilisations for peace in Mexico and messages to explain their position on the issues that related to their causes.

13. The National Security Law: This topic covers notes from the MPJD on the risks to and potential for violations of Mexican citizens' human rights if the National Security Law is approved, and images of a demonstration against the proposed law.

14. Anniversary of the MPJD: This covers the publication of activities and actions every 28 March, when the movement first began.

5.9   Mexican National Newspapers' treatment of the MPJD (2011-2013)

This phase of the analysis on the media explores the main topics covered by Mexican newspapers from 2011-2013. Oliver et al. (2003:223) suggest that 'most event data comes from newspapers or other news archives. For this reason, a correct understanding of the news media is a major methodological and theoretical priority for events researchers'. New social movement researchers have used newspaper event data to evaluate their claims (Koopmans, 1995, Kriesi et al., 1995, Rucht et al., 1999).

For this purpose, 470 news stories were taken into account. The distribution of the topics of discussion across these articles were as follows: 65 (14%) discussing the General Victims' Law, 44 (9%) covering demonstrations of the MPJD, 44 (9%) the MPJD caravans, 21 (4%) memorials to the victims, 87 (19%) the National Security Law, 32 (7%) disappeared activists, 20 (4%) the murder of Nepomuceno Moreno, 16 (3%) articles written by Javier Sicilia, 16 (4%) campaigns of the MPJD, 19 (4%) the dialogue between the MPJD and Felipe Calderón, 13 (3%) the dialogue between the MPJD and presidential candidates, 13 (3%) analysis of the MPJD, 11 (2%) covering the departure of Julián Lebaron from the MPJD, 7 (1%) the anniversary of the MPJD, 8 (2%) the dialogue between the MPJD and the chamber of deputies, with the remaining 49 (10%) covering other issues.

Analysis of MPJD

Articles writen by Sicilia

Murder of Nepomuceno (MPJD member)

Campaigs of MPJD

MPJD caravans

1st anniversary of MPJD

Dialogue MPJD & F. Calderón

Lebaron (member MPJD) leaves MPJD

Dialogue MPJD & chamber of deputies

MPJD encounter with presidential candidates

Activists missing

Victim's Law

Demonstrations MPJD

Memorial to the victims

other issues

National security law

Table 34. Mexican National Newspapers' treatment of the MPJD (2011-2013)

5.10 Twitter Use by the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity

The MPJD has a Twitter account, @MPJDdoc, with 781 followers. For the purpose of this study, I collected 1040 tweets from 16 October 2011 to 25 July 2013. The tweets are divided as follows: 813 tweets (75%) concern news stories, 144 (13%) video material, 63 (6%) petitions, 39 (4%) press releases, 12 (1%) reports, and 8 (1%) surveys.
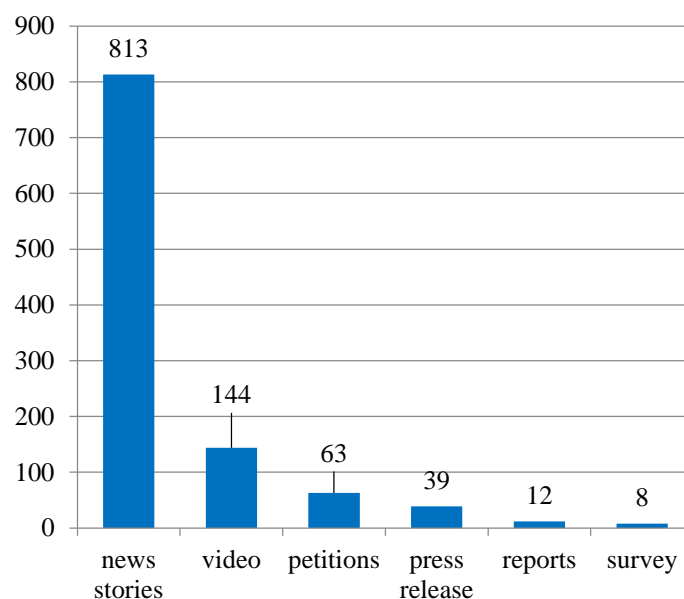
Table 35. Tweets from Movement for Peace Justice and Dignity

5.11 Have Social Movements for Peace Changed the Status Quo of the Mexican Policy for Peace?

According to Giugni (1998), movement participants and external observers may have different perceptions of what would be a scenario that defines their success, and similarly that the same action may be adjudicated as successful by some participants and as unsuccessful by others. For Rucht (1999) and McCarthy and Zald (2002), the capability to mobilise different sorts of resources is key for the impact of a movement. The mobilisation of resources and membership does provide some political influence, but while social movements are rational efforts to bring about change, many of their consequences are unintended and often unrelated to their claims. According to Giugni (2008), it is necessary to consider that social movements and protest activities have consequences, as continues to be evident. Any action, for that matter, has some kind of effect, small or big. Political consequences are those effects of movement activities that alter in some way the movement's political environment. Many scholars have proposed typologies aimed at identifying the outcomes of social movements, most of which deal with political outcomes. Perhaps the most well-known is Gamson's (1990) distinction

between acceptance, that means being accepted by political authorities as legitimate actors, and new advantages, that is, new advances for the movement or the group on behalf of which it mobilises (Giugni, 2008:1538).

Another approach to assessing the outcomes of the social movements is to look at the personal and biographical consequences of social movements, defined as the effects on the life-course of individuals who have participated in movement activities, specifically effects that are at least in part due to involvement in those activities (Giugni, 2008:1588-89). For the purpose of my study this part of the analysis works to answer how social movements might, in the context of using the Internet and social network sites, transform the status quo of the Mexican policy for peace? The answer to this question is not univocal, instead it captured a wide range of visions on this issue exposing different points of view.

