Spanish indignados and the evolution of #15M:
Towards networked para-institutions

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Internet and politics

• Participation + Internet =
  • More participation (Rainie, 2011; Christensen, 2011).
  • More extrarepresentative participation (Cantijoch, 2005).

• Non-participation + Internet = Participation, interest (Norris & Curtice, 2006; Borge & Cardenal, 2012

• Change of values (Inglehart, 2008).
• Change of paradigm (Sampedro, 2012).
Spanish users and politics on the Internet

• Political institutions use the Internet as usual (Criado & Martínez Fuentes, 2009; Peña-López, 2011).

• People use critically the Internet for political purposes (Padró-Solanet, 2010)

• Very important role of Twitter in politics (Izquierdo Labella, 2012; Lotan et al., 2011).

• Emergent component of Twitter use in politics (Guadián Orta et al., 2012)
The indignados movement: 15M, 12M15M, 29S

• Indignados: young, digitally competent, politically competent, left-wing bias, not trusting institutions (Anduiza, Cristancho & Sabucedo, 2012; Anduiza, Martín & Mateos, 2012).

• Decentralized structure, coalitions of smaller organizations (González-Bailón et al., 2011).

• Hybridization of the virtual-urban space (Martínez Roldán, 2011; Castells, 2012).
Research questions

• What are the characteristics of the movement?

• How did it evolve?

• How did it set relationships with other organizations/institutions?

• What is the inner and outer structure of the movement?
Hypotheses

• H1: Extra-representative movements are initiated by gathering a critical mass on social networking sites and evolve, on the outside, into a para-institution, while they keep an emergent and decentralized network-like structure on the inside.

• H2: Unlike institutions, that have a usually exclusive membership, citizen networks create para-institutions that share members among them.

• H3: The dialogue between political institutions and network para-institutions is weak, but existing, and concentrates on the left-side of the political arena.

• H4: When dialogue is non-existing, mass media act as the channel through which political institutions (normally on the right) and network para-institutions speak with each other.

• H5: Dialogue and lack of tension smothes online participation. Lack of dialogue and tension sparks participation and boosts it beyond representational participation.
Methodology

• Three phases: 15 May 2011 (15M); first anniversary and the global movement of 12 May 2012 (12M15M); events of 25 September 2012 (25S).

• Monitoring of words on Twitter: 3.4M tweets; 580,000 users.

• Categorization: gender, location, occupation, “tribe”, join.

• Relationships based on RT: directed graphs.

• Measurement of influence of tribes by connectivity through k-core decomposition (Seidman, 1983; Kitsak et al., 2010).

• Community detection through Louvain method (Blondel et al., 2008).
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Participation (I/II)

15M-25S_users_group: usuarios únicos

- 25S
- 12M-15M
- 15M

**Tableau**
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Participation (II/II)

Users activity 15M_mayo_authors_profiles

Users activity 2SS_agosto-octubre_authors_profiles

Users activity 12M-15M_mayo_authors_profiles

Tweets
RTs sent
RTs received
Replies sent
Replies received
Characterization of the participants

• Unbalanced men/women (but evolving towards balance), youngster, student, high educational level, involved with communications or technology, urban.

• Evolves into a more typical profile liked with activism and labor unions.

• Spreads out of big cities.
Evolution of the movements: 15M (origin)
Evolution of the movements: 15M (early)
Evolution of the movements: 15M (boom)
Evolution of the movements: 15M (late)
Evolution of the movements: 25S (origin)
Evolution of the movements: 25S (early)
Evolution of the movements: 25S (boom)
Evolution of the movements: 25S (late)
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**Relationship 15M/25S vs. institutional politics (I)**

*Max k-index, average k-index and standard deviation of the k-indexes of the nodes that formed the analysed groups during the 15M, 12M15M and 25S periods.*
Relationship 15M/25S vs. institutional politics (II)

Mention graph of the analysed groups in the 15M period.
Note: The size corresponds to the in-degree of the node.
Relationship 15M/25S vs. institutional politics (III)

Mention graph of the analysed groups in the 12M15M period.
Note: The size corresponds to the in-degree of the node.
Relationship 15M/25S vs. institutional politics (&IV)

Mention graph of the analysed groups in the 25S period. 
Note: The size corresponds to the in-degree of the node.
Conclusions (I)

• Strong bound between online and offline.

• Movements are para-institutions: institutions on the outside, horizontal and decentralized constructs on the inside.

• The movement survives despite evolution of core and rotation of members.
Conclusions (&II)

• Close resonance with similar movements.
• Close relationship with ideologically similar institutions.
• Difficult relationship with other institutions.

• New relationships with media.
• The role of media as intermediators between movement and other institutions.

• Advancement of extra-representative participation.
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