



FACULTAD DE COMUNICACIONES

DEL TESTIMONIO AL TESTIMONIAL

Propuesta de conceptualización del Contenido

Generado por Usuario de carácter testimonial (CGUt)

en Twitter aplicada al caso de las protestas contra el

impeachment de Dilma Rousseff

Por

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From Testimony to Testimonial: A proposal for the conceptualization of testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC) on Twitter applied to the case of the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment

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Resumen

La tesis conceptualiza y operacionaliza empíricamente (cuantitativa y cualitativamente) el concepto de Contenido Generado por Usuario de carácter testimonial, o CGUt. El caso seleccionado para aplicar dicho concepto fue el impedimento de la expresidenta de Brasil Dilma Rousseff, tal como observado a partir de los tuits emitidos con el #ForaTemer durante dos protestas en el contexto de su juicio final: 31/08/2016 y el 04/09/2016. El trabajo empírico utilizó métodos mixtos para: identificar contenidos testimoniales; caracterizarlos individualmente según atributos vía análisis de contenido; y apreciar su proceso de creación como apropiación social de TICs a través de entrevistas en profundidad con una selección de 10 usuarios.

Los resultados muestran diferentes patrones de generación de contenido testimonial por usuarios ordinarios, siendo los principales CGUt Político, CGUt Periodístico y CGUt Expresivo. Los patrones cuantitativos de creación y consumo de CGUt varían significativamente tanto en diferentes contextos (días diferentes) como en un mismo día (etapas de la protesta) y, desde una perspectiva cuantitativa, no parecen muy relevantes en términos de alcance (visualizaciones y retweets), por lo que el CGUt como táctica efectiva de protesta pareciera ser más bien una posibilidad más teórica que concreta, la menos en el caso estudiado. Las entrevistas muestran una fuerte convergencia en la creación de CGUt, vinculada a la percepción de cobertura sesgada por los medios tradicionales, generando una especie de inteligencia colectiva, además de, por un lado, una satisfacción de cumplimiento del deber cívico mermada, por el otro, por la frustración de la ineficacia de las protestas en el ámbito político. Se plantea que tUGC es un concepto interdisciplinario y puede ser aplicado a otras áreas de conocimiento como desastres, entretención y otros.

Abstract

This thesis conceives and operationalises empirically (under the quantitative and the qualitative paradigms) the concept of *testimonial User-Generated Content*, or tUGC. The case selected to apply such concept was Brazil's ex-president's Dilma Rousseff's impeachment process, as observed from tweets posted with #ForaTemer during two protests in the context of her final trial: 08/31/2018 and 09/04/2018. The empirical work uses a mixed-methods approach to: identify testimonial tweets; code them individually applying Content Analysis; and appreciate its creative process through the lenses of the ICT's social appropriation framework via a series of ten interviews with users that produced and published tUGC within the two protests.

Results point to three main different patterns of creation of testimonial UGC: Political tUGC, Journalistic tUGC and Expressive. tUGC proved to be context and stage-sensitive, as its quantitative patterns of creation and diffusion vary significantly as different days or different stages of the same protest are analysed. From a strictly quantitative perspective (retweets), tUGC does not seem very relevant, so its role as an effective protest tactics seems to be limited to a theoretical or at least latent possibility, at least per the studied case. Interviews revealed a clear convergence in the creation of tUGC, linked to the strong perception of all interviewees that traditional media coverage was severely biased, therefore prompting tUGC as a manifestation of collective intelligence. Furthermore, they revealed both a feeling of deep satisfaction related to the fulfilling of a 'civic duty' while on the other hand a sentiment of frustration due to the inefficacy of the protests as the political events followed their original course. It is outlined that tUGC is an interdisciplinary concept that may and should be applied to other disciplines such as disaster management, entertainment and others.

Introduction

2016 was an agitated year for Brazil in terms of political developments. Amidst economic and political crisis, President Dilma Rousseff was impeached on what has been referred to as a “soft coup” by Noam Chomsky (Goodman, 2016) or a “parliamentary coup” (Albuquerque, 2017, p. 1) with mainstream media acting, according to Albuquerque (2017), as a conspiring agent. The whole year was plagued with protests from both sides -pro and anti-impeachment- and social media became a point of convergence and conflict for the two polarized groups, turning it into an important source of information that competed with traditional sources in order to account for the events and subjacent processes.

This research analyses Twitter content created by users, originated during two protests following Rousseff’s ousting, and that contained the hashtag #ForaTemer¹: August 31, 2016, following the proceeding that formally impeached her; and September 04, 2016, first Sunday after it. Building on such data, 10 users that participated on the creation of content within such datasets were strategically selected and interviewed. The objective is to shed light on what has become an inseparable process: the immediate² *creation* of testimonial media content by users in their role of ordinary citizens (Chouliaraki, 2010), and its *publication* and/or *circulation* on Twitter, a ‘real-time’ (Bail, 2014), ‘event-following’ (Rogers, 2014, p. ix) communication tool. I will explore the patterns and modes of creation and circulation of such type of User-Generated Content (UGC) on Twitter, as well as the motivations and consequences of doing so according to some of its authors, those that were interviewed. I will analyse more broadly all testimonial content with the intent to set a standard of reference for the universe of data studied, but I will put particular focus on photo and video testimonial content created by ordinary users,

¹ “Out Temer”, in my translation, in reference to Michel Temer, former vice-president that became her successor. He was officially accused of betrayer by Rousseff’s Party PT (Hirata, 2016).

² Immediate is used here in its double sense: not intervened by media and real-time activity.

who prior to the advent of digital media not only had lesser access to the means to create such content, but more importantly had fewer possibilities to circulate their created content with high levels of reach. Such phenomenon is the centre of this research and will be called **testimonial User-Generated Content**, or **tUGC**.

Nowadays, equipped with smart media-creating devices -such as smartphones- and aided by digital social networks -both of which have been fostered by economic, social, technological and institutional drivers (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007)- those ordinary citizens have been given the potential for mass self-communication (Castells, 2009). The present study advances one-step on assessing to what degree such potential is explored, how it mingles with the rest of the content published within the selected datasets and how are the content authors' processes of creation and diffusion of such content. It is centred, then, both in the creation process and quantitative assessments and analysis of the relative salience of tUGC (retweets, likes, frequencies, timelines etc.) with the aim to set some starting points for further research and paint a detailed picture of the phenomenon observed in the present case study, in some cases raising more questions than answering them, especially in the 'media effects' perspective, for it does not deal with the qualitative effects in the perspective of the audience.

Context of the Case

The scenario for this empirical study is the final chapter of the impeachment process during the year of 2016, when Brazil's former president Dilma Rousseff was voted out by the Senate. That definitive voting that sparked the protests to be analysed took place August 31st during the morning and little after 1pm that day Rousseff's ousting was official news. Around 5pm the same day, Michel Temer was officially nominated the president of Brazil and at 8pm he made his first speech as official president.

Dilma Rousseff had ran for her second mandate in the end of 2014 to what was promising to be the fourth mandate in a row for her party PT, the Workers

Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*³), meaning 16 years holding the presidency, following Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who himself had also won the former two mandates in a row⁴. She won by a very narrow margin over her Aécio Neves (51.64% against 48.36%⁵), who belongs to historical PT's political antagonist social-democrat party PSDB (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira*). From the moment the results of the elections were officially announced, there were accounts of protests asking for Rousseff's impeachment, amongst other solutions to get her out, such as military intervention or cries for the 'leftists' to move to Cuba⁶. Those were the first signs that a radicalized part of the political opposition would not tolerate another mandate without a fight.

The idea of the impeachment itself was first materialized when *Movimento Brasil Livre*, MBL⁷ (Free Brazil Movement, my translation), an alt-right group engaged in deepening neoliberal policies, funded by Koch brothers, USA oil industry magnates^{8 9}, submitted an impeachment accusation to the Brazilian House of Representatives on May 27 2015¹⁰. That process did not flourish and other

³ PT is a historical leftist party with roots on the syndicalism. During the 1980's it was perhaps one of the more radical parties with a socialist inspiration, but in the 2000's it became moderately leftist and was known (and criticized by many of its constituents) by its alliances with centre and centre-right, becoming the left-arm of the status quo (Santos, 2017a). In this metaphor, the right arm would be right-centre parties such as the PMDB, party of former vice-president Michel Temer, an organisation with its roots in the dictatorship, and PSDB (Santos, 2017a). The metaphor elaborates mainly on the idea that both political standpoints did not question fundamental issues rooted in the neoliberal macro-economic policies.

⁴ Brazil's constitution allows for a maximum of two consecutive mandates for the president. After alternating with another person, the president may return, like Lula's intent to run for president after Michel Temer's current 'inherited' mandate.

⁵ Information from the official source in Brazil, *Tribunal de Justiça Eleitoral*: <http://www.tse.jus.br/eleicoes/estatisticas/estatisticas-candidaturas-2014/estatisticas-eleitorais-2014-resultados> retrieved September 14, 2017.

⁶ <http://g1.globo.com/sao-paulo/eleicoes/2014/noticia/2014/10/na-paulista-tucanos-gritam-impeachment-e-petistas-pedem-choro-no-cantareira.html> retrieved September 14, 2017.

⁷ <http://mbl.org.br/> retrieved June 1, 2018.

⁸ <https://www.cartacapital.com.br/blogs/outras-palavras/quem-esta-por-tras-do-protesto-no-dia-15-3213.html> retrieved September 22 2017.

⁹ <https://apublica.org/2015/06/a-nova-roupa-da-direita/> retrieved September 26, 2017.

¹⁰ A very detailed timeline of the events can be accessed here: <http://especiais.g1.globo.com/politica/2016/processo-de-impeachment-de-dilma/da-eleicao-ao-impeachment/> retrieved on September 14 2017.

strategies were formulated in the course of that year, while the economic crisis and political scandals eroded much of Rousseff's and PT's popular support.

The successful procedure, though, took advantage of an opportunity created by the recommendation of non-approval of the 2014 financial balances, due to alleged irregularities on its management by Rousseff's government. These irregularities became the argument for a renewed impeachment process delivered again to the House of Representatives, in a different circumstance: the leader of the House, Eduardo Cunha, accused of corruption and soon to be in jail, had withdrawn his support from the government previously, allegedly because government would have "orchestrated" a "pharaonic" legal action against him¹¹. With less influence on the House by the executive, impeachment became a concrete possibility as an option of political manoeuvre. In the meantime, millions of people were recurrently attending to pro-impeachment protests, making it a stronger case from the perspective of the public opinion. The largest of those was a protest that took over 300 cities in the country and to which around 3.6 million people attended, according to Brazilian Police estimates¹² (see Figure 1).

¹¹ <http://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2015/07/eduardo-cunha-anuncia-rompimento-politico-com-o-governo-dilma.html> retrieved in September 14 2017.

¹² <http://g1.globo.com/politica/noticia/2016/03/manifestacoes-contra-governo-dilma-ocorrem-pelo-pais.html> accessed in September 14 2017.

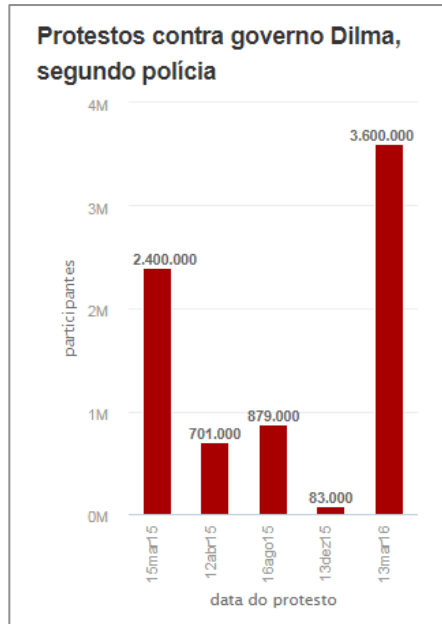


Figure 1: Attendance to the protests against Rousseff between March of 2015 and March of 2016 (Source: G1, with data from National Police).