One of the main effects of social movements stems from their ability to focus the attention of the elites and public opinion on the issues they protest. Social movements have created objectives with the purpose of generating changes in their social realities. Therefore, social movements regularly go beyond contesting public decisions, to criticising the forms in which decisions are taken, demanding greater citizen participation in decision making (della Porta, 1999:66). The activist Cordelia, a member of the collective 'Bordados por la Paz',[135] points out on this topic the importance of the civil society for the social movements for peace in Mexico, as a central actor in achieving peace, because it is needed to create agreements and commitments at all levels as a priority for the country. For that reason, its media productions are fundamental, and the activists can work with them through the documenting of all the proofs of the injustices which have happened, in this case in the war on drugs. Cordelia explains it in this form:

> I think that beyond talking to the authorities, we are talking to society because we believe that the path for peace has to work with the consensus that can be achieved in a civil society. The consensus that can be achieved with only academics and educators will say that as long as peace is not a serious matter, it will not be on the agenda. In a place where violence is very difficult to understand, we keep doing what the embroideries signify: documenting the evidence and anticipating judgement and demonstrating that the country was split into many pieces. If we can continue thinking and providing a space to show

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[135] Rea, D. (29 March 2013) Bordadoras por la paz, en busca de justicia con hilo y tela, *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2013/03/29/bordadoras-por-la-paz-en-busca-de-justicia-con-hilo-y-tela (Accessed 24 August 2015)

that what the victims say happened was true, as in the work done by the collective 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' with the handkerchiefs, I think that's a beautiful goal achieved, becoming a space that allows many things to happen. But it is imperative to preserve and support the truth throughout this documentation of violence, especially if the media is not documenting it. Our work is a very real action and that is something for which we have been preparing psychologically, and we invite civil society to join us. This war is real, there is a conflict, and we can show the proof. It is not the evidence collected by just ten people, it was the work of years of very clear intentions, a very open and determined learning process, trying to transcend the political ties of party options, it is about the creation of a sense of community that was built firstly for us, and which we then offered to all others who feel the need for it (Cordelia).

For della Porta and Diani (2006:239), while 'social movements have not always been on the winning side in referenda, the latter have nonetheless contributed to putting new issues on the public agenda and to creating public sympathy for emergent actors'. The activist and expert Janice makes a statement on this point, stressing the shift of Calderón's discourse with regards to the victims, making them visible in the public sphere, avoiding their re-criminalization and moving towards the reinforcement of the rule of law. Janice notes that the leader Javier Sicilia was crucial to empowering the movement's socio-political context, stating that:

> The MPJD's goal is to stop the war, and achieve justice in cases of forced disappearance and of all the victims. In the case of the enforced disappearances, there has been pressure on the government and it has had to change its discourse. The status quo before the MPJD was to support Calderón's war. The MPJD helped to change public opinion and the greatest impact of the peace movements has been the strengthening of the rule of law, opening the door for victims to be heard by the authorities. This could never have happened in this political context without a figure like Javier Sicilia (Janice).

Another well-recognised outcome at the political level was the rupture of the dominant discourse, not only through a rejection of Calderón's war but also a change in the discourse that labelled victims as collateral damage and considered them as an acceptable number of casualties. After this discourse changed in favour of the victims, however, the opportunity to promote changes through peaceful activism became more fragile, because of the propensity for the use of repression from the state against the protestors. By the end of 2013, five legal initiatives were being discussed at federal and local levels to regulate the behaviour of marches

and demonstrations in Mexico City, four of which were filed by the National Action Party, and one more by the Green Party. The Human Rights Commission of the Federal District (CDHDF) concluded that none of these laws were harmonious with the national and international standards that protect the fundamental human rights of Mexicans.[136] The activist Cordelia expresses her view on the political attempts to regulate protests:

> Thanks to these social movements for peace, Felipe Calderón was forced to say that collateral damage is not empty of meaning, and the fact that there are attempts to criminalize protests, to develop controls, and strategies of control, shows that the movement does affect the operation of politics. The political reaction has shown fear, and resorts to old strategies of co-optation. They are regulating public protests, and at some point they will want to regulate the networks (Cordelia).

One of the achievements of the MPJD was their effort from 2012 to pass the General Victims' Law, which sought reparations for the victims of the war on drugs. The effort took until 9 January 2013, when the president Enrique Peña Nieto announced its passage in the daily national journal. The activist Pilar considered this outcome a result of the MPJD's efforts to get agreements from the presidential candidates; Enrique Peña Nieto as a presidential candidate had promised to promulgate the General Victims' Law if he won the presidential elections.

> The MPJD was able to sit down with the presidential candidates in 2012 to make demands for public commitments to and greater vigilance of what a president does when organising law enforcement. The MPJD continues to monitor the situation closely with academic allies, and those with technical expertise. The MPJD's oversight of the law ensures that the advisory board that will create the law will take care of the victims; that the people chosen to sit on it will be those the MPJD trusts (Pilar).

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[136] Martínez, P. (16 December 2013) Las 5 iniciativas para regular las marchas son inconstitucionales: Derechos Humanos del DF. Retrieved from http://www.animalpolitico.com/2013/12/las-5-iniciativas-para-regular-las-marchas-son-inconstutucionales-derechos-humanos-del-df/ (Accessed 10 June 2015)

Fig. 25. Sicilia en los Pinos (Photo: Germán Canseco/*Proceso*).[137]

Della Porta and Diani (2006:237) suggest that 'the creation of new procedures and institutional arenas can be seen as a means of co-opting movement elites and demobilizing the grassroots'. In this way, it can be seen that after the MPJD reached its goal of the General Victims' Law, it lost the level of media attention it had enjoyed from 2011 to 2012, and that while it met that goal, there has been no compensation to the victims of the war on drugs. They have not received justice. Nor have they found their disappeared relatives.

There has also been criticism that the victims' law is not incorporated within the economical budget of 2014. Silvano Cantú, human rights activist and co-author of the General Victims' Law, observed that the draft budget does not assign specific resources to enact the law, and that no appropriate mechanisms were specified to redirect the required resources throughout 2014.[138] All in all, the MPJD had has the capability to influence political will, which is a requirement for influential public policy (della Porta and Diani, 2006); they have channelled the visibilization of the victims of the war on drugs into a public policy, and legally made their condition a subject of law, if not yet in practice.

