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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, ICT AND SOCIAL CHANGE ACCORDING TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

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Abstract
The rapid spread of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) has changed the way social movements use Public Communication and will do so again in the future. This paper provides an analysis of the academic literature related to the influence of the ICT transformations on social movements and its consequences for social consent. The study is based on one of the dimensions of the R&D: "Social Production of Communication and Social Reproduction in the Globalization Era". This is done through a content analysis of the representations offered by scientific institutions that mediate the social reproduction of meaning. Within the theoretical framework of the Social Production of Communication, the implemented analysis includes a corpus of 180 future scenarios from scientific and technical literature in this field. The findings suggest that the ICTs promote agreement between various social groups, but this might simultaneously trigger conflicts with other institutions or governments.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, ICT AND SOCIAL CHANGE ACCORDING TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY[1]

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Introduction

The revolution of the new technologies has been around since more than two decades and worldwide social movements' organizers have incorporated these new digital communication tools in all their actions. Web pages, online petitions, mailing lists, one-to-one emails, etc., have accelerated communication progresses, succeeding in producing an agreement amongst different social groups in order to aim a common objective. The contribution of ICT strongly determines the achievement of the intergroup consensus, since it contributes to a higher visibility of social movements, an increase in the capacity to mobilize people, a broader impact and a rise of the interactions between members.

Every social movement fights to achieve different purposes that, in general terms, can be considered as the steps needed to promote a real social change. Nevertheless, one wonders if the introduction of new digital technologies in the everyday life of social movements not only generates agreements, but can also bring socio-historical transformations or, on the contrary, social reproduction.

This paper is placed in the field of the studies about social movements and social change, when both phenomena are related to consensus/conflict dynamics and scientific-technical innovations, in particular to the social application of ICTs.

The main objective of the study is as follows: To know how certain "sociohistorical changes" related to the use of ICTs by social movements are being conceived in the scientific and academic fields.

"Sociohistorical changes" are those transformations with an irreversible character in the history of humankind. For instance, the digitalization will be irreversible as well as it was with the use of print. Related and specialised literature may offer various representations of the mentioned sociohistorical changes taking place within the scientific-academic community. In this study, a sample of those resources has been selected in order to analyse the texts in which the authors describe the scenarios that anticipate possible changes derived from the use that social movements are making of ICT. They are "future scenarios" which involve social consensus and conflict dynamics (Bernete and Velarde, 2014:93).

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Literature Review

Former contributions of scientific research from different approaches have linked social movements with protests, riots and protesters fighting against governments and corporations. Media, throughout the history of democracy, have grabbed the impact of these disruptive events, making it the centre of attention in most of the studies (Tilly, 2009). When referring to protests that go beyond national boundaries, Della Porta and Tarrow (2004) do not use the term "social movements", in which the state is at the core of the concept, preferring "transnational activism".

On the contrary, when explaining the social movement's phenomena, some authors (Polleta, 2002; Armstrong & Bernstein, 2008) consider that taking into account only the state involves ignoring the complete structure of these organisations. This structure cannot be separated from culture and identity, which means other non-political relationships. Armstrong and Bernstein (2008: 74) argue that the conception of formal public-claims-making targeting the state "is too narrow to encompass the diversity of contemporary change efforts" and marginalizes some social movements.

According to Gillan (2017: 271), "the first half of this decade has seen a tremendous wave of protest". There has been a shift in the nature of these disruptive events: from the social movement theory of the sixties that framed the studies on change (mobilizations of students, workers, farmers and women who claimed right to governments) (McAdam, 1988), to the growth of identity activism. It seems that what all the studies share is an "interest in contestation and collective mobilization processes" (Schneiberg and Lounsbury, 2017: 282). Cornelissen and Werner (2014) also point at an interest in the collective action and the capacity of activists to enlist members and gain acceptance and support. This capacity is based on modes of representation that motivate actors because they are grounded in wider cultural-belief systems (Cornelissen and Werner, 2014: 199)

To make collective action possible, activists need at least to succeed at creative identity framing. The development of a social movement will depend, therefore, on the establishing of a clear link between the issue they want to change, and "one or more highly salient identities, thereby conferring ownership of the issue to those groups" (McAdam, 2017: 200).

Since the First Industrial Revolution, different sociologists have analysed the relationship between social movements and the state or private institutions, and its impact on civil society. These thinkers often link the issue with dynamics of conflict and consensus (Coser, 1956; Galtung, 1969; Curle and Dugam, 1981, Freedman, 2014). How these dynamics play out since 1970 to 2011 is the focal question that unites the academic literature in this paper. As De Bakk et al. (2013: 288) assess, "groups seeking change often mobilize collectively outside established institutions to assert new logics and disrupt taken-for-granted arrangements". As it will be shown below, the disruptive logics involve consent within the groups that collide with the stabilised order.