On April 17th 2016 the House of Representatives voted favourably to open the impeachment investigation and the process went on its course to the equivalent vote on the Senate. On May 12th the Senate also approved to move forward with the legal due process, meaning that on the same day Rousseff was removed from office for up to 180 days, period during which the legal process should take place and Michel Temer became interim president. The final blow on Rousseff was the vote for the impeachment on the Senate on August 31st 2016, after the due discussion, accusation and defence. That is the day of the first dataset of this research, referred to as “Day 1”.

During that week, a big protest was organized in Sao Paulo the following Sunday, September 4th 2016 –which ended up spreading also to many other places, notoriously Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. The second dataset of this research refers to that day, referred to as “Day 2”.

Crime or Coup?

The main motivation for Dilma Rousseff's impeachment-related protests in Brazil – and one of the reasons that motivated me to choose this case- goes beyond partisanship (see Figure 2) or the political polarisation (Goldstein, 2016) that took place in the last few years in the country, following World-Cup related protests in 2013 and a deep economic-political crisis. It translates a widely disseminated perception that the impeachment process was just the most visible face of what critics like Noam Chomsky called a “soft coup” (Goodman, 2016) or like Albuquerque (2017), who called it a “parliamentary coup” (p. 1). As the “farce” that follows the “tragedy” (Löwy, 2016) -in reference to Brazil's military coup d'état in 1964- the impeachment has been distinctly interpreted as a *political process* instead of a *criminal* or *judicial* one, since there was no evident constitutional offence by president Dilma Rousseff that could justify such a serious accusation (Jinkings, Doria, Cleto 2016; Santos, 2017a; Santos, 2017b). The diversity of political orientation of the opponents of the impeachment that hit the streets those days was attested by in situ research (Ortellado, Solano & Moretto, 2016) and confirmed by the present research, meaning they were neither necessarily nor only partisans, and the prevailing discourse during protests was of a republican nature, first opposing the coup (Day 1), then calling for elections (Day 2). That becomes evident through the growth of the adoption of hashtag #DiretasJa¹³ from the first to the second protest (see section 1.2 Hashtags Analysis on the *Results* chapter). That reinforces the perception of a cry for respect to the result of the ballots that led Rousseff to her second mandate.

¹³ “Elections Now” (my translation).

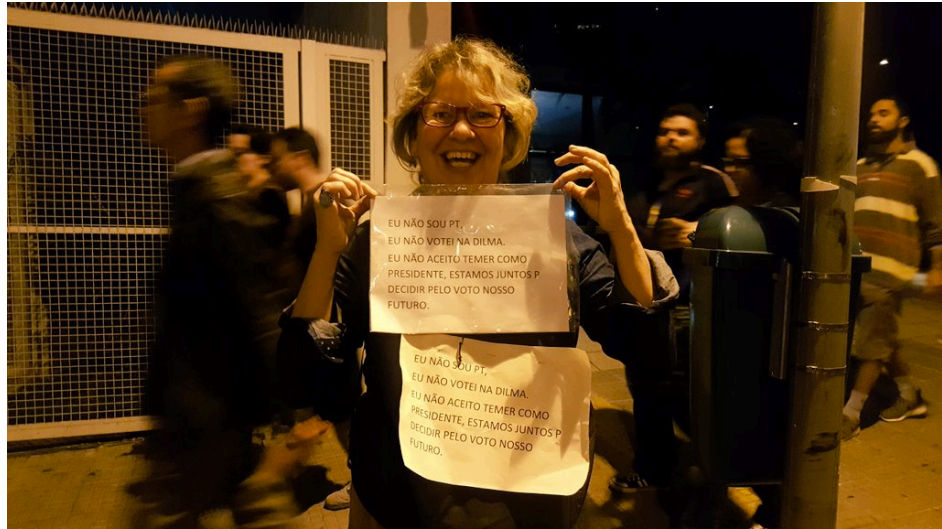


Figure 2: Testimonial tweet from the September 4th dataset (Day 2) points to a non-partisan participant, emphasizing her republican-oriented discourse: “I’m not PT; I didn’t vote for Dilma. I don’t accept Temer as president (...)”. Source: Twitter (https://twitter.com/Lele_Cordeiro/statuses/772562055253618688 retrieved on September 13, 2017)

Such wide range of constituents have generated very popular waves of protest in Brazil during the whole of 2016, but the vote on the Senate was the last resort to stop the impeachment from becoming a reality. In other words, by the end of such vote, the coup had won and in the afternoon of August 31st 2016 Michel Temer’s status changed from *acting* president to the official president of the nation. Such a situation has generated an intensive dispute for the narratives over the process, as well as the metanarratives on the very protests –reports of violence, attendance, the demands, amongst others.

The case studied has special relevance regarding the phenomenon of tUGC creation and circulation on social media, for two main reasons: (1) Brazil is a country where traditional mainstream media is ‘captured’ by economic and/or political elites (Guerrero & Márquez-Ramírez, 2004), therefore operate, at least occasionally, as a political agent, to the point of being accused of a “vivid example” of a free press conspiracy to overthrow Rousseff (De Albuquerque, 2012, p 93) and of “manipulating” information against social justice and citizen interest (Renó, 2015, p. 110); (2) following De Moraes (2009), political events generate disputes

for their meaning between different actors involved or interested. Considering that the trigger for the protests studied is the climax of a major political crisis (Goldstein, 2016) in the country, alternative documentation of the protests by ordinary citizens become extremely valuable while pursuing an accurate portrait of such events. Content produced by users who were not involved directly with the professional routines from the mainstream news media industry as well as from politics as a central life routine (such as politicians or activists), circulated through and on individual channels –such as Twitter, the platform this study is centred on– provide powerful testimonies that may challenge the narratives of ‘captured’, ‘conspiring’ mainstream media.

Relevance of the Research

The above-described process of citizen documentation of extraordinary events is not exactly new in the social communication realm. But the context has changed enormously in the last decades. In November 22nd, 1963, in what is considered by some authors one of the first notorious UGC (Wardle, Dubberley and Brown, 2014), US President John Kennedy was shot and killed during an ordinary public parade. Despite it being a previously planned and public event, it was ordinary citizen Abraham Zapruder, a clothing manufacturer, who captured the best video footage of that event. His images were sold and some frames were displayed on print a week later in *Life Magazine*, but the video was only made public on national television 12 years later (Zaid, Lesar & Sanders, 1998). If we fast-forward to October 20, 2012, almost 50 years later, Libya’s leader Muammar Gaddafi was trapped and killed by an angry crowd of rebels, that is, obviously, in an unplanned street event. Only that this time a wide variety of amateur videos witnessing his assassination were made available over the Internet the same day (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Side by side, a frame of Zapruder's film on Kennedy's assassination (Source: YouTube) and a frame of one of many unidentified citizen's videos of Gadaffi's assassination (Source: CNN Channel on YouTube).

Though citizen footage that documents extraordinary events, such as Kennedy's and Gadaffi's assassinations, is not novel, what stands out as new is its recent prominence, velocity and widespread adoption by communication technology users from (practically) the entire world. That is an effect of a state of *digital ubiquity* (Ganesh & Stohl, 2013) where communication technologies such as smartphones and the Internet have become 'invisible' like electricity or plumbing: we don't connect, we are connected; we don't set out to get our camera to make a picture, we just have it in our pockets.

There resides the power of what I will present in the following chapters: the **testimonial User-Generated Content** or **tUGC**, defined, as a result of this research, as **the product of a communicative practice of an ICT user, who as an 'ordinary citizen' being in a privileged time and place, witnesses an extraordinary event, appropriates socially and significantly digital communication technologies at hand to document (recording directly in a media device) and disseminate (publishing, sharing by own means) such event, with traces of spontaneity characteristic of an opportunistic testimony –as opposed to the planned registry.**

The difference illustrated by the dynamics of the diffusion of Kennedy's and Gadhaffi's citizen reports suggests that witnesses of important events such as the

ones studied for this research -or perhaps other contexts such as sports events, disasters, crimes and so on- are no longer dependant on the media or the police to interview them and mediate their testimony; they have the means to actively create and propagate it. Therefore, institutionally mediated testimony -i.e. testimony enabled by media, court or other institutions- gives way to a complex communicative act that encapsulates both the creation and diffusion of testimonial content through digital media such as social networks. *Testimony* becomes *testimonial*, as *witnesses* potentially become *publishers*; in the case of protests, *witnesses* may potentially become *media activists*. When that happens, and testimonial media content is created by ordinary citizens and put to circulation through their individual channels, it becomes **tUGC**. In the present case, I chose Twitter as such channel, for reasons that will be detailed further on.

As mentioned previously, two street demonstrations were selected and the Twitter data was collected via *Firehose*¹⁴ for both of them. The criteria (*query*) for the data selection was just #ForaTemer, the main hashtag of the protests, and the timestamp related to the protests. The differences of the two selected protests are instrumental for the research: the first protest (August 31) was the day of the final vote on the Senate that ratified Rousseff's ousting, so it was more of an impromptu generalized reaction throughout the country, on a Wednesday evening, which gives the event a particular outline. The second protest (September 4) was the first large organized event on a weekend, more specifically the first Sunday after the parliamentary coup. It is, therefore, a much more inclusive event, with main focus on one large city (São Paulo), so data is less geographically disaggregated and people were able to plan ahead their participation. This methodological choice is justified on the grounds that it enables the detection of differences regarding events' contexts as they influence patterns of creation and circulation of tUGC. Data

¹⁴ The historical data was retrieved through Sifter, a tool that, according to the website, "provides search and retrieve access to every undeleted Tweet in the history of Twitter" (<https://discovertext.com/sifter/> retrieved June 22, 2018).

was treated both quantitatively (quantitative content analysis, descriptive data analysis and statistical analysis) and qualitatively (individual message text and image analysis) over an iterative process to be detailed further. Ten of the participating users were identified through data analysis, then contacted and interviewed in depth, helping corroborate findings, sometimes enlightening grey areas and adding information to answer other research questions.

Objectives and Organisation

The main objective of the present research was to develop theoretically and empirically the concept of testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC). The first step to be able to fulfil such objective was to define theoretically the concept. To do so, I revised the literature on User-Generated Content in *Chapter I* to establish a convergent definition of UGC, for it is the concept I built upon. Then, I explored on the literature on witnessing from diverse fields and testimonial media from the communications science (*Chapter II*) to provide the means to intersect with previous chapter and set the foundations to propose a theoretical definition of *testimonial User-Generated Content* (tUGC) and its operationalisation in form of observable variables, both depicted on *Chapter III*. Then on *Chapter IV* the research method is presented in detail, preparing the grounds for *Chapter V*, where the results are presented and analysed. Last chapter (*Chapter VI*) synthesizes the discussions, conclusions, limitations and possible future paths for investigation.

In the *Results* chapter, the different patterns of creation and circulation of testimonial tweets and tUGC that emerged within the studied datasets, were identified and analysed. Additionally, the variation of such patterns according to contextual factors was analysed –in this case, depending on the *time of the day* or the *day of the protest*, since two different protests with distinguishing characteristics were selected. Moreover, the creation of tUGC is not a standardized phenomenon, so there are internal variations on the patterns of the attributes, so such variations were analysed and discussed as well as compared to non-tUGC

testimonials, to understand better the particularities of tUGC as a phenomenon per se. Also, there was made an assessment on the role of tUGC on the whole dataset, as for its salience in terms of relative number of tUGCs, its retweets and other measures to be detailed. Last on the chapter, I report the results and analysis of the interviews, which were structured on top of the ICT Social Appropriation framework by Proulx, Lecomte and Rueff (2007), to build an understanding of the process users/authors have gone through before and after the production of testimonial tweets and tUGC messages in the context of the case studied.