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[137] "No habrá justicia si no hay un camino hacia la paz": Sicilia sobre la Ley de Víctimas (discurso íntegro) (9 January 2013) *Aristégui Noticias*. Retrieved from http://aristeguinoticias.com/0901/mexico/no-habra-justicia-si-no-hay-un-camino-hacia-la-paz-sicilia-sobre-la-ley-de-victimas/ (Accessed 03 March 2015)

[138] Santoyo, D. (13 November 2013) Ley General de Víctimas, sin presupuesto para 2014. Retrieved from http://revoluciontrespuntocero.com/ley-general-de-victimas-sin-presupuesto-para-2014/ (Accessed 19 April 2015)

The outcomes for the social movements for peace must be examined on multiple levels. One of the demands, as mentioned above, was to change the strategy of fighting against the drug cartels' trafficking. However, the strategy did not change, instead the protests in Mexico have been dramatically silenced since Enrique Peña Nieto took the presidency on 1 December 2012, and police abuse and arbitrary detentions have been recorded.[139] The activist Jorge reflects on the MPJD's achievements and the activism for peace in Mexico during the transition from the government of Calderón to Peña Nieto's government in December 2012, stressing attention on the fact that the war on drugs continues to the present, and on the upsurge of new actors for peace within the context of the continuing violence, such as the 14 civilian armed self-defence groups that have emerged since 5 January 2013 across seven states in Mexico.[140] The MPJD succeeded in achieving a level of political participation which empowered the victims as active actors in the public agenda, and made their demands visible to the authorities. On this topic, Jorge notes:

> The main objective was to stop the war and this was not achieved. What we achieved was that the new government of Peña Nieto recognised that the strategy that Calderón was pushing would not reach any positive end. Unfortunately, Peña Nieto's strategy is not to stop the war, but rather hide it through communication strategies. The war continues and is compounded, because it is not recognised by the government as war. Yesterday an entire family was murdered in Juarez, and what is happening in Michoacán now? A civil war exists in Michoacán against real organised crime. New insurgencies are uprising against the inability of the state. The MPJD gave the victims a strong push to a level of political participation that has educated different actors politically, such that they are willing to follow mobilisations not only for this reason but others, seeing that certain groups are part of the same disease, and seeing the structural problems facing the movement of people. #YoSoy132 has been very close to the peace movement of the people of Zapatismo, Cheran, who have had a hard fight for a long time for democratic freedoms. We found this was a common space for the MPJD and #YoSoy132 (Jorge).

Another political outcome of the movements for peace can be seen in the widespread discussion in Mexico on legalising the consumption of certain drugs, such as cannabis, for example the two initiatives, one local and one federal, presented by PRD deputies on 13

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[139] Azuela, M. (6 March 2014) 1 Dic 2012: Muerte, desaparición y censura, *El Universal*. Retrieved from http://www.eluniversalmas.com.mx/editoriales/2014/03/69065.php (Accesed 04 June 2015)

[140] Reyes, L. (9 March 2013) Los grupos de autodefensa en México, ¿una ventana para el crimen? *CNN México*. Retrieved from http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2013/03/09/los-grupos-de-autodefensa-en-mexico-una-ventana-para-el-crimen (Accessed 06 June 2015)

February 2014.[141] The initiatives aimed to regulate the use of marijuana in the federal district, establishing safe spaces for the supply of the drug and increasing the amount people were legally allowed to carry to 30 grams.

The expert and activist Zara Snapp says that while there is no substantial change in the policies used in the war on drugs in Mexico there have been advances. While she stresses that Peña Nieto's government has not been clear in indicating which strategy his government will follow to battle the drug cartels, his government has created a national gendarmerie composed of 10,000 troops.[142] In the opinion of the MVS Ombudsman,[143] Gerardo Albarrán de Alba, Mexico has passed from the war on drugs to 'the land of agreements between political leaders', something that is only true in speech. The homicides and clashes are still happening, as they did during the six years of Calderón's government, but the media no longer dedicates the same amount of time to reporting on it. Zara observes that:

> So far we have not seen any change, but we see that there are more voices joining the discussion, there are legislators – mainly from the PRD – talking about it who never spoke of it before. There are several assembly members who are trying to discuss some kind of regulation. We have not seen a change in drug policy in Mexico; the strategy remains the same and the federal government is not being very open about what will change in their strategy, if anything (Zara).

For the journalist Elia, although the social movements for peace have achieved a transformation of the status quo, justice is still pending for the victims. From a political context she does not see any effort to shift the policies towards a lasting peace in Mexico. As a journalist, she perceives that the media has a lot of work still to do, following up on the victims, expressing her vision in this form:

> The ultimate goal of these movements is fixing the huge deficit of justice on this issue. Efforts have been isolated, the Victims' Law can be taken as part of a transformation, but it has not finished materialising; only then can we talk about results in terms of the

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[141] Presenta PRD iniciativas local y federal para regular mariguana (13 February 2014) *Aristegui Noticias.* Retrieved from http://aristeguinoticias.com/1302/mexico/presenta-prd-iniciativas-local-y-federal-para-regular-mariguana/ (Accessed 09 August 2015)

[142] México: el plan de Peña Nieto contra el narcotráfico (18 December 2012) *BBC Mundo*. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2012/12/121218_mexico_pena_nieto_estrategia_seguridad_narcotrafico_jg (Accessed 10 August 2015)

[143] La nueva estrategia mediática de Enrique Peña Nieto (10 May 2013) *Noticias MVS*. Retrieved from http://www.noticiasmvs.com/#!/podcasts/el-defensor-de-la-audiencia/la-nueva-estrategia-mediatica-de-enrique-pena-nieto-530.html (Accessed 04 August 2015)

fulfilment of justice. At this moment in Mexican politics we still see only an intention, we have not seen practical applications or policy mechanisms that meet the demands of the movements. The main responsibility of the media is not to abandon the agenda of these movements, to continue investigating claims, to continue giving voice and support to the victims. While their demands are not resolved, the issue is not exhausted and remains on the table (Elia).

At an international level, for the activist and expert Janice, the outcomes of the social movements for peace in Mexico can be seen in the level of international awareness that was reached in the Caravan for Peace in the US in August 2012 through the spreading of the movements' message in the US media:

> Yes, of course one of the goals was to raise awareness in the US. It is an achievement to have appeared in the media, we were covered daily over the course of a month, spreading the message that the war against drugs has an effect in Mexico. This is a great achievement, it was one of the goals and I think we did very well. The local media also helped to legitimise the caravan. It helped that the movement had the figure of Javier Sicilia, because a lot of media attention was attracted by him, and through him the other victims become visible, helping to spread knowledge of their cases. This diffusion was one of the major goals of the caravan (Janice).