Theoretical framework: Theory of Social Communication

This paper is based on a study that analyses the relationships between the transformations in the Communication System that affect social movements and their links with social changes. In particular, it is focused on whether those communicative transformations result in the creation of consensus dynamics, conflict dynamics, or both at the same time. For the analysis, consideration has been also given to other dynamics affecting the whole society.

The study's theoretical framework is the Theory of Social Communication developed by Manuel Martin Serrano (Martin Serrano, 1986). This theory interprets the relationships among social formations (SS) and communication institutional systems (CS) as an interdependence between two systems, which are autonomous but affect each other.

The theoretical reflections on this link appear in the 16th century. Since then, the social uses of communication and information technologies have been frequently considered the main procedures to transform institutional and interpersonal relationships. Humanists, Illuminists and Positivists have shared this sociohistorical view, which helped them to foresee the change in pre-industrial societies (Martín Serrano, 2014).

From the time of the appearance of the electronic media, those technologies have been considered the foundation for the development of the "mass society". Since Gabriel Tarde (2011, 1890), the massive use of mediated communications has been seen as inseparable from the industrial revolutions. Apart from Cultural Theorists, Functionalist and Structural-Functionalist authors are the key scientists who linked those social uses of ICT with human progress. It should be pointed out that, after the Second World War, the "optimistic and progressive view" about historical changes based on scientific and economic development was not as shared as it was before. Frankfurt School authors and others from other stances have shown that "Social Communication" had had a lot to do with the world order established after the war conflict and with new social control mechanisms.

Based on the Marxists postulates, the author of *Social Production of Communication* (Martín Serrano, 1986) uses a perspective from the analysis of communication and society. This approach is based on a homology/difference criterion between the levels (CS) and (SS), since in both cases the same levels exist: infrastructure, structure and superstructure.

The "Theory of Social Communication" was developed when it was not possible to imagine the features and output of the digital network. Therefore, sociohistorical changes related to those new ICTs were left out of the social movements' analysis. This paper tries to offer such an analysis including the ICTs.

Methodological framework: Social production of communication and social reproduction

The same methodology implemented before in a Research and Innovation project has been used in this study. This project called "*Social production of communication and*

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social reproduction in the age of globalisation"[2] comprised a content analysis of the scientific discourses in specialized literature. These discourses are related to existing interdependences between the transformations of communication and social changes in the globalisation age. Of the total examined resources (70 books, 10 book chapters and 33 papers in scientific journals, dating from 1970 to 2011), a corpus of 2300 sentences was created and included in the R&D database. A "sentence" is defined as follows:

> *[…] is the transcription of an argument onto a well-formed narrative, following a design that makes that reasoning comparable to alternative ones* (Bernete and Velarde, 2014: 95).

In this case, what it is analysed is scientific narrative. The localization and transcriptions of these arguments come from a previous design[3] based on the application of structural and discriminative techniques, which allows the construction of equivalent measurable and quantifiable analysis units. The following table shows the protocol with the list of references taken into account by analysts in the R&D data collection:

Table 1. Protocol for Source Selection

I. Transformations In Communication that are Reflected in Public Communication [Scp].[A]Transformations that Transcend (Or Will Transcend) to Other, Non-Communicational Systems [Ss]- [Sr]
Reference types: • Transformations of public communication systems   • Transformations of public communication processes   • Transformations of public communication mediations   And, correlatively:
II. CHANGES IN *NON*-COMMUNICATIONAL SYSTEMS [*SS]- [SR*], that are (or will be) related to transformations in public communication systems [SCP].
Reference types: • Changes in social system organization and components   • Changes in social processes   • Changes in social mediations   • References to groups involved in social changes   ↓
III. Insofar as Those Relationships are Related (Or May Become So) to Social Reproduction in the Age of Globalization
Reference types: • Reproduction or transformation of the states, dynamics, of globalized society.
[a] "Public communication" uses communication systems that are **not** privative and do **not** have access restrictions (by definition).

Source: Bernete and Velarde, 2014:100.

In this study, a broad and inclusive perspective of the issue has been used to select the sample. The selection of the semantic field is based on some of the topics proposed by the *Journal of Social Movement Studies*[4]*:* contributions dealing with different types of movements, including gender, race, indigenous peoples' rights, ecology, youth, religion, disability, and others. It also includes all forms of representation and communication linked with social change, such as cyber cultures, hackers, etc. Networks supporting

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[2]   R&D project with reference: CS020010-22104-C03-01. From: 01/2011 to12/2013. Hereinafter mentioned as <R&D>.

[3]   For an in-depth description of Design and Testing of Models for the Analysis of Future Scenarios, see Bernete and Velarde, 2014: 94).