Table 1: Relation between Research Questions, Specific Objectives and Primary Methods used to address the respective issues. (Source: Author).

General Objective		
<i>Develop theoretically and empirically the concept of testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC)</i>		
Research Questions	Specific Objectives	Primary Methods
1. What is testimonial User-Generated Content?	1. Define theoretically and operationalize empirically testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC);	1. Literature review and iterative empirical feedback.
2. How did the attributes of testimonial tweets and tUGC circulated on Twitter vary during the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment?	2. Identify and analyse the patterns of testimonial tweets and tUGC creation and circulation in the datasets studied and how such patterns may vary according to contextual factors;	2. Quantitative screening, Content Analysis, quantitative analysis.
3. What was the overall role of testimonial tweets and tUGC created by Twitter users during the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment on Twitter during the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment?	3. Assess the relative importance and role of the different variations of testimonial tweets and tUGC in the datasets studied;	3. Quantitative analysis.
4. How were the different processes that led to the creation and publication of testimonial tweets and tUGC in the context of Dilma Rousseff's impeachment protests? What are the users' motivations, modus operandi, fears and attitudes?	4. Understand the process users/authors have gone through before and after the production of testimonial tweets and tUGC messages in the context of the case studied.	4. Qualitative semi-structured interviews.
5. Have this communicative practice (testimonial tweets creation and publication during protest) had any tangible and/or perceived consequences in their lives?		

Though there is, as we will see in what follows, academic interest in the adoption of UGC by professional media, as well as in the crossroads of UGC creation and political participation and in the production of testimonial UGC in the context of extraordinary events, this research adds a few contributions to the crossroads of such subjects with social appropriation of ICT's and political participation studies: (i) it offers an extensive literature review of UGC conceptualisations and proposes

an unifying definition; (ii) founded on such definition, it reclaims the concept of tUGC as a noteworthy phenomenon, defining it theoretically; (iii) it pioneers in exploring tUGC empirically in a context of political activity, supported by mixed methods, approaching for the first time in a great level of detail how tUGC is embedded as a communicative practice in the context of the selected demonstrations. I will highlight the potentials and limitations for tUGC as a communicational activity and shed light on the motivations, dynamics and other factors users go through when creating them or as an effect of engaging in such a communicative process.

Chapter I. User Generated Content

This chapter will first suggest the factors that led to the origin and crystallisation of UGC as a concept, followed by the conditions to its proliferation as a type of content that populates much of digital media nowadays. Then I will present and discuss definitions and typologies of UGC in a multidisciplinary literature review to set the state of the art of the concept and understand the different approaches and contributions from each discipline. Following that, I deconstruct the concept in its individual components (*User, Generated, Content*) as an analytical strategy to scrutinize it and finally, the last section is a definition that operates as a synthesis of the all of the above, preparing for the next chapters, which build the concept of tUGC on top of it.

I.1 Origins of UGC

1. How UGC becomes a Concept

The rise of the concept “Generation C” -arguably first published by Trendwatching.com in February 2004 (Trendwatching.com, 2004)- C as in “Content”, drives the concept of a generation that creates media content. That could have led to the development of expressions such as User-created content, user-generated content, consumer-created content and other variations. An interesting fact is that the cited article was published more or less at the same time that Wired Magazine publishes the article “We are the Web” (Felly, 2005) that mentions expressions such as “user-generated ratings” and “user-created channels”. That was approximately one year before the first user-generated video was uploaded on YouTube by one of its founders¹⁵. Following YouTube’s -as other UGC platforms’- success, by the end of 2006, *Time Magazine* decides to award “YOU” as the person of the year with a YouTube-like interface in December’s ritualistic cover (Figure 4).

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNQXAC9IVRw>, retrieved June 17, 2016.



Figure 4: Time magazine's 2006 cover (Source: Time Magazine).

From the professional media perspective, it seems that the London bombings of 2005 are seen by many as the first event to draw considerable attention to the use of UGC by journalists and media (Allan, 2007; Reading, 2009; Wardle & Dubberley, 2014), as the most famous picture of that episode was taken by an ordinary witness with a mobile phone and published first on a Blog (Reading, 2009). As previously mentioned, Wardle and Dubberley (2014) track the phenomenon of UGC back as far as Kennedy's assassination to assert the importance of news content produced by non-journalists. At the same time the authors assert that the systematic incorporation of UGC in journalistic routines is triggered by events like the Southeast Asia Tsunami of 2004 and the London bombings of 2005. Such events are one of the triggers for the establishment of BBC's UGC Hub to manage content from audience in 2005 (Williams, Wardle & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2011).

Lobato, Thomas and Hunter (2010) approach the production of content outside media industry realm from a historic perspective, including in their

analysis scientific journals from 17th century as example of content created by their authors outside the structure of conventional media, in this case, scientific findings communicated via personal letters, published in such journals. The authors suggest that the distinction between professional and amateur production as UGC's defining paradigm is not as pertinent as the opposition between formal and informal elements within the media industry, tracking examples in time such as the history of family pictures. The authors understand that, all along the history of family pictures, there is an oscillation between (i) the production of pictures restricted to the *professional sphere*, due to technical difficulties (capturing and developing the images) and associated costs, and (ii) a more *popularized production process*, accessible to the non-professional individual as the costs lower and technical competencies are less of an obstacle –both due to culture appropriation (as more people learn it over time) and to ease of use that come along with advancements on technology –such as friendlier interfaces, automation of technologies and so on. The current UGC realm would, according to them, fluctuate between formality and informality as the acquisition of Flickr by Yahoo demonstrates: the incorporation of the user-generated photo management site by a big company brings formality to its regular procedures (Lobato et al., 2010, p 7-9).

One way or the other, though UGC may not be brand new as a creative process, it definitely owes its recent visibility to the rise of digital technologies and especially web 2.0 related standards and practices, which invite the ordinary user to publish and collaborate in different ways in user-friendly environments. The very adoption of the terminology “user” suggests activity (Pavličková, 2012, p. 39), as opposed to what is evoked by other expressions like “consumer” (inherited from marketing jargon) or “audience” (from media studies). “Media user” suggests, in that sense, more than the mere cognitive activity on the receptor's side: it refers to an individual that acts on different parts of the lifecycle of the content other than just consumption, including creation, publication, diffusion and feedback analysis. Ease of access to tools of creation and publication of content favour a sort of

massive interactive autonomy, that Castells (2009) calls mass self-communication: “its content is self-generated, its publication is self-directed and its reception is self-selected by all those that communicate” (p. 108).

Such user autonomy on the whole content creation and circulation process, highlighted by Castells, is at the centre of what is new about digital media. Chris Walton, BBC’s journalist, explains his view on what is and what is not new regarding UGC in the realm of journalism:

The thing about user-generated content is that it’s not new. None of this stuff is actually new (...) **What’s new is that it’s coming very fast, instantaneously, and the volume is absolutely huge and coming via devices like the Internet and mobile phones** (Chris Walton interviewed by Williams et al., 2011, p. 89, my emphasis).

Harrison & Barthel (2009) sustain that what is novel about Web 2.0

[I]s the now-widespread recognition and acknowledgement that **users actively apply the affordances of new technologies in the service of their own creative and instrumental objectives**, and that the desire to do so seems to be liberally distributed among those who are online (p. 161, my emphasis).

Van Dijck (2009) explains how the ability to respond empower the users, highlighting the relevance of UGC distribution channels:

What is different in the digital era is that **users have better access to networked media, enabling them to ‘talk back’ in the same multi-modal language** that frames cultural products formerly made exclusively in studios. (p. 43-44).

The meaning of associating the expression UGC to the digital era resides, not so much in the fundamental ideas associated to the concept –such as content created by ordinary people- that, as previously discussed, are not necessarily a new practice per se. It is the juxtaposition of the three keywords that compose the acronym. Such abbreviation gains much more meaning and prominence as it gradually becomes omnipresent in the mediated life of the citizenship, through its

plethora of manifestations, from leisure to politics, passing compulsorily by the news media. But such omnipresence is driven by a series of conditions that allow, facilitate or propel the growth of UGC presence in the mediatic scenario, as we will see on the next section.

The strength of UGC as a novel phenomenon to some measure, resides, then, in its insertion on the digital context. I propose an analogy with the role of the hypertext to frame such insertion: *hypertext*, as a concept, is not intrinsically rooted on the Internet, since the idea of nonlinear reading through a text that contains a link to another (potential) text, may be observed in other platforms such as an encyclopaedia, a footnote or a nonlinear novel such as Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (Beiguelman, 2003). Ted Nelson's 1965 definition precedes the idea of computers interconnected over a digital telematics network. It is mainly directed to a general idea, inspired on the *Memex* of Vannevar Bush (1945), which fosters the "file's ability to store related materials in associative trails, lists or chains of documents joined together" (Nelson, 1965, p. 86, emphasis on the original). Despite a notorious resistance of the author regarding the practical application of the concept nowadays, the widespread adoption of the technique as an explicit immediate link between ideas in the Internet era installs a new writing paradigm, transforming it in a phenomenon inexorably associated with Internet. I sustain that **UGC represents to social media what hypertext represents to the first era of Internet: the central socio-technical component that leads to the explosion of a latent cultural manifestation**, key to a digital, dialogical and participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006), that had been, prior to that, "stuck to analogue cultural forms" (Johnson, 2001, p. 34, my translation) of unidirectional mass media. Thanks to the conditions I'll present in what follows, UGC finds fertile soil in the last decades.

2. Conditions to the rise of UGC

2.1 UGC Drivers

The catharsis that leads to UGC wide cultural adoption, perhaps best exemplified by the success of natively mobile Apps such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat etc. and Social Networking Sites (SNS) like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube amid others, is better explained by observing the different drivers that facilitate, or better yet, trigger such social catharsis. Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) sustain there are four drivers that account for the “rapid growth and pervasiveness” (p. 27) of UGC:

1. *Technological*, such as increased broadband access, better and more powerful technologies as well as software to create and share content that include non-professional users as target. The result is the circulation of not only more UGC content, but more complex UGC content (such as high quality photos, videos, live streams etc.).
2. *Social*, such as the rise of the ‘digital natives’ and a cultural acceptance of the logics of expressing oneself and of sharing. Such logics bring forward the possibility of more open and interactive platforms that allow for personal expression, collaborative projects and community building through digital media and ICT communications tools.
3. *Economic*, referring to the lower cost barriers to broadband access as well as to devices and software that produce, edit and distribute content, such as smartphones, ‘long tail’ economy, business models monetizing on UGC, and others.
4. *Institutional*, such as new permissive licenses such as creative commons that allow for re-use or distribution of content and specific licenses for UGC-like content (p. 27).

Croteau (2006) had previously pointed to many of the same factors Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) did, at the same time outlining a few other aspects that

could be aligned to the same general drivers: decentralized data distribution services such as BitTorrent and the convergence of PC and TV bringing the former to the living room (*technological* driver); the growth of DIY¹⁶ culture amongst youngsters (*social* driver); growing accessibility to digital devices to capture, create and manipulate audio or imagery and the emergence of services that allow the distribution and promotion of self-produced media content (*economic* driver).

Van Dijck (2009) states that the possibility of answering to traditional media in their same language is due to low cost and ease of access to digital technologies (p. 43) and highlights the importance of UGC sites to enhance user autonomy and agency: “a more important driver is the many Internet channels, particularly UGC sites, that allow for do-it-yourself distribution” (p. 44).