The activist Lolita envisages the outcomes of Sicilia's labour for peace in Mexico at a societal level, stating that the political class has no interest in ending the war on drugs in Mexico. She recognises, however, the community efforts made in the movements towards educating people on the potential for peace in Mexico, saying that:

> The other day I was talking to Javier Sicilia, I said we worked four years and have not achieved peace. We have achieved from our work of peace that the victims feel less alone. I do not think the political class of Mexico cares about the war, unfortunately. We are learning as we go, we work with many groups together, but have not managed to have a loud enough voice. The creation of this network has been slow, and the urgency has always won against us. In Mexico now, this government has the option to give money to the collectives, for its interests, which is a way to dismantle social movements. We have ensured that many victims feel less alone, we have claimed rights for journalists, we have made educational projects for social empowerment, we have generated a lot of hope. People have heard many testimonies of people who need to be heard, we can distinguish

what happens by the different Mexican states. If it is in our hands, we will try to ensure

that no one feels that everything is only destruction and impunity, which helps us to think

that peace is possible (Lolita).

As shown above, there are different perceptions as to what extent the social movements for peace in Mexico succeeded. The voices of the activists mainly focus their attention on the necessity of the creation of a broad consensus within civil society to produce a widespread awareness of the need for peace in Mexico as part of the main public agenda. Meanwhile, the activist groups, such as the 'embroiderers for peace', have been documenting proof of the cases of violence within the context of the war on drugs, stressing the importance of the creation of a sense of community.

The social movements for peace in Mexico achieved a visibility and recognition under Calderón's government that potentialized them as political actors with influence on the authorities to change the discourse, but the strategy of the war on drugs continued without any significant changes. Another achievement relates to the initiatives that have generated a debate in regard to the policy on drugs; the MPJD has been part of those discussions, most recently on 30 July 2014,[144] in the International Drug Policy Forum organised by the Mexican chamber of deputies.[145]

The activists have shown their concern regarding the regulation of demonstrations and the Internet as a tool for activism,[146] that instead of effecting a change in the status quo for peace in Mexico, potentially makes their activities vulnerable to state repression.

An additional goal reached by the MPJD was the approval of the General Victims' Law in January 2013. However, following this, the social movements for peace in Mexico gradually lost visibility on the media agenda they had had from 2011-2012. Even in light of its passage,

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[144] Realizarán Foro Internacional de Política de Drogas (30 July 2014) *LXIII Legislatura Cámara de Diputados*, (*Comunicación)*. Retrieved from
http://www5.diputados.gob.mx/index.php/esl/Comunicacion/Boletines/2014/Julio/15/3847-Realizaran-Foro-Internacional-de-Politica-de-Drogas (Accessed 01 August 2015)
[145] The topics discussed in this meeting were on: drug policy from the perspective of human rights; the background and legislative perspective in relation to the regulation of psychoactive substances in Mexico; security, justice and drug policy; the regulation and economic impact of drugs in Mexico; a debate on the effects of cannabis on health; the legal framework for the drug policy in Mexico; prevention, risk reduction and treatment of drug dependence; and the drug policy from the perspective of civil society.
[146] According to the 'Freedom on the Net 2015' published by Freedom House, the relevant topics censored on the Internet are criticism of authorities and corruption. Retrieved from https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2015 (Accessed 10 March 2015)

a critique made of this General Victims' Law is the lack of economical measures for the compensation of the victims.

A silenced media was characterised by both experts and journalists in the transition from Calderón's to Peña Nieto's governments, one that has invisibilized the reality of violence that daily affects the Mexican citizens. The experts and journalists have exposed a discourse of violence that does not generalize across the whole Mexican territory, instead just focusing on 'specific zones',[147] or claiming that 'the violence has improved, it is not the same as ten years ago',[148] thereby exposing the lack of policies for peace that do not rely on militarized strategies. All things considered, from the activists' point of view, the primary achievement of the movement for peace has been to create a safe community for the victims, which they can count on to help them not feel alone, which focuses on their needs, and which generates social empowerment and the hope that there is a possible path of peace in Mexico.

Conclusion

This chapter's analysis of the uses of the Internet in social movements for peace in Mexico has shown that the mobilisations for peace occurred as the consequence of several factors in the context of the violence in Mexico of the war on drugs, these factors stemming from a generalized discontent with the strategy launched by President Felipe Calderón in December 2006. The interviewees recognised that the victims of the violence were silenced and were not visible because the dominant discourse of the media was that they were criminals, a discourse that reduced victims to numbers.

The relationship between the social movements for peace in Mexico and the media has shown that even if they cannot access the mainstream media, they can rely on alternative media possibilities to spread their demands and construct a sense of community. The Internet alters the movements' relationship with the media as the material published on websites becomes a source for the journalists in their articles, and as media channels have been pressured to rely on social media information.

It is through the Internet that the collective identity may be promoted across a widespread population and can inspire sympathy amongst people, making them feel that they

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[147] Peña Nieto: sí hay violencia, pero en 'zonas específicas' (15 February 2015) *SIPSE.com.* Retrieved from http://sipse.com/mexico/pena-nieto-violencia-zonas-especificas-seguridad-137626.html (Accessed 19 April 2015)

[148] La situación de violencia ha mejorado, no es la misma de hace 10 años: Osorio Chong (23 June 2015). Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/06/23/politica/006n1pol (Accessed 17 April 2015)

are part of a community through their shared feelings. The social movements for peace in Mexico have been creative in the way they have created communication strategies to form a bigger community of alliances and solidarities in the pursuit of their demands.

One of the most relevant advantages provided by the Internet for the mobilisations for peace in Mexico is the opportunity to reconfigure their identity in the terms that the community chooses, to create their unique voice and their own stories as a key point in the construction of the potential for mobilisations in the pursuit of social change in Mexico for peace. Unfortunately, even with the use of social network sites and the Internet, the socio-political context of the social movement in Mexico is not favourable enough to enable the transformation of the status quo, or the successful claiming of justice. The significance of the movement has been obstructed by the international normative that emphasises battling the issue of drug trafficking.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This thesis is the first explicitly socio-cultural research into the use of the Internet and social networking sites by the social movements for peace in Mexico. The intention was to make a contribution to contemporary analysis focused on Internet use, the role that social networking sites have in the construction of collective identity, and the potential that new communication technologies have for mobilisation. This thesis also contributes to an understanding of how the nature of political action has been changed by the use of the Internet and has critically examined how the status quo of the policies for peace in Mexico has been transformed.