[4]   See: http://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=csms20

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broad "ways of life" associated with alternative social systems, 'identities and the construction of collective identities", theoretical reflections on the space´s context ("local, regional, national, international and global socio-economic, and cultural movements") and theoretical approaches "on the significance of social movements and protest".

From the abovementioned database, a criterion based on searching parameters has been set up in order to get information related to the communicative transformations that affect collectives, such as social and politic movements and NGOs. The result of this searching has yielded a sample of 180 sentences, whose content is described and analysed below in this paper.

Dynamics related to social movements, social consensus and conflict

In the sample selected for this study, there is information about the diverse social consensus and conflict dynamics that are taking place in a society where the ICTs play a major role in the social changes these collectives are involved in. Therefore, the purpose of this analysis is to contribute to the knowledge of these kinds of dynamics and to determine the different forms they can take. Amongst these dynamics, the following stand out: social agreement regarding collective awareness, political commitment, moral issues or public affairs participation; and social conflicts leading to group protests or civil resistance, among many others. The analysis is organised according to the following phases:

First phase: affected collectives

This phase focuses on the study of the affected organizations and collectives. They are as follows:

− NGOs

− Social movements, which include feminist groups, hackers and trade unions.

− Political movements in general and those including liberation movements (such as the EZLN – the Zapatista Army for National Liberation -).

− Civil society in general, which can set up diverse social movements when affected by public communication.

It should be specified that there are sentences that refer to public communication used by institutions in general, including: NGOs, social movements and political movements.

Table 2. Affected social collectives

NGOs	Social movements	Political movements	Civil society
31%	90 %	27%	17%

Source: author's own.

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The results reported in the above table show that the vast majority of the sentences refer to communicational transformations affecting social movements. Just one third of the sentences talks about NGOs, followed by those that do it about political movements. Lastly, barely one quarter of the sentences relate to communicational transformations that provoke social mobilisations of various kinds.

Second phase: consensus and social conflict dynamics

The social consensus//conflict dynamics generated by the transformations of the communicational system are specifically analysed in this phase, according to the following protocol[5]:

Table 3. Social Consensus/Conflict Dynamics related to ICT uses by Social Movements

Referred exclusively to social consensus, when they foster:
- Social development.
- The end of poverty and social exclusion.
- Meeting social demands.
- Solidarity.
- Regional integration.
- Social and economic balance worldwide.
- Social equality
- Fair distribution of the wealth.
- Democratization
- Freedom of expression.
- Development of a multicultural society.
- Liberation of peoples and groups.
-
Referred exclusively to social conflict, when they contribute to:
- A decrease in the State control of the population or other private institutions.
- A deterioration or rupture of social or institutional relationships.
- Identity conflicts.
- Criminal activities.
- An increase of aggressiveness.
- Chaos and social fragmentation.
Referred to consensus and, eventually, to conflict, when they simultaneously:
- Boost the agreement of anti-globalisation groups and the conflict with the institutions that underpin the globalised system.
- Facilitate the mobilisation of the groups against government action (wars, laws, etc.).
- Allow the sharing of interest, which may reinforce pathological or destructive behaviours.
- Make it possible the transfer of the collective action towards ICT, which generate drastic and radical changes (in society, family, relationships, etc.).

Source: author's own.

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[5] The protocol is based on the categories used in the Doctoral Thesis of Casas-Mas, B. (2017). Public Communication Transformations in the Globalisation Era and its Influence on Social Consensus and Conflict. Complutense University of Madrid (Spain).

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The results of the second phase of the study are shown in the table below:

Table 4. Number of sentences included in each consensus//conflict dynamic

Dynamic	Percentage of Sentences
Referring exclusively to social consensus	16.
Referring exclusively to social conflict	5.
Referring to consensus and, eventually, to conflict	79.

Source: author's own.

Taking into account these results, the following is considered:

- Communicational transformations generate social consensus when all the sectors of the society, both public and private, benefit from them. A quarter of sentences is exclusively related to social consensus. For instance:

> "*The introduction of the ICTs makes possible new ways of communication for community work, (a communicational transformation that depends on), the development of inclusive policies for all the sectors of society, politicians, NGO officials, representatives of local communities, and private sector leaders, which allows economic and social growth*" (ID[6]. 1626, R&D database).

- Communicational transformations can also lead to consensus among different social groups but, at the same time, can trigger disagreement with other groups or institutions holding different positions or interests. This category "consensus/ conflict" comprises almost all of the sentences where the communicational transformation affects social movements, NGOs and other political movements. This is because this kind of institutions generally aim at the social change or the transformation of the established order, which contradicts the interests of other private institutions, governments, etc. For example:

> "*New communication and media strategies make new ways of accessing the public space, which enables social and political movements to fight the rest of political actors on an equal basis*".
> (RD 96, R&D database).

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[6] ID. Sentence Identifier in the R&D database.