The conclusion is that, though approaches to the factors that impel UGC may vary, its growth as a communicative practice embedded in contemporary society is not a technological phenomenon isolated from other variables. Also, its role in the media landscape should change in time as its “amateur aesthetics” (Polydoro, 2016) –which to the present day still holds a sense of freshness based on its “emotional proximity” (Pantti, 2013) in contrast to the aesthetics of professional journalism- becomes gradually naturalized in society therefore loosing its appeal as a novelty. Due to that process, the enhanced perception of authenticity (Polydoro, 2016) and affective engagement (Pantti, 2013) should decline over time, justifying Polydoro’s (2016) statement that the power of this aesthetics, which is “free from the plastic membrane of the spectacular” (p. 29), is “historically built and historically situated” (p. 164). Nevertheless, the convergence of technological, technical, economic, social and institutional/legal aspects, altogether, create an environment prone to the increase of UGC presence amongst available content in digital media. Such environment is characterized today by the ubiquity of digital devices and infrastructure, to be discussed as follows.

¹⁶ Acronym that stands for *Do It Yourself*.

2.2 Digital Ubiquity

As a result of the above-discussed drivers, the creation of content, as well as its distribution, has become interwoven in our society, in what may be called *digital ubiquity* (Bimber, Flannigan & Stohl 2012; Ganesh & Stohl, 2013). That's what happens when "a wide variety of social institutions and practices are organized around them [technologies], regardless of whether and how individuals or communities may or may not adopt or use specific technological artifacts in particular ways" (Ganesh & Stohl, 2013, p. 428). Such technologies are implicated in social practices "just as the conveniences plumbing and electricity", resulting in an "*emerging technological environment, not a particular technology* that has profound implications for contemporary protests" (Ganesh & Stohl, 2013, p. 428, original emphasis).

On a focus group regarding UGC adoption by newsrooms, organized by Wahl-Jorgensen, Williams and Wardle, (2010), one journalist depicts clearly such perception of ubiquity:

When you think about it you have millions of people who have mobile phones in this country, and who can take pictures and video footage. (...) so whatever happens, someone is going to be there with a mobile phone (journalist participating on a focus group organized by Wahl-Jorgensen, Williams & Wardle, 2010, p. 188)

Within such technological environment, technologies of capture, editing, diffusion and sharing are not only accessible but most of them are also embedded on smartphones, ready to be used to UGC creation. The exponential growth of technologies of mobile connectivity during the last years have expanded such possibility, meaning not only the possibility of publication of UGC but also its consumption and dissemination through personal contact networks thanks to platforms like social media.

I.2 UGC Definitions

Though the expression UGC seems to be widely adopted in the scholarly literature in many different fields such as technology, tourism, media, marketing, informatics and so on, not many of those definitions converge. Even in the specific field of communication, there seems to be no agreed definition. Research in different areas takes for granted the meaning of this complex acronym. Wardle, Dubberley and Brown (2014) criticize the expression, within the realm of journalism: “the phrase ‘user-generated content’ is a catchall that can mean different things to different people, even those working in the same newsroom” (p. 10). Hermida and Thurman (2008) use the expression “so-called user-generated content” (p. 2.), while Van Dijck (2009) performs a critical review of the user as an economic agent of the “so-called user-generated content (UGC) platforms” (p. 41). Researching on *tourism UGC*, Lu and Stepchenkova (2015) and Bourdages (2016) highlight the lack of theory founding most of the work, the latter stating that nearly 75% of the papers had no theoretical foundations at all. Dylko & McCluskey (2012), after an extensive literature review on UGC, identify no less than 43 different expressions that allude to such a communicative practice (p. 257). I argue, then, that there is a peremptory need to define the concept of UGC so that I will be equipped to further on build the derivative concept of tUGC on top of it.

Conceptualisations that revolve around UGC, found in the literature for this research, can be grouped into four different foci: (i) on the *content*, such as ‘user-created content’ (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007), ‘self-produced media content’ (Croteau, 2006), ‘user-contributed content’ (Bakshy, Karrer & Adamic, 2009), ‘consumer-generated media content’ (Japan’s Ministry of Economy, 2006), ‘participatory news’ (Deuze, Bruns & Neuberger, 2007); (ii) on the *communicative practice* as ‘citizen journalism’ (Gillmor, 2004), ‘participatory journalism’ (Bowman & Willis, 2003), ‘audience participation’ (Kammer, 2013), ‘conversational media’ (Sonvilla-Weiss, 2010); (iii) on the *user* or *audience*, such as the neologisms ‘prosumers’ (Toffler, 1980), ‘mediactive’ (Gillmor, 2010), ‘producers’ (Bruns, 2010);

2013), 'pro-am' or professional-amateur (Leadbeater & Miller, 2004); (iv) on the *platform* such as 'Web 2.0' (O'Reilly, 2005; Chadwick & Howard, 2009; Harrison & Barthel, 2009), 'participatory media' (BBC, n.d.-b), 'Social Web' (Gruber, 2008) and the popular expression 'Social Media' (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) that points to the convergence of *UGC* and *Web 2.0*. In what follows, I present the diverse definitions of UGC found in different disciplines of social sciences.

1. Social Communication and Journalism

In the field of Social Communication, McKenzie and colleagues (2012) highlight the importance of *voluntarism* and *distribution* as defining variables stating that UGC is "content that is voluntarily developed by an individual or a consortium and distributed through an online platform" (p. 2). Sonvilla-Weiss (2010) define UGC platforms as "conversational media" when analysing them in relation to mass media in his approach to the *remix culture*. Wardle and Williams (2010) perform a terminological analysis and propose to adopt the term "audience content" instead of UGC in the context of newsrooms.

BBC's news centre has, since 2005, an operation for recollection and analysis of UGC called *UGC Hub* (Williams et al., 2011). This very fact reveals the relevance that UGC earns in the first decade of the century, at least for this emblematic mainstream media organisation that considers UGC a "vital missing piece of human interest" (BBC, n.d.-a, par 2). In its terms of use¹⁷, BBC defines UGC as "(...) anything made by people using our services. User-generated content, that's called." Also, the broadcaster's website offered¹⁸ another definition to the term, including equivalence with other terms related to the idea of UGC:

User-generated content ("UGC") also commonly called 'citizen journalism', 'social media' or 'participatory media', refers to a wide variety of media content produced by our audience as opposed to content developed by BBC,

¹⁷ Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/usingthebbc/terms/terms-of-use> June 25, 2018.

¹⁸ The content was available and retrieved in June, 2016, but the link was not active as by February, 2018, so I had to translate back from Spanish for I hadn't kept the original English version.

independent producers or individual collaborators commissioned by BBC
(BBC, n.d.-b, my translation)

This former BBC definition reinforces the vision of UGC as something created outside the institutional borders, whether if created by *employees*, *producers* or *regular contributors* (I suppose they mean *freelancers*). Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2010) define UGC as “media content produced by the end-users” (p. 178). One of Wahl-Jorgensen’s co-author, Wardle, paired with Sam Dubberley (2014), pursued a new definition of UGC for journalism on a recent study, excluding comments on news articles and interestingly circumscribing to audio-visual material: “we define UGC as *photographs* and *videos* captured by people who are not professional journalists and who are unrelated to news organizations” (p. 10, my emphasis).

2. Economy and Media Industry

Though many mainstream media outlets allow audience to publish their own content, especially on the online versions (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2010; Schrøder, 2012; Wardle & Williams, 2010), there is also the business-oriented vision by Kaplan & Haenlein (2009) that UGC is the content that fills social media up: “User Generated Content (UGC) can be seen as the sum of all ways in which people make use of Social Media” (p. 61). Such a proposition seems to suggest an opening in the spectrum of what may be considered content, considering there are multiple ways to use social media besides news-making. Some of those ways are more obviously related to the idea of ‘content’, such as written texts or audio-visual material. Others, though, are less obvious, such as little actions or interactions such as *following*, *liking*, *sharing*, *voting* and even *commenting*, excluded, as seen, by Wardle and Dubberley (2014) in their analysis. This is a complex discussion and I’ll get back to it in detail further on.

According to this research, the most cited definition seems to be that of the previously mentioned study sponsored by OECD -Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development- by Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) centred in new business models and value creation around what the authors call 'user created content' and the intellectual property problematisation, amongst other issues. The economy/industry focus results in the following definition for UGC¹⁹: "i) content made publicly available over the Internet, ii) which reflects a certain amount of creative effort, and iii) which is created outside of professional routines and practices" (p. 9).

Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011) don't precisely define UGC but put it in the centre of their definition of social media from a marketing perspective: "Social media employ mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content" (p. 241). Also from a marketing perspective, Ann (2015) plays with the words to highlight the importance, within such field, of the possibility of connection between brand/business and consumer/user in a blog post entitled "Undeniable, Glorious Connection".

As previously mentioned, Lobato, Thomas & Hunter (2010) argue that what defines UGC is the opposition between formal and informal elements in the media industry:

Our suggestion is to position UGC not in opposition to professional or "producer media", or in hybridised forms of subjective combination with it (the so-called "prosumer" or "pro-am" system), but in relation to different criteria, namely the formal and informal elements in media industries (p. 1)

The authors recommend making a clear distinction between *media economy* and *industry sectors*, for while the former encompass both formal and informal, the latter is highly formal and regulated. Therefore, to the authors, *remuneration* and *routines* are just a couple of these elements, as others would be, for example, *taxation*, *institutionalisation*, *capital intensity* and so on.

¹⁹ As mentioned, the authors refer to the concept as User Created Content. I will treat as analogous here, since I assess no conceptual difference in their approach.

Fernández Castrillo (2014) links UGC to transmedia content creation and includes adaptations of existing content:

User-Generated Content (UGC) encapsulates all content formats available through social media and online platforms, created and distributed by one or many non-professional individuals. The result may be either the invention of a new work or the adaptation of previous ones, always in a free and voluntary manner. This kind of productions is characterized by its highly creative component and usually hold a transmedia characteristic and are the result of collaborative dynamics on the web (p. 60).

In the field of Tourism, Girardin, Calabrese, Fiore, Ratti and Blat, (2008) employ the terms “digital footprint” and “user-generated electronic trails” to refer to data published both in an *active mode* (such as photos published consciously on social media) and in a *passive mode* (such as information collected by Google after tourism-related searches). This conception of passive user-generated data is also shared by Haklay and Weber (2008). The authors study User-Generated Street Maps, referring to the specific kind of UGC in such context as “user-generated mapping” and “user-generated geographical information” (p. 18). They include passively generated content such as *GPS data* and *user searches* in their understanding of UGC. This passive-active duality brings us to one of the dilemmas of coming up to a definition that is comprehensive and at the same time still circumscribe the concept: what should be considered ‘content’ in UGC? We’ll get back to that question.

3. Information Science

DesAutels (2011) proposes the idea of User-Generated Information Systems (or UGIS), which are the outputs of information management work mediated by software, performed by users who don’t need to have the technical capacity to program (p. 186). The author claims, in such context, that “the traditional roles of producer and consumer are being supplanted with those of provider and creator. Push models are giving way to pull” (p. 191), suggesting an understanding of such

platforms as mere structures –built by *providers*- where users –*creators*- generate content.

Hagemann and Vossen (2009) propose, also from an Information Science perspective, a categorisation of UGC that expands the idea of content including programming pieces of software such as API's and even tags, arguing that “there is more UGC than is commonly understood” (p. 1). In the same direction, Krumm and colleagues (2008) state that “user-generated content comes from regular people who voluntarily contribute data, information, or media that then appears before others in a useful or entertaining way, usually on the Web” (p. 10), pointing to (i) the definition of user as a regular person; (ii) the voluntary nature of the communicative act; (iii) other forms of content other than media, referred to as *data* and *information*, probably related to less obvious kinds of content than pictures or videos published in social media; and (iv) possible social functions of UGC (“useful or entertaining way”) that could suggest the idea of social appropriation, as will be discussed further on.