This thesis supports the position of Dahlgren (2014) in relation to the central role media play in social movements. This case study, Social Movements for Peace in Mexico, has demonstrated that material produced by newspapers is mainly used to communicate ideas within the context of the war on drugs and the overwhelming consequences that this war on drugs has brought to the civil society.

It also needs to be considered that mainstream media could simplify and homogenise the ideologies and practices of social movements for peace in Mexico (Pleyers, 2014, Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993, Atton, 2003, Milan 2013). It is important to mention that not all the movements for peace in Mexico have gained mainstream media attention as in the case of MPJD.

This thesis, through the comments analysis on YouTube videos and the *Proceso* magazine Facebook page, has demonstrated that users can display a restricted understanding of the causes and goals of these social movements for peace. My position reflects Cammerts' (2008) outlook related to how new communication technologies arise with high expectations and strong claims about their potential to nurture democracy and emancipation. This means that there is a tendency to overestimate the capabilities of new communication technologies as if they could magically enable processes of civil participation or social change.

Nevertheless, this thesis has demonstrated that collective identity can be promoted by the Internet (Stekelenburg and Boekkooi, 2013), particularly when the activists cannot access the mainstream media. They can use alternative forms of communication, such as the websites created by well-recognised journalists. In other cases, mainstream media can use material from

alternative online sources and social media networks, which can provide information, as the journalists interviewed explained in this thesis.

This thesis aims to offer a solid contribution to the literature on social movements and media, and new technologies of communication. It presents a critical theoretical analysis of new social movement theory through the lens of different perspectives (Klandermans, 2013b, Diani, 2013, della Porta, 2006, Melucci, 1992, Mc Adam and Tilly, 2007). An important contribution is the discussion of the potential difficulties in applying Western literature to this analysis. These difficulties could be summarised in two core points: the historical differences between Western social movements and Latin American movements, and the wider differences in relation to the cultural, economic and political contexts in which the social movement for peace in Mexico is positioned. Although Latin American literature has produced a considerable body of work on social movements, there are some limitations: insufficient exploration of how new social movements interact with social media networks, and limited analysis of the potential of the Internet and social networking practices and dynamics to grasp the rich complexity of contemporary mobilisations around the world.

I have argued that one of the significant social movement for peace in Mexico was the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity, which began in April 2011, for which the mainstream media played a key role in its diffusion. It could not be said that the Internet and social media played a dominant role in the diffusion of their messages calling for mobilisation. As Saavedra (2015:45) notes in his work *No, it did Not Grow Up because of the Internet: The Emergence of 2011's Student Mobilization in Chile*, these modern communicative practices of social movements take place in 'another time and space', meaning that these actions are occurring outside of the 'neoliberal timing and democratic closures'. In the case of social movements for peace in Mexico, the power of human communication to create an impact in Mexican society can be seen through the high value the leader Javier Sicilia gave to the use of poetry in his public speeches, or to hugging the victims or kissing the authorities in the dialogues, as an indication of forgiveness for their omissions in not providing protection and justice to the victims.

I have concluded through my analysis that the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity provided the background which precedes the subsequent mobilisations for peace in Mexico, which nowadays continue in the pursuit of justice. I have taken a critical position in analysing the multifactorial causes that allowed the rise of the social movements for peace in

Mexico, that include arms trafficking, the Mérida Initiative, neoliberal policies, the growth of poverty, the lack of education, the human right violations against migrants and money laundering.

I have aimed to analyse how the leadership of Javier Sicilia was a catalyst of the collective wish for peace, that his middle class position and his networks of intellectuals and journalists empowered him to gain a wide range of media coverage. This analysis goes against the theoretical perspective of a shift in participation caused by the use of the Internet and social media that suggests that a lack of leadership generates a feeling of togetherness, empowerment, collaboration and unity (Castells, 2012:225, Enjolras et al., 2012:2-3, della Porta, 2011:50).

This thesis has explored the different styles of leadership in social movements, having observed that some movements such as the MPJD have a single main leader, in the case of the MPJD the poet Javier Sicilia, while the 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' collective, for example, has relationships based of horizontality, a structure which aids their driveto understand what people need and how they can empower the people in need of a voice, by consciously not excluding the agents that take part in the war on drugs.

It is relevant to mention that mobilisations for peace in Mexico existed prior to the emergence of the MPJD, such as the mobilisation for justice for the women killed in Ciudad Juárez, and the online activism of the group 'Nuestra Aparente Rendición' that in 2010, after the massacre of immigrants at San Fernando, Tamaulipas, highlighted the state of emergency in Mexico evidenced by these atrocities by creating an online platform to reflect on the issue of violence in the context of the war on drugs and to develop a deeper understanding of the different faces of the violence in this context by providing a voice to those affected.

I have noted that prior to the emergence of the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity most of the affected population was silenced and stigmatized by the authorities and mainstream media, lacking a voice in mass media until the appearance of the leadership of Javier Sicilia, who joined the voices from below, providing visibility for them in the public space, for example in the case of those who came across the movement in the course of the caravans for peace. I have suggested in my analysis that the MPJD not only increased the prominence of the humanitarian tragedy that Mexico was suffering, but also made visible the human rights violations committed by the authorities and armed forces.

This analysis has demonstrated that the MPJD disrupted not just the Mexican government's monolithic discourse, which referred to people's deaths as 'collateral damage',

but also the discourse that stigmatized people who had been killed as criminals, creating in the collective imaginary the idea that the 'good ones' were winning the war on drugs. This analysis has examined how the MPJD and collectives for peace in Mexico gave visibility to the victims by naming them, through the narratives of who they were and what they pursuit of, and counteracted the media coverage which frequently exposed images of the dead bodies, imposing a discourse of horror that paralysed the civil society. The analysis observed the recognition of the vision of the MPJD as an expression of the multitudes that were wishing for peace at the same time, which means that the figure of Javier Sicilia was just a facilitator of the broad complex reality.