There is a substantial difference between the above sentence and the previous one: in sentence 96 the agreement of groups of citizens makes it possible "to fight" against other groups.

- It is remarkable that only almost one in ten sentences of the sample refers exclusively to social conflict. It seems to be a meagre result as the social movement analysis has been historically linked to protests, riots and fight between groups. In the example below, the conflict is about social movements struggling to have access to technological innovations in some countries around the world and not an interest's conflict with an institution.
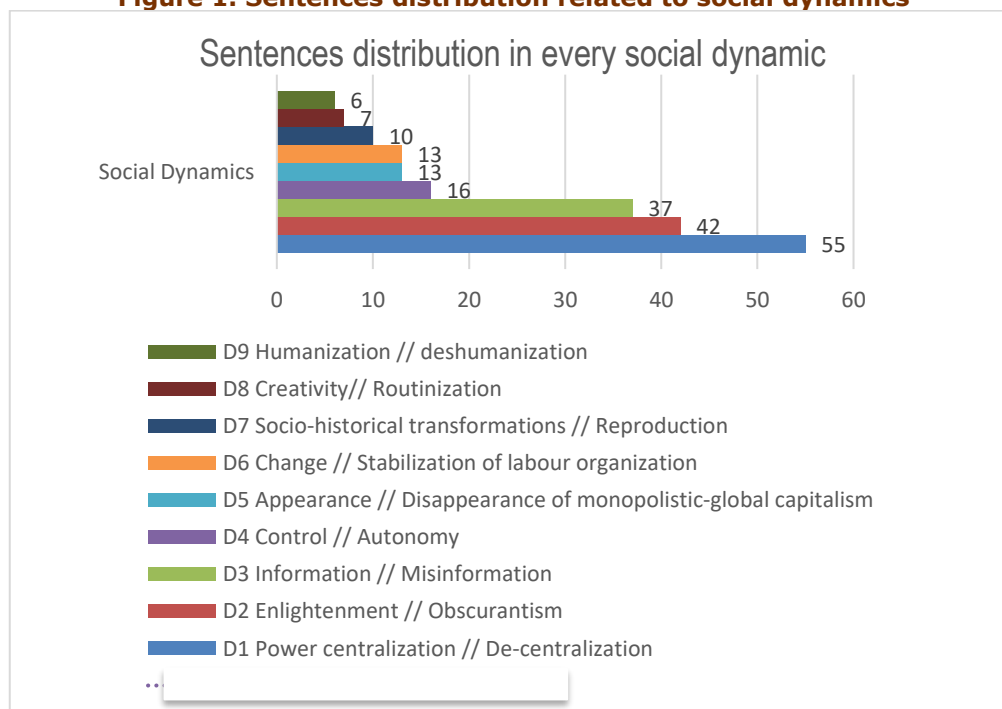
> *"The digital divide (the near absence of communications structures)*
> *causes obstacles that hinder development for social groups in Latin*
> *America and Africa"*. (ID 743, R&D database).

Third phase: other social dynamics

The methodological design of the abovementioned R&D considered a categorization of the set sentences according to nine social dynamics affected by communicational transformations (Cf. Bernete and Velarde, 2014). The same categorization has been used for this analysis in order to stablish the relationships with social consensus and conflict.

The graph below shows the sentences distribution on every social dynamic. On some occasions, the same sentence can be simultaneously related to various dynamics.

Figure 1. Sentences distribution related to social dynamics

Source: author's own.

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Social dynamic 1: "Power centralization // De-centralization"

Most of the analysed sentences describe technological innovations involving power de-centralization as follows: a decrease in political and economic power, a decline in power of some institutions, horizontality of power, participation, democratization, or delegitimation of the current system and its institutions.

With regard to the texts referring exclusively to social consensus, an issue appears in the majority of cases: *Virtual assembly boots the participation of NGOs* (Zhao and Hackett, 2005) and *social movements* (López, Roig and Sádaba, 2003). These organizations allow its members to work together (Klein, 2001), ensuring the success in mass mobilizations (Surman and Reilly, 2005; Tilly, 2009). Furthermore, virtual communication fosters a legitimation of NGOs' and other volunteer organizations' activities (Surman and Reilly, 2005).

From a sociological perspective, Coser (1956: 204) pointed out that those legitimation processes benefit even governments because this kind of groups act as "safety valves", avoiding potential conflicts.

Han (2014a: 23) takes a more critical point of view, arguing that the consensus among the members of social movements is ephemeral and breeds no future, precisely due to the digital communication speed.

With regard to the texts referring to consensus and, eventually, to conflict, there are quite a few sentences related to the following issues:

a) *Cyberdemocracy may alter the conventional patterns of power* (Curran, 2005), *which could affect co-responsibility of the members of virtual communities* (Willson, 1997). Melucci (1980) warned about the risk of discontinuity and fragmentation of social movements due to this trend towards power horizontality.

b) *The agreement for social mobilization weakens the power of States and governments*.