These views expand the range of content included in the definition of UGC, problematizing the limits of the concept of *content* traditionally associated with mainstream analogue media. They posit, in an indirect manner, that code, for instance, may be considered as *content*. That is not irrelevant considering that code knowledge within the digital media industry could very well be considered part of the indispensable grammar to the field, as are operating a camera or framing to the audio-visual field.

4. Humanities

In the realm of the digital humanities, project *Europeana*²⁰ supports research over digitized content. It includes content previously restricted to the local, domestic or personal use, such as files from libraries, museums and even personal content such

²⁰ Website of the project: <http://research.europeana.eu> retrieved June 24 2016.

as photos of the Second World War, characterized in the project's blog as "the new history" (Bull, 2016).

In the cultural production realm, there are several examples of how the industry has been reacting to the UGC phenomenon. Paul Verhoeven, in 2012²¹, developed a project with collaborative screenplay-writing, attracting more than 400.000 people to engage in the creative process (Span, 2013). Prior to that, though, in 2010, Kevin McDonald (director) and Ridley Scott (executive producer) created *Life in a Day*²². The idea was a sort of UGC movie, where users sent one day of their lives to a channel on YouTube following some very broad guidelines, except for one very strict: that day had to be July 24, 2010. To the lenses of Lobato and colleagues (2010), it could be seen as a call to 'unformalize' the formal (movie industry), at the same time industrializing artisanal UGC and 'artesanizing' Hollywood. All mediated by YouTube.

The examples lead to a couple of dilemmas. First: is UGC restricted to digital creation supported by natively digital devices? Or should user content created with other technologies, including content created before the existence of such devices and then digitized and published in digital media be also considered UGC? In other words, does the value of novelty reside in the accessibility that digitisation enhances or is it more than that? Second: if UGC is circulated through mainstream media –such as news outlets– or amplified by some big Hollywood executive producer like Ridley Scott, is it still UGC?

5. Political Science

Though there are many authors that highlight the relevance of UGC in the realm of political participation (Bruns, 2005b; 2010; 2013; Chadwick & Howard, 2009; Dylko & McCluskey, 2012; Earl & Kimport, 2011; Jenkins et al., 2013; Santos &

²¹ Technical record of the movie: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2171875/> retrieved February 21, 2018.

²² YouTube channel of the project: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC70oKkuTAoL-grDe4l2pAw> retrieved June 24, 2016.

Condeza, 2017), not many studies have pursued empirically the relationship between UGC creation and political participation or the political outcomes of the creation and circulation of UGC. Those that did so provide a reference to this study as they define and operationalize UGC empirically in the context of political participation.

Östman (2012) researched the relationship between UGC creation and political involvement. The author distinguished two characteristics common to the UGC definitions: (i) amateur production of original content or editing of existing content and (ii) the act of sharing such content, publishing in different platforms such as websites or blogs, linking one more time content *generation* with its *publication* or its active *dissemination*. But the author highlights that different levels of authorship regarding the content generated allow a distinction between *user-created*, as in entirely original content, and *user-generated* content (p.1006). The same author excludes social media, labelling it *online social networking*, which I completely disagree, since social media is multipurpose and is certainly the main channel for regular people to publish their UGC nowadays, not beyond activities of social networking but as a means of it. The author operationalizes the concept in terms of *expressivity*, *performance* and *collaboration* and concludes that having an active role in the creation and diffusion of content (UGC) predicts both online and offline political participation but is negatively related to political knowledge.

Leung (2009) studies whether UGC facilitate or impede psychological empowerment adopting uses and gratifications framework. The study “reasserts that psychological empowerment can be enhanced by one’s degree of content generation online” (Leung, 2009, p. 1327-8). The author operationalized creation of UGC for a survey through five UGC-related activities: *personal webpage*, *blogs*, *forums*, *videos on YouTube* and *Wikipedia contributions*. Such activities were then combined into a single measure named “overall user-generated content online” (Leung, 2009, p. 1335).

McKenzie and colleagues (2012), alluding to the work of Harrison and Barthel (2009), posited the idea of 'value creation' rooted in UGC, relating it to a marketing terminology. They also include, though, the possibility of other sorts of values, such as civic participation: "The collaborative construction of new media products is linked with more than the creation of economic value; it is argued to be inextricably linked with civic engagement" (p. 9).

Dylko and McCluskey (2012) built the concept of *Political UGC* on top of Eveland's (2003) 'mix of attributes' model. They worked it theoretically to advance in modelling an analytical framework for content such as UGC. One of the collateral benefits is their advance in the direction of systematizing knowledge of the field, after having identified, as mentioned previously, 43 different terms that refer to such communicative practice (p. 257). They operationalized *Political UGC* on top of Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery's (2007) definition, adding variables related to political communication:

(...) we conceptualize political UGC as (a) information products (e.g., news and opinion) that are (b) published online and openly available, (c) thematically focused on politics, (d) to a significant degree shaped by an active participation of the users, and (e) where this participation occurred voluntarily outside of the user's professional routines and practices (p. 257).

Mortensen (2015b) elaborates theoretically on the idea of *connective witness*, that point to the crossroads between digital visual culture and personalized political participation through the creation of testimonial content, exemplifying with cases of a CNN.com citizen reporting channel called *Ireport*. The author develops other researches related to the phenomenon, and operationalizes the concept of "eyewitness images" in five traits (2015a): (i) *auto-recordings*, that point to the autonomous and immediate production and circulation of the images; (ii) *subjectivity*, as a "partial and quasi-private point of view" (Mortensen, 2015a, p.

541); (iii) *participation and documentation* as both activities frequently mingle²³; (iv) *media institutional ambiguity*, which problematizes the ambiguous role of media regarding amateur eyewitness sources; (v) *decontextualization*, as elements that serve to anchor the images on the events frequently are not easily available or may not be present at all (who are the subjects of the images, where and when it happened and so on).

I.3 UGC Typologies

In the following section, I will go through the different systems of classification and typification of UGC found in the literature, again segmented by different fields of knowledge. There is plenty of literature overlap with last section, but now I will focus on the categorisations provided by its authors, aiming to set the foundations to a new type of UGC that includes the testimonial component (tUGC), to be developed over the next chapters.

1. Social Communication and Journalism

Wardle and Williams (2010), after an exhaustive research on BBC's use of UGC, distinguish 'audience content' and 'audience commentary':

- **Audience content:** centred in the facts, with more informative quality than commentary. It is divided in three kinds: (i) *audience footage* (audio-visual material such as photos and videos); (ii) *Experiential Testimonies* and (iii) *Audience Stories* (tip-offs, indications of news tips that are not in the medium agenda)
- **Audience commentary:** centred in the opinion of the audience, on proper spaces provided by media professionals "calls for action", such as a telephone call or a comment on Twitter under the appropriate hashtag.

²³ Such as a camera on the helmet of a cyclist during a race. In the context of social movements, an example would be an activist that documents the protest.

In the same field, but with focus on levels of audience participation in the production of news, Kammer (2013) suggests the following 4-type categorisation:

- i. **Information:** refers to audience in its traditional role as ‘sources’, that “does not challenge or transform the institutionalized role of the journalist as the one who selects from and edits the information at hand, thereby taking up the traditional role of the gatekeeper” (p. 119);
- ii. **Collaboration:** “audiences participate more actively in the actual news production and under-take journalistic tasks, so that the news production process becomes a collaborative one” (p. 119). Audiences here are converted in *producers* (Bruns, 2005a; 2007; 2008) and journalists in *gatewatchers* (Bruns, 2003);
- iii. **Conversation:** social-oriented conversation that has as main function users’ amusement, rather than the delivery of ‘useful’ information: “the purpose of the sociable conversation is the very social interaction” (p. 121);
- iv. **Meta-communication:** “exchanges about the very coverage, the premises and processes behind the news production are made

Table 2: Types of audience participation in the production of online news (Kammer, 2013, p. 123)

	Role of the audiences	Role of the journalist
Information	Source; resource for the journalist	Gatekeeper
Collaboration	Journalistic producer	Gatewatcher; journalist
Conversation	Conversation partner	Gatewatcher; conversation partner
Meta-communication	Reflexive audience	Gatewatcher; source for the audience

visible” where “the audiences take a reflexive position to news production, because they address the practices and processes that constitute the framework of the coverage as well as the coverage itself” (p. 122).

The second category (Collaboration) is by large the one that fits better with the idea of tUGC:

Through this kind of comments, audiences who happen to be in the right place at the right time transcend their role as eye witnesses and become some kind of amateur journalists who participate in blurring the distinction between audiences and journalists (Kammer, 2013, p. 120).

The author includes in such category the role of the audiences, correcting information published by the journalists, in what Bowman and Willis (2003) call the “new watchdogs” (p. 52) of contemporary society. In that sense, instead of media controlling government, these are citizens controlling media –in other words, citizens controlling the controllers. It has many elements in common with what Lasica (2003) celebrated as “random acts of journalism”.

Thurman (2008) studied the adoption of original content in what he calls “citizen journalism” supported by a poll and some qualitative interviews with British newspapers’ directors. The author identified seven categories to classify the content that allowed participation from citizens:

- i. **Polls:** questions to the public with multiple choice of binary answers;
- ii. **“Have your say”:** place where journalists ask and audience answer;
- iii. **Chat:** conversation rooms for users;
- iv. **Q&A:** mechanisms that allow user to participate formulating questions to interviewees;
- v. **Blogs with comments enabled;**
- vi. **Message boards:** places where users may publish their messages.
- vii. **Other:** a variety of media-specific user content that did not coincide with other media initiatives

This classification restrains the modes of participation due to platform-related limitations of format, such as Content Management Systems (CMS), survey tools or blog platforms. Looking a bit closer it emerges that Thurman preoccupation is text-centred, for it does not cover multimedia content, which

nowadays is much more associated with how UGC ends up in mainstream media publications.

2. Economy and Media Industry

Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) established a typology that mixes different organizing axes, probably due to a more economic perspective of an OECD sponsored research:

- i. Text, fiction and poetry
- ii. Photos and images
- iii. Music and audio
- iv. Citizen journalism
- v. Educational content
- vi. Mobile content
- vii. Virtual content

Analysing the items, there is a first group of types of content, segmented by *media mode* (text, image, audio-visual, audio); then, as *communicative practice* (citizen journalism); followed by *industry* (educational content) and finally as per *technological support* (mobile content) and *socio-technical place* (virtual content). Though a study by OECD arguably has the intent to systematize knowledge with epistemological rigor, the above classification is far from mutually exclusive leaving many questions unanswered: why there is no reference to 'entertainment content' or other industries? Are there not educational texts, audios or videos? Mobile communication is so especially distinguishable to deserve a category of its own? Is not citizen journalism transversal to most of those categories? And so forth.

McKenzie and colleagues (2012), in an analysis of digital economy, propose a typology founded in two dimensions: the level of participation (high or low) and the type of content (mediatic creation or programming). The final result is the following categorisation (McKenzie et al., 2012, p 1-2):

1. Creative content: Individual textual, audio, image, video, and multimedia productions that are distributed online through software platforms such as blogs, podcasting repositories, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, and citizen journalism sites;
2. Small-scale tools: Software modifications or applications that are written by individuals to operate within or augment specific previously existing datasets or hardware or software platforms (e.g., mobile phone applications or “apps,” utilities that manipulate publicly available data sets, game or virtual world modifications); and,
3. Collaborative content: Formal or informal consortia that collaboratively produce and distribute UGC, including open source software (OSS), such as Linux or Apache, and wikis, such as Wikipedia.