I have analysed the lack of justice within a context of high rate of impunity in the Mexican state as central point in the most relevant grievances have caused the mobilisations for peace that took to the streets in Mexico. A related pair of grievances that have provided the driving force for mobilisations for peace are the human right violations suffered by Central American migrants, and the threats to the human rights defenders who demand better conditions for these illegal migrants in Mexico.

I have also provided an original contribution to the field of media studies and social movements by articulating the relationship between social movements for peace and the mainstream media, observing that even when the media provide coverage there is no guarantee of veracity in their version of the facts, and there is the potential for them to mislead through the information provided.

According to the results and analysis of this research and through a critical approach, I have also indicated how the social media content of social movements for peace in Mexico could be used by traditional media as a source of information, thereby interweaving these two spheres of communication. The study suggests that social media can potentially help people to have public discussions; to launch online messages concerning high risk situations such as armed confrontations in the streets, or when a human rights defender has been threatened; and to spread messages of encouragement to groups such as the vigilantes committees in Michoacán, characterised as being irregular organizations who aim to restore order to Mexican communities, that arose in the Gulf and South Mexico regions between 2012 and 2013. A key area for future analysis is to the possible opportunities and constraints of the mainstream media and digital media in terms of mediation, as proposed by Cammaerts (2012). This leads to the conclusion that the social movements for peace in Mexico might not be able to fight without

the visibility afforded by the mainstream media, but also implies that the traditional media could function as an informative source which might enable the social movements for peace to create their own counteracting visual narratives on digital platforms.

Celebrities can also empower these mobilisations by attracting more supporters, as was the case with the actors Gael García and Diego Luna, and the directors Alejandro González Iñárritu, Alfonso Cuarón and Guillermo del Toro.[149] In the case of the MPJD, the mainstream media was a central point for informing ordinary people. The maintenance of an independence from the state's power is vital to these collectives, and some collectives have worked together in the pursuit of their demands. In addition, it is vital for these movements that non-traditional media conduct research, the reason being that the information they research can sometimes be used to counteract official statistics or reports compiled by the government, besides which there is an awareness in some independent journalism that provides an integral narrative that explains in depth the causes of this violent conflict and hears the voices of the people that have been affected.

This thesis has demonstrated how these collectives for peace in Mexico have been innovative, learning how to use digital tools for communication in the absence of media coverage. These actions imply a need for professionalization to strategically spread their online messages, but there co-exists a position that considers these tools of voracious capitalism as obstacles to the perception of the effectiveness that could empower their causes.

This thesis has confirmed that while there is an awareness about how digital media can encapsulate the messages, the potential is limited for the broad audience that cannot access the Internet, indeed, most of the activists, journalists and experts interviewed stated that there are members of these movements who do not have access to the Internet. Beyond using the Internet as a tool for social movements for peace in Mexico, a major goal for them is to cause a shift in the mentality of the people, to increase consciousness of the situation in Mexico in the context of the violence of the war on drugs.

This work notes that while at times media coverage is desirable, the media discourse can be simplistic, failing to explain that the authorities have been involved in acts of corruption or have been careless, not clarifying the causes behind the violence, and not expressing in depth

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[149] Iñárritu, Cuarón, Arau y Guillermo del Toro apoyan la Caravana por la Paz en LA (13 August 2012) *Animal Político*. Retrieved from http://www.animalpolitico.com/2012/08/mexico-esta-sufriendo-porque-eu-evita-el-tema-del-alto-consumo-de-drogas-sicilia/ (Accessed 06 June 2015)

all the difficulties that the families of the victims have gone through in their pursuit of justice or in their search for their disappeared relatives. In this form, the media coverage can portray the situation in a sensationalist form, without conducting ethical research, and in this regard it is notable that the traditional media has adopted the language used by drug trafficking gangs.[150]

This thesis has shed light on how the communication strategies gained media coverage, such as in the case of the campaign 'Pedalling for Peace' in 2013, organised by the collective 'Mexicanos en el Exilio[151]' in El Paso, Texas. This is just one example of how personal narratives of the victims can help to create awareness, but the experience of this case in particular underscores that traditional media expose such cases on their own terms, following their own interests. Also, the media coverage is often sentimental, not making any effort to show the complexity of the issue of being a victim, staying at a superficial level of explanation.

This thesis has also shown the difficulties that Mexican journalists have faced, such as censorship, threats to their lives, murders, and the risks that are implied for any media coverage in the context of the war on drugs. It is in this context that journalism has arrived late to coverage of the human tragedy that the Mexican population experiences in their daily lives. There has however been a spread of a type of 'journalism of hope', which follows ethical protocols to construct the news stories of the victims, providing a human face to the victims' tragedies. An extraordinary example of this 'journalism of hope' is the work of Marcela Turati,[152] who was given the WOLA Human Rights Award in 2013 in Washington, DC. In her speech, she summarized the human face that has challenged Mexican journalism. She recognised how the journalists that covered events such as the MPJD's caravans in 2011 were deeply touched by the victims' narratives and the terrible situation they had found, asking herself:

> 'Am I still a journalist if I cry? Who did not cry in that caravan of pain that crossed the country and where in each kilometre there appeared dozens of mutilated souls who had to hide the fact that their children had been killed? [...] How should we feel when they

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[150] Castañeda, L. and Henao, J. (2011) The 'Narco' Element of Composition in Newspapers, Revista Virtual Universidad Católica del Norte. No. 33, (mayo-agosto de 2011, Colombia) pp. 7-24. Retrieved from http://revistavirtual.ucn.edu.co/index.php/RevistaUCN/article/view/8/18 (Accessed 08 December 2015)

[151] It means 'Mexicans in exile', which is a collective group based in El Paso, Texas, that brings together families, journalists, human rights activists and individuals who have suffered violence in Mexico and fled to the United States seeking political asylum.

[152] Marcela Turati receives 2013 WOLA Human Rights Award (24 October 2013) WOLA Advocacy for Human Rights in the Americas. Retrieved from http://www.wola.org/video/marcela_turati_receives_2013_wola_human_rights_award (Accessed 08 December 2015)

call to thank us for mentioning in a line of our story the name of a child who disappeared among 26,000 others registered in only the last six years, or who was killed among the 70,000 in the same period?' (Turati M., WOLA 24 October 2013)

This thesis has shown how the MPJD has been able to construct a strong relationship with the media because it has established a solid relation with two civil organisations who have professional members skilled in the creation of communication strategies (Cencos and Separaz). An important correlation has been noted, that the more media coverage the social movements for peace in Mexico received, the greater the response they received from the citizenship.