The Internet facilitates the mobilization, the identification of global interlocutors and makes the comprehension of social demands possible, involving more segments of civil society (Tilly, 2009). Besides, the Internet encourages negotiations with the political power, as well as limiting the scope for action of the State and the development of a military order (Valencia, 2003). This goes along the thinking of Manuel Castells (2009, in Freedman, 2014), who points to the contradiction that "in spite of the growing concentration of power, capital and production in the global communication system, the actual content and format of communication practises are increasingly diversified" (Freedman, 2014: 56). Similarly, the number of sentences where the role of the ICTs is to provide freedom of expression is remarkable. This freedom lets people disclose their political opinion, which stops the privilege and immunity of states (Sreberny 2005).

The analyzed texts sometimes describe social networks as the tool for mobilization, which overthrows dictatorial regimes (e.g. Gergen, 2008). Nevertheless, Morozov (2011:183) recalls the following: "Before policymakers embrace digital activism as an effective way of pushing against authoritarian governments, they are well-advised to fully investigate its impact both on its practitioners and on the overall tempo of democratization".

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c) *ICT fosters consensus among social movements that fight to change the socio-economic order supported by the media*. For instance, women demanding greater gender equality to governments (Giddens, 2000), technological communication movements requiring more freedom of speech (Wolton, 2002), etc. Sometimes the texts highlight the questioning of the global order (Muñoz, 2005; Martín Serrano, 1994). For example, movements about de-legitimization of the neoliberal system, the globalization paradigm (Amat et al., 2002; Fuch, 2008; López, Roig and Sádaba, 2003) or the modernization paradigm (Miller, 2011).

Social dynamic 2: "Enlightenment // Obscurantism"

This is the second dynamic that includes a larger number of sentences. It refers to communicational transformations that lead to autonomy of thought, of actions, critical awareness, capacity to convene political and/or citizen mobilizations. It is also related exclusively to social consensus or to social consensus and, at the same time, to conflict.

Concerning the texts that refer exclusively to social consensus, the mentioned issue is *changes of women representations in the media that strengthen feminist movements* (Curran, 2005). Laube (2010: 15) notes that traditional social movements approaches also analysed the mobilisation of these marginalized groups and the political opportunities than enable them "to gain access to mainstream institutions". In the sample, the *creation of popular media that allows non-elite groups to gain greater attention*, which benefits movements for democracy is also pointed out. With regard to this, Teun A. van Dijk suggests: "An Internet-based social network of oppressed people who are engaged in cognitive discourse in their exchange of ideas, beliefs, values, judgements and values" (van Dijk, 1995:244).

Concerning the texts that refer to consensus and, eventually, to conflict, the recurrent issue is the following: *The critical capacity of globalisation generates social resistance against the globalised system*. The analysed literature indicates the social agreement of "antiglobalisation" groups, "protesters", "resistance" or "emancipatory" groups. They promote a global awareness to change the current social order (Cheney, Ganesh and Zoller, 2005, Petrillli and Ponzio, 2000, Cavallo, 2005, etc.). In addition, this change triggers the conflict with the interests of power. The interests in detecting manipulating mechanisms by North American governments and international corporations led scholars to analyse the progressive empowerment of these movements at the beginning of the globalisation. Subsequently, digital technologies made the agreement among the members of the "global resistance movement" (Amat et al., 2002) easier, such as the Anti-Globalisation Movement, which has been analysed by different authors (Ramonet, 2000; Chomsky, 1992; Žižek, 2002 and many others). Castells (2002a:86) points out that the main merit of this movement is to have brought to the top of the political-social debate what was presented as the only and indisputable path towards the progress of humanity.

Social dynamic 3: "Information // Misinformation"

This is the third dynamic of the study embracing a greater number of sentences. They are related to concepts such as the increase of information flows and the rise in virtual interactions between members of organizations and their followers. In these texts, only

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consensus is mentioned. For example, *interaction and telematics links make it possible to coordinate actions and work groups through screens, which facilitates the increase of social and political movements* (López, Roig and Sábada, 2003); or *the guarantee of a universal service of instant communication will make possible a global conversation through social movements, which will help to foster democratic institutions* (Mattelart, 2002).

In this dynamic, the communicational transformation involves an inter-group consensus or a general social consensus. It is remarkable that, as Des Freedman (2014: 109) notes, in spite of "the opportunities for distributed communication that connect independent members of the public pleasure, politics or education, there are all too often new choke points that mediate the process". It seems to be, therefore, a contradiction between the free flow of information and the proliferation of gatekeepers, and the phenomena of the "hypermediation" (Morozov, 2011) that has made new communication forms (e.g. blogging) so widespread.