While the first category is more related to content that demands less technical expertise, the second and third contemplate other types of contributions that need at least intermediate technical knowledge (such as connecting or programming an API²⁴, contributing to Linux code) and are divided chiefly based on the level of commitment and inter-communitarian ties generated by the collaborative practices. The authors mention that *collaborative content*, the third category, is “consciously collaboratively produced, evaluated, aggregated, and distributed” (McKenzie et al., 2012, p. 3). Those dimensions may also be interpreted based on the intensity of each of them. The authors understand Wikipedia, for example, as collaborative content. Nevertheless, it is a platform in which different forms of participation should be consciously collaborative and it does not demand high levels of technical skills. Also, it is inclusive of all levels of

²⁴ Application Protocol Interface, an open protocol to external developers to connect with a platform, such as to build a map on top of Google Maps, or, more pertinent to the present research, to extract data from Twitter.

commitment, from those very thorough and dedicated to one or a number of articles, engaged in the forums and so on, to others that make occasional contributions.

The definition that brings more elements to the current chapter’s discussion, though, is that of *creative content*, described as individually produced content (in other words, user-generated), “distributed online” by digital platforms alternative to big media, particularly social media and digital alternative media managed by citizens.

3. Information Science

Hagemann and Vossen (2009), as discussed in the previous chapter, understand UGC in a broad perspective: any mode of narrative text, that they call “narrow sense” (video, written text, audio etc.); *structure* content (such as tags and links); *complex objects* such as maps; and *functionalities* such as mashups and APIs. The following table synthesizes the proposal:

Table 3: UGC types according to Hagemann & Vossen (2009)

Type	Examples	Type of use	Quality level
content (narrow sense)	Wikis, blogs, reviews, public short messages, profiles; photo, audio, video platforms (e.g. YouTube)	display/play/show	platform/item
Structure	Tags, links	hyperlink	platform/item
Complex objects	Skipper maps, ActiveTags TagExtractors	use for resp. function	item
Functionality	Yahoo Pipes, Popfly, Greasemonkey, Ubiquity, ActiveTags mashups	execute function	platform

Standing within the field of Information Science, a ‘metascience’, Hagemann and Vossen’s typology is not restricted to the specific practices of one or another field, as they propose from the perspective of the systems functionality logics. The result is a very inclusive typology that leads to a higher degree of complexity when it comes to operationalizing the concept.

I.4 Deconstructing UGC

In the present section, I will go through each of the terms amalgamated in the acronym UGC and circumscribe the limits that serve best the concept. As I will demonstrate, none of the terms can be fully understood if not in a relation of co-dependency with each other, as a complex and composed concept that results from the juxtaposition of those three words. By addressing one dimension, let's say, *User*, invariably we must consider the repercussions on both other concepts, as the idea of 'generating' media must not be divorced from the subject that generates it, neither of that which is generated, i.e., the 'content' within it. And so forth. Also, as we will see further on, by adding the testimonial character to the content, we create a new acronym that respects that same logic and must be assessed from the same perspective of co-dependency.

Chaffee (1991) states, regarding the pursuit of the definition of a concept: "what is important here is to recognize which terms are primitive and which other terms they enable us to explicate" (p. 10). Neither the composed expression UGC or its individual terms *user*, *generated* and *content* are intrinsically primitive, "which are accepted as commonly understood or as given" (Chaffee, 1991, p. 7, citing the work of Hempel, 1952), though in some contexts that assumption could be acceptable. But since UGC is a constitutive part of the focal concept of this research (Chaffee, 1991), it must be properly scrutinized.

Wardle and Williams (2010) develop a critical reading of the concept departing from its composing terms:

The term 'UGC' developed as a way of describing content created and shared by users on the internet, and in this context the term 'user' is appropriate, but in the context of the BBC, which produces television and radio content alongside online content, it is not. Similarly, while a YouTube clip is 'generated', a comment about the presidential campaign or the current economic situation is not. And, finally, the idea of 'content' also fails to capture some of the material which is described with the term 'UGC',

such as participatory journalism drawing on nodes of expertise within the blogosphere, or a collaborative journalism project training community reporters to produce their own stories (p. 782)

Though the authors' discussion is brief and limited to the journalistic realm, this section will follow and deepen the same path, by deconstructing the acronym from its three constituting terms, collecting the aspects pertinent to each one of them, defining and circumscribing them without losing the thread of UGC as one final concept. This doesn't mean I claim that the concept is the mere sum of its words, on the contrary, this is an iterative process of analysis and synthesis, decomposing to recompose with a better and clearer understanding of each term in relation to the others in the context of the phenomenon of UGC.

1. User

Greenberg and Salwen (2009) identify the distinctive attributes of mass communication as follows:

[T]he diffusion of messages from a seemingly powerful, single source to a large, heterogeneous audience; the public nature of the messages; and the lack of (or delayed) feedback from receivers to the mass communication source (p. 62).

In the aftermath of digital media, the "seemingly powerful, single source" gradually –but rapidly– becomes a myriad of sources; "large, heterogeneous" audiences turn into much smaller profiles targeted by businesses with the aid of aggregated data (Van Dijck, 2013; Srnicek, 2017) and, at the same time, explored commercially within the economic logics of 'the long tail' (Anderson, 2004); and the interaction is in the centre of digital culture as opposed to a "lack of (or delayed) feedback". How to grasp such public that despite being massive can no longer be referred to as a mass? A public that, besides consuming content, now create, edit, publish and disseminate it?

1.1 From Audience to User

Jay Rosen, professor of the University of New York, in a provocative post in his *PressThink* blog, starkly declares in 2006 the end of the audience such as media professionals had known:

The people formerly known as the audience wish to inform media people of our existence, and of a shift in power that goes with the platform shift you've all heard about (Rosen, 2006, par 1, my emphasis)

The idea of an active user as a content producer is far from new as has been discussed by many (Bruns, 2010; Biocca, 1988; Livingstone, 2012; 2015; Ridell, 2012; Rubin, 2002, to name a few). Enzesberger (1971) argued more than 40 years ago that the radio was as much a means of production as a means for consumption of media. De Fleur & Ball-Rokeach (1989) help to build the former argument by explaining how our known standard of the radio industry was more of an economic decision (a business model) than a technical or technological limitation that impeded the user from broadcasting content. The early history of electric media, according to Marvin (1988) tells a similar story, founded on the fear of the new paradigms, more than technical constraints:

Chaotic and creative experiments with new media and thought experiments with their imaginary derivatives attempted to reduce and simplify a world of expanding cultural variety to something more familiar and less threatening. That impulse fixed on one-way communication from familiar cultural, social, and geographic perimeters as a preferred strategy to two-way exchange, with its greater presumption of equality and risks of unpredictable confrontation (p. 4).

More optimistic, McLuhan (1999) claimed in the 1960's that "we live today in the Age of Information and Communication because electric media instantly and constantly create a total field of interacting events in which all men participate" (p. 248) where "participation" can be understood as a shared cognitive mediated experience on a global scale. Lazarsfeld (1985; Otero, 1997) and Katz (1957) had

previously discussed the limitations of mass media effects and the conceptualisation of an active audience from a cognitive perspective. In a different context in the realm of media activism, for Downing (2001) media audiences are “users” in opposition to “consumers”, referring to an active cognitive behaviour as opposed to “non critical” (p. 8). Such perspectives, though, offer a very limited understanding of ‘activity’ or ‘participation’ if we consider the whole cycle of media production: they only stand in the reception side of an unilateral process; all of them refer to introspective processes instead of concrete media production regardless of the chosen term: *audience* or *user*.

Alvin Toffler (1980), in the same book where he inaugurates the term *prosumer*, states that “the day of the all-powerful centralized network that controls image production is waning” (p. 178), showing that he didn’t let media off the hook in his futuristic analysis of post-industrial society “The Third Wave”. Even though in its original meaning, *prosumer* referred to a *proactive consumer* -more attached to an industrial or economic perspective- in communications it has been also used as the juxtaposition of expressions *producer* and *consumer* implying either that consumers of media interchange roles assuming also the role of producers (Ridell, 2012) or that the boundaries between both concepts have vanished (Press & Livingstone, as cited by Ridell, 2012; Papacharissi, 2007, as cited by Ridell, 2012). John Fiske (as cited by Livingstone, 2015) proposed in the 1990’s to convert the noun into a verb: *audiencing*. Leadbeater and Miller (2004) approach this active media producer issue using another neologism: *Pro-Am*, which stands for *Professional-Amateurs*, defined as “innovative, committed and networked amateurs working to professional standards” (p. 9). Bruns (2005a; 2007; 2008; 2010; 2013) uses the expression *produser* as a criticism of a sort of ‘econocentrism’ embedded on Toffler’s (1980) definition, arguing that the concept of *prosumer* leads to a mere appropriation of consumer’s efforts by private corporations in their wealth creation cycle, maintaining the unequal and hierarchic relationships of the industrial age (Bruns 2010). On the other hand, his expression *produser* points to

the fusion of *producer* and *user*, referring specifically to users who take part in processes of active content creation. The author exemplifies with Wikipedia, open source projects and citizen journalism, and qualifies such media products as “unfinished artifacts”, thus defining *produsage* as “the collaborative and continuous building and extending of existing content in pursuit of further improvement” (Bruns, 2010, p. 9).

Amid the proliferation of neologisms, Ridell (2012) criticizes this sort of hybrid labels, arguing instead that what is new is the interchangeability of the roles assumed by the very same individual when interacting with digital media, but insisting on the validity of the maintenance of the original categories, such as *audience*, *producer*, *consumer* and so on: “A movement between roles (...) presupposes that the roles are analytically distinct, not fused” (p. 32). On that same perspective, Van Dijck (2009) identifies three levels of user participation in social media, where he assumes roles of *creator*, *spectator* and *inactive* (p. 45-46). The author also criticizes a revolutionary view of digital media arguing that “The implied opposition between passive recipients defined by old media (e.g. television) and active participants inhabiting digital environments, particularly UGC sites, is a historical fallacy” (p. 43). Livingstone (2015) criticizes a linear approach to the communicative process, problematizing the adoption of the expression “end-user”, recognizing the importance of individual and collective experiences of “ordinary persons” in the digital realm (p. 442). In the same direction, Bruns (2008) states that in such digital realms, where collaborative creation of content is the reality, “the role of ‘consumer’ and even that of ‘end user’ have long disappeared, and the distinctions between producers and users of content have faded into comparative insignificance” (p. 2).

It seems to be reasonable that instead of working around the concept of *audience* attempting to re-signify it in face of the changes, we should adopt a lexicon that comes already charged with a potential association with the ideas of activity, participation and creation. I suggest, therefore, that ‘user’ is a term

adopted in the software industry that embraces in a neutral form the range of roles discussed above.

1.2 Who or what is user?

I claim, as most of the authors that define it, that UGC as a concept is distinct than regular media content created and distributed within the professional media industry realm. Still, it is necessary to discuss the limits of who can be called user, i.e., who may be called the individual/author behind a UGC and which characteristics convert a person NOT into a 'user' in this sense. If the user should be one who produces content outside his professional routines (Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007), is a journalist that tweets on a news event from his personal account a 'user' creating UGC? Wardle and Dubberley (2014), for example, mention the existence of such a term as *Journalist-Generated Content* (JGC) to single out this kind of user. But outside the media realm, what if the journalist is creating non-news content such as sharing on Facebook pictures of a touristic attraction taken during his family vacation? Or, in the present case, if she/he publishes content as a participant on a political protest?