This thesis has shed light on how even though the speed of the Internet allows the near-instantaneous distribution of messages, and augments the capacity for information storage, it does not follow that the social movement organisations can answer at the same speed and with the same capacity that the Internet allows. This thesis has examined how the Internet is used to create ties of solidarity through the creation of an international community such as the Global Network for Peace in Mexico, which has demonstrated across different countries across the world. In addition, while the Internet has permitted the promotion of collective action, virtual manifestations are generally no substitute for face-to-face contact for groups such as the MPJD. The thesis has also investigated how, through the Internet, collective identities can be promoted and can inspire sensitivities amongst supporters, making them feel part of a community. In this perspective, this work has also examined how social media has been used in innovative forms to organise campaigns to make claims and demand justice, reaching supporters across an international sphere.

This thesis explored the conceptualisation of 'citizens' media' created by Clemencia Rodríguez (2011), and has used it in this analysis to demonstrate how, for example, the MPJD have reconstructed through communication processes public spaces where terror events have happened, consolidating collective actions and re-signifying such spaces.

This thesis has shown how identity has been transformed, becoming more fluid, multiple and fragmented. The construction of a collective identity has relied on the skills of the group to share a definition system. In this regard, emotion has played a central part of the construction of collective identity. Javier Sicilia's frequent expression of his emotions in public spaces shaped the collective identity of the MPJD. In the demonstrations of the MPJD, the display of emblems such as photos of the disappeared relatives is a constant element. In

addition, the capacities of social media have allowed the construction of a community that is expressed more in terms of friendships and relationships than in terms of the informational element.

This thesis has presented the concern activists have expressed in relation to the passive activism that consists in just clicking buttons on the Internet without engaging in any real way with the mobilisations. The activists note that face-to-face contact with the victims gave the supporters a real sense of the situation: the richness of this type of contact cannot be overstated.

In addition, the thesis has found that for the success of some of their collective actions, to mobilise successfully, it was sometimes necessary to keep information unavailable via the Internet before the action. Another crucial element concerning collective action on the Internet concerns the challenges as regards the veracity of information, which can affect the media coverage, when journalists do not verify the information collected from the sources they consulted on social media. This thesis has analysed how the Internet could be undeniably beneficial for social movements for peace in Mexico, because some places are not physically accessible because of the high risk of violence.

This thesis has explored how the Internet has challenged activists because of the risk that their communications can be traced, through being, the subjects of surveillance or through the infiltration of the social media platforms or mobile devices. As a consequence, the activists have had to protect themselves through anonymity and auto-censorship, and they recognise the necessity of learning to further protect themselves in the digital space. This issue has arisen as a polemical debate amongst civil organisations and activists after the detection of the use of the spying software FinFisher to monitor communications from individuals and corporate users, including the servers of at least two telecommunications companies. FinFisher is surveillance software (spyware) that oversees and monitors the activities of the users of telecommunications networks and Internet-based services. The warnings of espionage in Mexico were raised after an alleged intervention in the communication between a human rights defender and his family through the WhatsApp messaging platform in the Federal District, as reported by the civil organisation Propuesta Cívica.[153]

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[153] Sánchez, J. (20 June 2013) México, en alerta por riesgo de espionaje digital, *El Economista*, http://eleconomista.com.mx/tecnociencia/2013/06/20/mexico-alerta-riesgo-espionaje-digital (Accessed 08 December 2015)

I have concluded that the socio-political context of the social movement in Mexico does not empower the transformation of the status quo with any significant solidarity at a transnational level. This goal has been obstructed for two reasons, firstly because there is an international laws that focuses on punishment when combating the issue of drug trafficking, and secondly because international interests have not been affected.

This analysis has demonstrated how individuals have contributed on social networking sites by providing comments, a process which has helped the social movement's processes of self-reflection. It is important to recognise that 'flaming' YouTube comments frequently undermine online discussions and the reflection of the issues discussed. On the other hand, YouTube has been used to express solidarity and support for the mobilisations for peace, though some comments have questioned Javier Sicilia.

This thesis has investigated the uses of Facebook pages for social movements for peace in Mexico, showing that the most frequent uses for these pages are: newspaper articles, invitations to demonstrations, and information produced by the collective groups themselves. This thesis has demonstrated that the comments left on news stories regarding the MPJD on Facebook are prominently opposing then-President Felipe Calderón, expressing doubts about the leader of the MPJD, Javier Sicilia, blaming politicians for the state of violence in Mexico, supporting the peace demonstrations, supporting Javier Sicilia, and commenting on the corruption and the situation in Mexico. Through the analysis of these posts, and of the YouTube videos, it can be seen that the comments are polarised either in support of or against President Calderón and Javier Sicilia, but Facebook saw fewer flaming comments compared to the YouTube videos. In relation to the uses of the website of the MPJD, the most frequent post topics were: claims for justice, stories and information about the caravans, and information related to the MPJD's demonstrations.

This thesis has shown that one of the most powerful effects of the social movements for peace in Mexico is the cessation of the media discourse that named victims as collateral damage, through their contribution to positioning new issues on the public agenda and thereby contributing to a change in public opinion, opening the door for the victims to be heard by the authorities. The approval of the General Victims' Law can also be seen as an achievement of the MPJD and the other collectives for peace in the pursuit of the provision of help to the victims of the war on drugs, although the law's application has been hampered by the lack of funds to operate it properly and the absence of a national register of disappeared people.

The outcome of social movements for peace in Mexico rests on a particular societal level: the political class which has no interest in ending the war on drugs. The war on drugs that ex-President Calderón originated keeps going. At the end of July 2014,[154] the Mexican government released new data showing that between 2007 and 2014 more than 164,000 people were victims of homicide. Nearly 20,000 died in 2014, a significant number, but still a decrease from the 27,000 killed at the height of fighting in 2011.