Social dynamic 4: "Control // Autonomy"

Communicational transformations affecting liberalization and/or autonomy of social movements have been included within this social dynamic, which is largely linked to consensus. There are two main issues mentioned in these texts:

a) *ICT increases the autonomy of vulnerable groups*. This autonomy is possible when ICTs improve communications strategies, expanding campaigns and, in general terms, when the technological re-appropriation enhances efficiency. All this autonomy involves less control, repression or constrain exerted by other institutions of power with conflicting interests. Indeed, talking about the autonomy of the social movements, Mhlanga and Mpofu, 2014: 130) argue that:

> *"In today´s networked world, groups faced with challenges in accessing information and participation in political processes and those living in societies where laws, policies and the political environment hinder free communication have found platforms presented by new media opportunities to create their own autonomous spaces".*

Liberation of this groups may be linked with the abovementioned "freedom of speech" process (Vïzer, 2011) thanks to ICT, because the communication for development is disseminated through them. Thus, it enables the liberation of oppressed peoples (Gerace, 2008). Authors such as Enzensberger (1971) anticipated this approach. He stressed the potential of new electronic media of the industry as a pacifying element for development. Nevertheless, other researchers such as Lipset (in Habermas, 1984-1968) questioned McLuhan's and Enzensberger's technological uthopianism. This author studied the social movements' struggle and their lack of understanding of the technological development as a factor of individuals´ freedom. People could never relinquish their possessions, and get away from labour alienation and social status pressure.

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b) *The collective identity of group reference*. Public communication throughout the media contributes to the acquisition of a symbolic capital. It reinforces group identity and strengthens the sense of belonging to a group (Sgroi, 2004, Chaparro, 2004; Álvarez, 2005; Curran, 2005). These symbols may also foster the action of social movements (Duarte, 1998; Marí, 2004) or spread national pride (Sampedro, Burnhurst and Cordeiro 2003¸ Zhao and Hackett, 2005). The growth of nationalisms has also been analysed by Giddens (2000), Mattelart (A. & M.) and Delacourt (1984) and by Arendt (2006), but they consider it as a potential source of conflict.

Social dynamic 5: "Appearance // Disappearance of monopolistic-global capitalism"

Most sentences in this category mention consensus and conflict dynamics simultaneously. They are about technological innovations affecting anti-globalisation movements, which is the main group that fights against the monopolistic-global capitalism system[7]. As Echart, López and Orozco (2005:20) point out, the anti-globalisation movement arises out of the questioning of "neoliberal globalisation, its characteristics and its impacts". ICT are said to boost social agreement of groups rather than confront the neoliberal globalisation (Amat et al., 2002). These networks try to drive cooperation among countries (Muñoz, 2005); they are cyber activists´ platforms that promote the renovation of the informational capitalism´s structures (Fuchs, 2008).

In the analysed literature, digital platforms are suggested to assemble people physically and eventually triggering confrontations with the police and military forces under the authority of capitalist institutions. However, even if this questioning of Capitalism is channelized through active fighting, it does not involve the end of the system, but only - and not always -, the visibility and resistance of groups like the counter-globalisation movement. The sentences clearly reflect the consequences of these groups' agreements, because they generally lead to a conflict with the currently economic order (Sábada and Roig, 2004; Sreberny, 2005).

That means that those social movements might cause some inconveniences to capitalist institutions but, in any case, the use of ICT would provoke the disappearance of the monopolistic capitalism. Among other things, because "social media do not seem to result in democratic networked organization structures, but are embedded into hierarchies, internal power structures and the formation of elites within social movements" (Gerbaudo, 2012, in Fuchs and Sandoval, 2015). Treré and Cargnelutti (2014: 183-203) emphasize that the new Internet economy is far from democracy, as it is linked to "neoliberal surveillance issues, corporative control and immaterial labour exploitation of the users".

Social dynamic 6: "Change // Stabilization of labour organization"

This dynamic includes sentences of consensus, in which the communicational transformation generates new forms of networking, changes of the internal communications within the organizations, new ways of administration and coordination,

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[7] The concept of" monopolistic capitalism" refers to the last quarter of the ninetieth century, when the society presented the features of what non-Marxists sociologists named as "mass consumer society", "welfare society", post-industrial society" (Cf. Martín Serrano, 1986; 2008: 41).

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new strategies, etc. That is to say, changes in the labour organization that have been previously agreed by these organizations and that lead to greater effectivity in the achievement of objectives, either an increase of the visibility of the actions, or the capacity for mobilization and participation.

A big issue has been identified: *The globalisation of communications increases the ability of bringing citizens together*. ICTs make the "reticular structure" of these organisations more effective (Juris, 2004), for example, by reducing bureaucracy (León, Burch and Tamayo, 1995), or improving message penetration in the citizens' awareness (López, Roig and Sábada, 2003, Sreberny, 2005).