This leads to the discussion of another variable: *visibility*, which can be appreciated in terms of the *user* and/or the *content*. It is interesting to analyse separately the value of the individual that creates the information and the information value *per se*. Therefore, a content that becomes popular *because* it was produced and/or shared by a public figure with a lot of media exposure -a movie celebrity, a politician, a TV anchor- has necessarily a different reach than the same content by an ordinary user with not as much visibility, reflected for instance, in the amount of expected retweets (Suh, Hong, Pirolli & Chi, 2010). From the content perspective, on Twitter, for example, a content may become popular on different accounts: the author's network of followers or the networks of the author's network of followers; the use of hashtags has been related to more retweets (Bruns & Stieglitz, 2014); the tone of the content (Naveed, Gottron, Kunegis & Alhadi,

2011) and so on. On the other hand, technical knowledge in the field of communication, even without the formal training, would result in a sort of 'newsy' content outside news media outlets, following the Pro-Am logics. Also, there have been studies that identify a tendency of journalists to use their personal profiles as extensions of the media outlet, so even that difference could disappear (Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012). Bruns (2018b) states that news outlets have conflicted views about the presence of their newsrooms staff on social media, ranging from an active encouragement, sustained on the perception that it will help promote and disseminate their content, but the fear that negative repercussions of their employees' activities on social media seem to be a menace as well (p. 6).

If UGC is to be understood as a relatively new phenomenon that pertains to the digital age, it is because the value of the opportune content itself could –or even should- be able to gather visibility in the context of social movements “bypassing domestic choke-points of censorship and reach for global attention” as Tufekci (2013, par. 20) suggests on her analysis of the role of social media in the context of protests in Tahrir square. I will discuss the *content* later (section 3. Content), but it is important to remark at this point that the privileged access to traditional media as the unique diffusion platform available is no longer, in an UGC perspective, the sole path to make a content visible. The user's networks could have that potential, as shown by Bastos and Mercea (2015) with their study on 'serial activists'. The authors show that users with “ordinary number of followers”, but with intensive Twitter activity, play an important role in the diffusion of protest information: “serial activists present the possibility that social media might have expanded the capacity of ordinary actors and enabled a transformation in the demographics of revolt” (p. 17). Condeza, Santos, Lizama and Vásquez (2016) performed a Twitter Social Network Analysis (SNA) with data around a protest against a hydroelectric project in Chile on Twitter, through the protests' main hashtag, and concluded that individual ordinary users are more important than organisations or media to connect the network in such circumstances and that even people with an ordinary

follower network (e.g. around 800) “can affect significantly the connectivity of the network and thus its amplification” (p. 221, my translation). Santos and Condeza (2017) replicated the method to another protest with different characteristics – much more massive and related to educational demands- concluding that individuals matter more than their own organisations on Twitter: “Instead of talking to the TV channel, I talk to the journalist; instead of talking to the party, I talk to the politician; instead of talking to the NGO, I talk to the activist” (Santos & Condeza, 2017, p. 81, my translation).

Nevertheless, considering the interchanging roles of users on digital media (Ridell, 2012), journalists, politicians or celebrities in general, are no less of ordinary people when they are off the spotlight, just as the example above of a journalist sharing his vacation pictures. To solve that innuendo, following the prior discussion, I suggest to identify two dimensions that help define what is a ‘user’ in a UGC perspective: the *role* played by the author of the content (which are inclusive of the different roles played by people as ordinary or public figures) and the *professional competency* (associated with the communicative practices involved in the process of capturing, editing, publishing and disseminating the content). The former varies in most cases, since roles are usually context-dependant, so most of the users could, in function of the context –such as a journalist outside her professional routine, an activist on a sports event and so on- create UGC. Professional *persona* is not perennial; it is interchangeable with individual social *persona* as it was confirmed by interviews with journalists that participated in the protests which corroborate such perception. The latter should be historically situated (Polydoro, 2016, p. 164) for not only the professional media standards are variable through time, they are gradually getting blurry with amateur (Leadbeater and Miller, 2004), due to, perhaps, amid other plausible causes, growing centrality of digital and visual culture as well as technological advances of regular consumer

media devices –as opposed to professional- that allow untrained people to produce high quality content, either by luck, talent or plain persistence²⁵.

Contextualizing to the present research, to be discarded as UGC, in the realm of a protest, a user must either publish through organisational channels –such as a journalist or even an ordinary citizen that sends content to a media outlet as the concept of ‘audience content’- or the individual channel is used professionally, such as an activist’s or a politician’s Twitter handle. Therefore, this criteria, in the context of the present research, excludes celebrities or politicians, whose public life mingles with political life, and activists, whose political activity is what defines them in first place²⁶, so their individual personal profile, during protest, operates analogously to a professional channel. **Whenever a digital media user plays a role as an ordinary citizen and as such creates content, then publishes and publicizes in his/her individual channels -instead of professional or organisational ones- we should be talking about a communicative practice included in the category of UGC, from a user’s perspective.**

2. Generated

The due appreciation of what means to generate content in the context of UGC leads us to question the myriad of ways one can participate in digital media and which ones we should consider in the definition of UGC. As previously stated, Östman (2012) distinguishes UGC from UCC, or *User-Created Content*, defining the latter as “content originally created by users” (p. 1006), while the former encapsulates a broader spectrum of creative activity:

UGC is defined here as encompassing either of the alteration/production or the sharing feature, or both (...) UGC involvement encompasses a wide

²⁵ It is very different to take pictures with trial and error tactics typical of digital era than with the necessary precision of the analogue cameras. Videos are a bit more complicated, especially live streams. That explains why there were more photos (17%) with professional standard than videos (5%) and 9 out of 9 live streams in the datasets presented amateur standards, as per our coding process of testimonial UGC analysed further on.

²⁶ Though an individual account of an activist is not necessarily her professional occupation, it should be a central occupation for this profile.

variety of different kinds of content, ranging from encyclopedic entries on Wikipedia and blogging to posting of music videos on YouTube (Östman, 2012, p. 1006)

Wardle and Williams (2010) state that comments on social media are not to be considered UGC, but a video uploaded to YouTube can. Dylko and McCluskey (2012), in their study on Political UGC, define the “degree of ‘activity’ of the user” as a variable (p. 257). Even though I agree that level of participation in the creation of content seems to be a valid criterion, how to assess what content qualifies as ‘significant’ is not a simple matter. How different is a big participation by one or a few committed users -such as transmitting a live stream- from a little participation from a large group of users -such as the sum result of the all the likes and shares that make such video visible?

In sum, within the context of UGC, ‘G’ means generate what? How? By whom? In a digital media environment, practices of co-creation, remix, collages and bricolages are inherent part of a *mashup culture* (Sonvilla-Weiss, 2010), a culture of “sampling & remixing; borrowing & reshaping; appropriating & recontextualizing” (Pettitt, 2007, p. 1). Such culture follows the end of an era of “composition”, that is, a single author’s monopoly over literary creation, defined emblematically by Sauerberg (2009) as the *Guttenberg Parenthesis*. Where are we to draw, then, the line that defines what ‘generated’ means in the context of UGC?

2.1 Participation and Authorship

Dylko and McCluskey (2012), Östman (2012), Wardle and Williams (2010) amongst others, posit that there should be a different treatment to the integral creative act from other levels of creation of content. There are obvious differences between “liking” or “sharing” something created by someone else and publishing a content in a more authorial mode, such as a text or a video. But there is a third side of things: content generated unintentionally and/or unknowingly by users –not ‘authors’ in such cases. Though they might encapsulate minimal effort and have

almost irrelevant effects individually, may have important effects when aggregated with other such contents.

Van Dijck (2009) highlights the uneven distribution of users' contribution on social media, exemplifying with YouTube, which has an impressively low rate of *active* users –meaning those that currently publish videos- versus *passive* ones – that just navigate, consult, comment but don't upload. Less than 5 in every 1,000 users are within the former group, according to a study by Li cited by the author (Van Dijck, 2009, p. 55). This figure leads us to ask if the interactions of the other 99,5% of YouTube users are discarded from the concept of UGC if one is to follow Dylko and McCluskey (2012), who distinguish the degree of activity of the user as a variable to define UGC. The same authors conclude that to be *political UGC*, the content must be “to a significant degree shaped by the active participation of the users” (p. 257). Nevertheless, as discussed above, “significant” is a hard concept to operationalize and points to the exclusion of everything that has the shape of collaborative content in scale, composed by small or micro contributions. In other words, it could exclude content characteristic of acts of collective intelligence, defined by Lévy (2004) as “intelligence distributed everywhere, valued constantly, coordinated and mobilized in real time” (p. 20, translated by author). Along the same lines, Sunstein (as cited by Dylko & McCluskey, 2012) “suggested that small acts (e.g., rating content and commenting on a blog) by large numbers of people can produce meaningful outcomes” (p. 256). It is not clear, though, if the “significant degree” implies intensive individual participation or if is inclusive of a massive collection of small contributions.

Furthermore, as discussed above, there are many little footprints and trails left -conscious or unconsciously- by users of different data systems that are captured and to which a lot of meaning can be attributed. In sum, I disagree with Dylko and McCluskey (2012) in the sense that I do not consider that “increased user control and engagement (in the sense of interaction) with content should be essential to any conceptualization of UGC” (p. 256); I sustain that content whose

authorship is problematic and even impossible to be attributed to an individual, due to its nature, should also be considered UGC. That is content by small individual contributions, built on top of collaborative, large scale systems, leading to multiple authorship -or none at all, as artist-researcher Beiguelman (2003) states regarding creative process in digital media: “authorship, endangered noun” (p. 35).

Another issue imbricated in the ‘G’ of UGC is the diffusion: if a content is created by an ordinary user but is sent to a traditional media -such as BBC UGC Media Hub that receives that kind of content- does it stand as the phenomenon being circumscribed here? Or should it be labelled differently as proposed by Wardle and Williams (2010)? The diffusion, within a culture of sharing (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013), seems to be inextricably attached to the process of creating the content. I argue, supported by many of the previously reviewed definitions of UGC (Bruns, 2010; Dylko & McCluskey, 2012; Krumm et al., 2008; McKenzie et al, 2012; Wunsch-Vincent & Vickery, 2007), that one (generation) without the other (diffusion) is not UGC.

2.2 Diffusion

Prior to the popularisation of UGC, content generated by people with no access to mainstream media either had to pass mainstream media’s gatekeepers’ approval or circulated in alternative media such as pamphlets, fanzines, community media (such as local radios), to name a few. In the context of social mobilisation, even cassette tapes that circulated in Egypt played an important role to communicate subversive resistance to the country’s authoritarian regime for a long time, prior to and concomitantly with the irruption of digital media (Sánchez, 2013) and the downfall of Hosni Mubarak in 2011. During the industrialized media era, post-Gutenberg, in which media that just transmit content one way acquire a ‘machinic’ scale, a certain distance between content creation and content production processes, between creator and publisher, was imposed. Exception was when Mallarmé decided that for his 1897’s poem *Un Coup de Dés* it was necessary to walk

into the press to position characters according to his intent, being known as the first diagrammed poem, “melting interface and message” (Beiguelman, 2003, p. 37, my translation). In spite of that, Mallarmé still intervenes very little in the production process and none in the distribution.

Bruns (2010) states that the content generated by an active user that he calls *produser* must be “publicly accessible”, suggesting the content earns meaning through sharing. Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) state that the content must be “publicly available over the internet” (p. 4). Jenkins, Ford and Green (2013) point out that the networked culture operates under the logics of dissemination, diffusion, that is, of what the authors call *spreadability*: a content’s trait or tendency to be spread. In the authors’ words:

“Spreadability” refers to the technical resources that make it easier to circulate some kinds of content than others, the economic structures that support or restrict circulation, the attributes of a media text that might appeal to a community’s motivation for sharing material, and the social networks that link people through the exchange of meaningful bytes (p. 4)

The above discussion leads to the conclusion that ‘generated’ in the context of UGC implies diffusion as an inseparable step of the process. It points to a virtuous interdependence proper from digital realm in the post web 2.0 era that simultaneously make it novel and defines it.