The work of the social movements for peace in Mexico under the government of Enrique Peña Nieto has transformed as a result of the upsurge of self-defence groups in Michoacán at the end of 2012 and the beginning of 2013, under the leadership of Dr. Mireles, who won massive visibility in the public sphere. It is important to notice the difference between these new social movements for peace and the non-violent groups for peace in Mexico, having as a distinction that the self-defence groups use arms to protect civilians. Javier Sicilia pointed out in September 2011, when he was in the caravan through the south of Mexico, that the MPJD would be the last pacifist social movement for peace. It is undeniable that the peace movements have seen a transformation into armed self-defence groups, seeing the use of these armed strategies as their only option to protect their families and neighbours.

During this research I have encountered many challenges. The literature available for review on social movements and social networking sites is limited to certain social network sites, despite the extensive online technological expressions of social movements. This fact lead to the overlooking of significant characteristics such as the role and development of diverse platforms within a movement, and the networks between other technologies, actors, and their practices, that could be potentially relevant to mobilisation (Mattoni and Treré, 2014). This thesis attempts to help fill the gap found in the limited consideration given to 'Latin American Struggles and Digital Media Resistance' (Treré and Magallanes, 2015) in the academic attention to these movements published in English, but also to the still less consideration given to the 'movements for peace with justice, against violence and impunity' (Treré and Pleyers, 2015), not just in Mexico but globally. Treré and Magallanes (2015:3653) note that 'academic literature in English that has tackled the role that digital media play within contemporary Latin American protest tends to be scattered and fragmented'.

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[154] Torres, J. (29 October 2015) Enfocan la violencia periodistas de México y EU en capital mexicana, *Diario La Estrella*. Retrieved from http://www.diariolaestrella.com/2015/10/29/142777/enfocan-la-violencia-periodistas.html (Accessed 20 November 2015)

This thesis has made an original contribution to the studies of social movements and the Internet by analysing the collectives for peace in Mexico through different social networking sites, being a unique study through the consideration of the entwined relationship between the mainstream media and social networking sites. It has also helped comprehend the power of media coverage in producing an effect of fear. When the mainstream media and the government hide the complexities of the violence, it undermines the social fabric, isolating people from public spaces, and creates a polarisation that fragments the society into a Manichean position of 'good ones' and 'bad ones'. Social trust, so important for the construction of solid communities, has been severely debilitated by the repression of expressions of peace and demands for change, such as protests, as was seen on 1 December 2011 when Enrique Peña Nieto took the presidency, launching repressive actions against the protesters that were on the streets and in the end criminalizing the protests.

In addition, the social movement for peace in Mexico has shown its strength in attracting media coverage, for example after the disappearance of 43 students from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers College on the night of 26 September 2014, when it effectively revealed the complicity of the authorities with organised crime.

I conclude that the MPJD was the first social movement for peace that was inclusive in the heterogeneity of its voices, which profoundly exposed the humanitarian tragedy and gathered hundreds of civil organisations together in an attempt to stop the war on drugs. It is necessary to recognise that all these collectives have a long road to follow. Examples such as Colombia suggests that a war on drugs could last more than five decades. The approach taken to battle the issue of drug trafficking, by installing terror in the cities and communities has had a traumatic effect on the reconstruction of the social fabric of Mexico.

Human right defenders such as Marta Sanchez Soler,[155] the executive director of Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano,[156] have expressed the view that Mexico's war on drugs is about the ethnic cleaning[157] of entire communities, as could be seen with the violations of the human rights of those Central American immigrants that enter Mexico who have had their

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[155] Caravana de Madres Centroamericanas, en De este lado. Rompeviento TV. 2/1213 (7 December 2013) *Rompeviento TV*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCzXhWs34P4 (Accessed 01 November 2015)

[156] Movimiento Migrante Mesoamericano, http://movimientomigrantemesoamericano.org/

[157] According to Lieberman (2012 online): 'Since the 1990s, ethnic cleansing has become one of the most widely known forms of violence directed against groups. Ethnic cleansing is related to genocide, but ethnic cleansing is focused more closely than genocide on geography and on forced removal of ethnic or related groups from particular areas'.

organs removed with the intent of selling them in the black market, as revealed to the Mexican authorities by the human rights defender Alejandro Solalinde: the organ trade is a prolific business for the drug cartels[158]. The Mexican scholar and expert on drug violence issues, Rossana Reguillo, has suggested that the mechanisms of the narco-machine have their basis in a neoliberal logic. This most obscured face of advanced capitalism is what Mexican society is fighting against for their right to live.

The new faces of protesters, such as the survivor of the 43 students' disappearance, the normalista[159] Omar García from Ayotzinapa, could lead to a transfer of the leadership away from Javier Sicilia. While there has been a characterisation of the leaders as fighters for justice without fear, who avoid representing themselves as victims, it is important to mention that there has been a traditional media campaign to discredit their activism for justice, and as such these movements for peace and justice in Mexico have a limited media opportunity structure. The global solidarity, however, gained by the Ayotzinapa movement has been the most prominent since the social movement for peace in Mexico in 2011. This represents an important academic challenge for future research in Media, Internet and Communication for Social Change. That is why it is relevant to understand the modes through which social movements for peace used social networking sites and the media to create awareness and a social change for justice in Mexico.

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[158] Martínez, S. (05 July 2015) El tráfico de órganos, negocio de cárteles, políticos y médicos, denuncia Solalinde. *La Jornada* Retrieved from http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/07/05/politica/012n1pol (Accessed 02 June 2016)

[159] This means a teaching student, in this case indicating students who studied at Ayotzinapa, which is a radical teacher training college in Guerrero. 43 students went missing on the night of 26th September 2014, after a convoy of buses they were travelling in came under fire from Iguala's municipal police.

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APPENDIX 1

Example interview for journalists, activists, and experts

1. How do mainstream media create new forms of political action in the Mexican movement for peace?

2. How can a channel be established through mainstream media to allow citizens a democratic opportunity for contestation?

3. What are the ties with social movement organisations that enable visibility in the mainstream media for the Mexican movement for peace?

4. What are the ways in which mainstream media can empower collective action?

5. What are the risks and challenges for digital activism for peace in Mexico?

6. How could mainstream media enable a transnational collective action for the Mexican movement for peace?

7. What are the challenges for political action as regards visibility in the mainstream media?

8. What are the factors stemming from the use of mainstream media that transform political action?

9. Do mainstream media affect the structure of the social movements for political action?

10. What are the elements that enable the transformation of political action through the use of mainstream media?