In this respect, Melucci (1980:219-220) asserted that the control of information by the State and other powered institutions bestows social movements the nature of individual deviant behaviours. In the globalisation age, new social movements do not focus on the politic system, but they search for autonomy and independence from the State. They are characterised by "solidarity" and demands of "identity". However, this author also warned about the danger of "fragmentation" and "discontinuity" within those groups, because they reject any kind of representation (Melucci, 1980:220-221). The analysis of Mattelart (A. and M.) and Delacourt (1984) focused more on the influence of globalised communication on group cohesion than on fragmentation.

Social dynamic 7: "Socio-historical transformations // Reproduction"

Nearly all the sentences within this dynamic relate communicational transformations to social changes, socio-historical/structural transformations.

Regarding the texts where the social use of ICT contributes to the unity of society, *new media increase all forms of global integration of social movements, third-sector organisations, communities and global citizen networks* (Cavallo, 2006; Lash, 2005; Del Gizzo and Rozengardt, 2005; Tilly, 2009).

Nevertheless, Jan Van Dijk questions the effects of the new media on modern society and states that "changes will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary and that the network society will not be an altogether different type of society" (Van Dijk, 2012:277).

Bourdieu and Passeron (1981) provided an additional theoretical perspective. They considered that the integration of a group lies in identity ("total or partial") of the "inculcated habitus" by different socializing institutions (school, media, family…). These authors considered the social philosophies of consensus "naïve", arguing that they reduce the integration of a group to the possession of a common repertoire of representations (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1981: 76).

Regarding the texts where the social use of ICT contributes to consensus and at the same time conflict, *activism is said to go against the reproduction of the current social order. In this dynamic, the "established order" is generically mentioned*, without specifying which kind of order they fight. For instance, consensus among members of these organizations, thanks to the activism of minority media, may be quite effective to change the established order (Curran, 2005).

From Žižek´s (2008) point of view, this agreement between members of emancipatory groups pretending to change the social order presents a contradiction: the system they

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want to overthrow is exactly the one that provide the tools they need for mobilization. Thus, this author openly questions global movements´ efficiency for a real social change.

Social dynamic 8: "Humanization // De-humanization"

There are few sentences included in this dynamic. They are clauses that exclusively hint at ICTs promoting network solidarity. These communicational transformations can produce solidarity within the whole society (which involves social consensus), or solidarity towards specific collectives or social causes (which may simultaneously involve social consensus and conflict). For example, an exodus of refugees to neighbouring countries might affect collective action through the social net to protect their human rights, and this could put in a difficult situation those governments with anti-immigration policies.

Normally, the effectiveness of communication in those cases comes from both, instrumental and symbolic terms that facilitate collective identity and solidarity of social groups. But other scholars like Rupp and Taylor (1987) or Melucci (1996) (in Diani, 2000), consider that it is "the feeling of mutual identification and solidarity which bond movement actors together and secure the persistence of movements even when specific campaigns are not taking place. (Diani, 2000: 387).

Some authors such as Melucci (1980) or Castells (2002a) have linked the growth of cooperative culture thanks to the digital communication, to the appearance and proliferation of movements driven by solidarity. On the contrary, Han (2014b) considers that in the digital age, when a universal cooperation to overturn the neoliberal system may exist, there is a great contradiction: "there is no cooperative, interconnected multitude to rise up in global protest and revolution" (Han, 2014b: Paragraph 15). Žižek (2008, 20-22) goes further, asserting that the Internet does not promote even the meaning of "universal sharing". He notes that the net power belongs to what he calls "liberal communists", who are legitimated by the whole society. They represent the new power of the modern Capitalism (formerly banking) and they do not aim at economic wealth, only want to change the world, even though in this goal they increase profit.

Social dynamic 9: "Creativity // Routinization"

A scarce number of sentences have been found within this dynamic, all of them referring to communicational transformations involving routinization or commercialization of culture, arts, education, media, Internet, etc. These texts also include those transformations that produce cultural autonomy or dependence and other phenomena like the disappearance of cultures, of languages, transculturation, cultural uniformity, etc. As mentioned before, these transformations might be related to consensus and social conflict. The most common issue is the following: *New media generate consensus of groups that reject cultural homogenization*. For instance, the introduction of horizontal communication of new media to avoid homogenization (Gerace, 2008). It is also a better access for cosmopolitan groups, consumers, fundamentalists and, in general terms, movements reacting to that cultural unification. (Murdock, 2006).

Digital transmission and storage technologies or social networks such as Indymedia, may change people´s mentalities, values, beliefs and worldviews (VV.AA., 2000). However, as López (2006) points out, cultural cohesion of new movements that pursue a radical

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transformation of the established transnational order is the key to the clash between those groups and power institutions.

Theoretical reflections

The analysis of logical sentences provides an overview of future scenarios about the role played by the ICTs as a tool for diverse social movements in the reproduction or the social change in an age of globalisation. The scientific and technical literature about the issue makes a record of the social consensus promoted by social movements and, to a lesser extent, by NGOs and other political movements. This consensus is sometimes connected to conflicts with institutions and organizations, whose interests antagonise. In other words, technological innovations that affect social movements might be linked to the perspective of conflict being a driving force for social change. Marxism and social Darwinism have supported this approach, as well as sociologists worldwide who assert that conflict is essential and positive for social relationships (González Seara, 1971:138-227).

Eventually, communicational transformations that affect NGOs result in humanization social dynamics (as they promote solidarity actions). This may be in line with the consensus theory proposed by Comte and Durkheim, for whom it is crucial to have social harmony based on a general agreement among individuals and groups. (Cf. Campbell, 2002: 138-227).

The vast majority of the analysed sentences point to communicational transformations that affect social movements and, at the same time, are related to: firstly, an increase in democratic participation and a decrease in political and economic power. Secondly, the rise in the critical thought, in the ability to convene citizens and mobilize people for political purposes. Thirdly, the growth of the information flows and the virtual interactions between members of social movements, which would be able (or not) to give rise to more face-to-face interactions.

This perspective goes in line with some scholars who claim that contemporary revolutions are linked with networked protests of connective action and social media movements (Castells, 2012), whereas other scholars consider it as techno-determinism and see in social media tools of governments and capitalist institutions (Fuchs, 2015). Noam Chomsky (1999) has long referred to the technological determinism that links ICTs with more participatory democracy.

Along the same lines, around the 1970s, Armand and Michèle Mattelart (2000:162) proposed that the growing importance of the media and communications systems and their internationalization was crucial for citizens as they assumed certain values and worldviews. This view is at odds with the idea of technological innovations providing social movements with a greater exercise of critical reflexivity. Both authors denounce the use of communication by certain established powers (either governments or corporative organizations) to maintain the *status quo*. Additionally, even though in the analysed texts of this study there are many sentences about the so-called horizontality (the decrease in governments' power), it does not seem to affect all private institutions the social movements have conflicting interests with. It cannot be omitted that, in the globalisation era, the most powerful technological moguls are offering these innovations "for free" to social movements and many other users.

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Regarding the increase of information flows and interactions that affect social movements, the analysed literature has to do with the concept of "Network Society". This term (primarily coined by François Lyotard) has been used by authors, such as Castells (2004) and Melucci (1980) with their interpretation of the New Social Movements within the space of the New ICT. Specifically, in the realm of social nets, Melucci (2001) stands that the new social movements are characterized by two factors: a constant negotiation of collective identity, and its simultaneous unification and fragmentation.

New social movements might be understood as reactive forms of collective action facing a pre-existing conflict. They search for solutions to give answers to the lack of assessment during the post-materialism period. Candon (2010) amplifies this argument and points out that ICTs, and specially the Internet, have produced a flow of connections and information, disrupting the structures of activism, participation and political association.

Conclusions

In the analysed scientific and academic literature, for every text related to consensus, there are five addressing consensus and conflict together. That means that even though virtual interactions are considered to increase citizens' participation and the democratization of societies, *according to academics and scientists, the use of ICT by social movements contributes to the outburst of conflicts between socio-political systems and civil organisations.*

There are positive expectations about the setting-up of social movements and the achievement of their goals thanks to the use of ICT. This leads to the following conclusion:

There are new technologies that encourage the exchange of knowledge and social interactions among individuals and their networks. These technological innovations work collectively in real time and blocking them up is quite intricate. In this context, it is assessed that by using ICT, social movements might help the power transference from the State to the Civil Society.

It should be pointed out that these consensual dynamics are the result of conflicts (usually of a political nature) or may have been their source. Anyhow, they might lead to an institutional power crisis.

In most cases, "taking part in a protest through the Internet" is regarded an "action" that may well lead to social change. In such cases, the differentiation between executive and expressive acts is fairly blurred. The difference between "to do" and "what needs to be done" is very often confused.

In the light of this analysis, it is worth mentioning the boundaries of this study and of any other based on representation analysis. Those representations could be comparable to previous ones, expressed throughout the history of the ideas. This article has tried to provide an evaluation of differences and equivalences when the results of the study made it possible. Nevertheless, it is not possible to foresee the changes linked to the use of ICT by social movements that will take place in the future, based on nothing more than prospective approaches included in the analysed scientific-academic literature. That would be a transgression of level.

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We can, however, validate or refute a representation of sociohistorical changes. Although in order to achieve such purpose, one has to wait for the necessary length of time for this prediction to be verified. Thus, verifying whether social movements will be able to transfer the power from the State to the civil society thanks to the use of ICT is an interesting possible research to conduct in the future.

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