2.3 Intentionality and Awareness

The commercial value of metadata has long been a source of debate (Fuchs, 2017; Srnicek, 2017; Van Dijck, 2009; 2013). Van Dijck (2009) highlights the economic relevance of metadata left as digital footprints by users of UGC platforms through an analysis of YouTube’s evolution after its acquisition by Google: “Metadata are not merely a by-product of user-generated content: they are a prime resource for profiling real people with real interests” (p. 49). Drawing a balance, the author states “the user’s role as a data provider is infinitely more important than his role as a content provider” (Van Dijck, 2009, p. 49).

The issue that stands out is: to what degree is it transparent to the user that he is actually producing content that will be used in some unknown manner, even if in the form of aggregated metadata that renders the individual users anonymous? Though the ethical component of such discussion is not the direction of this research –in spite of its importance- it triggers questions related to it, mainly to the definition of UGC regarding *intentionality* and *awareness*. That includes the awareness of the final meaning that users' interactions will contribute to, such as quantitative statistical analysis, data mining and big data analyses. To be considered UGC, then, must content be *self-contained*? That is, must it be meaningful by itself? This dilemma is discussed by Moens, Li and Chua (2014):

“Stronger than in the past and in a form that is more amendable to automated processing, people **more or less willingly and knowingly** provide information about themselves and other persons, and about all kinds of events that previously had to be sampled and documented for different purposes” (Moens, Li & Chua, 2014, p. 10, my emphasis).

These two dimensions evoke the variety of processes of content creation discussed so far (see Table 4): (i) those that are intentional and that the user has better awareness of the meaning given by third parties –or at the least, is aware of possible attempts to provide meaning to it- such as a public tweet; (ii) those that are not intentional but there is awareness, such as email messages, location history and others being used for profiling through data mining (or haven't you read the terms of service?); (iii) those that are intentional but of which the user is not aware –either not fully or not aware at all- of the conversion of the information into meaningful UGC, such as searches on Google, also used for data mining or profiling; and (iv) those that are not intentional, that obviously imply a lack of awareness either, such as the fact that what you've written and *have not sent* out of self-censorship on Facebook is also a signal to be read by someone as aggregated data (Das & Kramer, 2013). This very research fits within this discussion for it takes tweets out of their context either through the quantitative aggregated analysis or

by enhancing its visibility via qualitative appreciations, triggering questions of social media research ethics and data rights (Puschmann & Burgess, 2014).

Table 4: Types of UGC according to the combination of variables *Intention* and *Awareness* in its creation (Source: Author).

		Intention	
		YES	NO
Awareness	YES	Public Tweet	E-mail Data Mining
	NO	Map search	Unsent messages on Facebook

Girardin and colleagues (2008) propose research methods for an object they call *digital footprints*. They may be *explicit* (like photos on Flickr) or *implicit* (map consultations, calls, SMS messages etc.) alluding again to the myriad of ways user-generated data of different forms in different scales may be interpreted as meaningful information even when they are not necessarily generated *conscious* or *intentionally*. Otherwise, this kind of content is the result of using digital media or services that allow, through the terms of service (usually barely readable for a lay person in legal jargon), not only the storage of personal data or metadata, but also its analysis, such as in the abovementioned case of Facebook's unpublished status updates.

As a *blow-up* of Antonioni's film (Ponti, Rouve & Antonioni 1966), digital ubiquity leads to an unprecedented frequency of creation of UGC that enhances the chance of capturing extraordinary content. At the same time, many eyes look at such content, recontextualize and find new and unintended meanings to it, such as the present research does. In the context of UGC, then, **to *Generate content* includes a myriad of data created and publicized by users on digital environments that can be interpreted in a meaningful way by the same user or third parties, even though might have been collected or grouped together for analysis in absence of intention and/or awareness of the same user.**

3. Content

3.1 What is Content

The noun *content* derives from the past participle of the Latin expression *continêre* which stands for *hold* (tenêre) *together* (com); it relates to “keep within limits” (Contain, 2005, p. 249). Be *contained* is to be delimited within concrete spatial or abstract ideal limits. This implies simultaneously stability of the registry and limits of the format.

The externalisation of signs from the self to a medium that allows, to some measure, the stability of the record as well as the dissociation between the existence of the sign and presence of the author. Such dissociation enables the transference of information between two parts that are not mutually present. Such were pictures of the walls of ancient caves -still attached to a sense of localness for it is not transportable. Then later came books, audio supports such as magnetic tapes, CDs or DVDs or audio-visual material, which add the possibility of mobility to that equation.

When content starts to flow in societies, as transmissible and/or mobile contained signs, the problematics of authorship begins, though culturally it probably didn't matter much for a long time for the rudimentary social groups—and still don't in some cultures or subcultures. Oral discourse such as Socrates sayings, Saussure's classes, even the Bible or the Koran might not have endured over time if not by those who wrote it down. In that sense, oral signs are not contained in time, for they depend on the fallibility of memory over generations. The equivalent in today's media environment would be livestreams, live transmissions on TV, Radio, Chats and so on. One important difference of the digital environment is that most of those are recorded in databases and potentially could be accessible –such as stream platforms, media channels and even Twitter database on US Library of the Congress.

This discussion does not intend to be exhaustive, but to point out two main traits for something to be considered *content*: (i) externalisation of information in a (ii) format that allows for the registry and/or diffusion of it. I will consider *content*, then, a sign or group of signs that are contained within some sort of concrete boundary that allows for its recording and transmission through channels of communication dissociated from the human body.

3.2 The Boundaries of Content

The last piece of the puzzle in defining what is UGC is what characterizes content at last. According to the Oxford Dictionary of Social Media, *content* is “Any material made available for sharing online, including photographs and videos, news and entertainment” (Chandler & Munday, 2016). Social media and digital media in general, in that sense, bring along a plethora of media formats that fit that description, that ‘contain’ within some clear borders, some sort of content: blog posts, animated Gifs, location data (such as Swarmapp), Facebook pictures, YouTube videos, tweets, media streaming etc. What they have in common –with notable exception to Snapchat and its equivalents and secure messaging systems such as WhatsApp and Signal²⁷- is that they’re recorded in databases. Even streamed media is recorded most of the times, which makes them transmittable and accessible from different locations and in asynchronous ways, as long as one is connected to the Internet.

Hagemann and Vossen (2009) propose, as previously discussed, unorthodox formats such as tags, code, mashups or applications as content. The equivalent in visual media would be grammars of framing and composing an image, for instance, or, following the analogy, the linguistics behind textual media. Also, other types of very small contributions, in forms of content that collectively acquire relevance - such as marketing platforms that aggregate user-generated opinions of products

²⁷ Both these chat Apps do not save messages on their servers. For details refer to their privacy policy on the Apps’ websites.

(Flanagin & Metzger, 2013). Even individual metadata represent small bits of data coupled with media that, even though in an incomprehensible or opaque way to its creator, allow a series of platforms –from social media to search engines or advertising servers- to fulfil a series of different tasks, supported by data mining and data aggregation. This aligns with the previously mentioned idea of ‘meaningful outcomes’ proposed by Sunstein as the result of ‘small acts’ by many users put together and should be taken seriously, especially considering the growing field of Big Data research (boyd and Crawford, 2012, Bruns & Stieglitz, 2013; Freelon, 2014; Rogers, 2015; Tufekci, 2014).

UGC may also be result of the combination of different sources such as derivative work very common in the digital age; it may also be spread (Jenkins et al., 2013) in uncontrollable ways through practices of copying, saving files and uploading back, remixing, sampling and so on (Sonvilla-Reiss, 2010). These means that a person, a group of persons, a multitude or even automated gathering and generating mechanisms (such as bots, crawlers, algorithms, feeds etc.) could be behind the generation of content. In other words, an individual content, in order to be considered UGC, not necessarily must be meaningful on its own, it may be the result of different combinations that might involve different bits of content or different formats. In the end such bits of content are meaningful to someone or something. On accepting such a form of content, there is a demand for a more inclusive definition of the expression *content* in the context of UGC.

Differences lie behind the type of content, though. As previously discussed, there are authors that disregard comments as UGC, others that condition it to the level of participation, the type of creative process and so on. In a study about the value given to UGC by audiences of BBC, Wahl-Jorgensen and colleagues (2010) find that there is a radically different valuation of testimonial content versus opinion: while the former are very highly esteemed, the latter are even despised. That discussion leads to another variable to consider: the motivation behind the creation of UGC. Exclusively social content –such as phatic conversation- fulfil a

very different communicative function than cultural creation, political debate or criminal denunciation. Kammer (2013) classifies content as *conversational* when its purpose is merely the social interaction. Nevertheless, such distinction is less relevant if we consider the variety of attributes that may be source of knowledge from a social sciences perspective –and other fields as well- such as metadata of place, time, choice of words, frequency of interaction: Girardin and colleagues (2008) study tourists' behaviour patterns by analysing the pictures they take and crossing with georeferenced data from their mobile usage; in marketing, user opinion may be compared and valued in comparison with expert opinion, indicating its prevalence when there is a high volume of user opinion (Flanagin & Metzger, 2013); and so on.

Jenkins (2006) states that in a culture of convergence, content ceases to be the end of the cultural production and becomes one of multiple dimensions of transmediatic activity (Jenkins 2013) that gathers different types of interaction. Such interactions transform metadata into an important part of the content. In light of that, the number of hits, likes, shares, citations etc. become part of the content's value chain and should be considered integrating part of UGC reality. This calls for a dynamic, fluid interpretation of the concept, apart from the static, perennial content of industrial media, restrained to the materiality of its analogue immutable forms. Metadata becomes, then, as much of a content as text.

In sum, we consider 'content', in the context of UGC, not only standard media creation, but also collaborative content in forms of very small individual contributions -such as metadata, ratings, 'thumbs up'- and even unintended contributions to some unnoticed or opaque database for its cumulative result might be meaningful in different ways for different people or organisations.

I.5 Defining UGC

Following the discussion of the three terms, the proposed definition of User-generated Content is **any kind of text, data or action created or performed by human individual users on online digital systems, knowingly or not, and published by the same user through digital channels or platforms that ensues an expressive or communicative effect either in an individual manner or combined with other contributions from the same or other sources of data.**

Chapter II. From Witnessing to tUGC

This chapter explores the intersections between UGC and witnessing in the socio-technological contemporary context, which enhances not only their relevance in the struggle to get audience's attention but also to dispute the meaning of political events (De Moraes, 2009). I argue, in line with Mortensen (2015a), that, in the contemporary socio-technological context, the practices of *UGC* and *witnessing* merge, assuming a more central role in the mediascape. Former communicational practices related to witnessing, that previously relied necessarily on institutional mediation to reach a massive audience –such as media, criminal system and so on– have become embedded in a media system that allows for the autonomous and potentially massive production and diffusion of self-generated, self-directed messages (Castells, 2009). The transit from the role of the *audience* as a *witness* to that of the *witness-user* as a *content creator* is central to the comprehension of the definition and operationalisation of tUGC on the next chapter.

The incorporation of testimonial content from *ordinary citizens* (Chouliaraki, 2010) in the non-fictional storytelling process –such as journalism and propaganda– is not novel. The problematisation of memory, witnessing and testimony in the field of communication has received some attention in three waves: first, after the Second World War, with emphasis on psychological and cognitive aspects due to the horrors narrated by survivors of the Holocaust (Felman, 1992; Felman & Laub, 1992; Laub, 1992; Levi, 2002; Oliver, 2004); second, as a response to the massification of electronic media and the incorporation of testimony to it (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009; Ellis, 2000; 2009; Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009; Givoni, 2011; Peters, 2001; 2009); and third, more recently, with the proliferation of self-produced testimonies in digital mediascape and especially on social media (Allan, 2007; 2014; Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014; Carvin, 2012; Chouliaraki, 2010; Mortensen, 2015a; 2015b; 2015c; Pantti, 2013; Reading, 2009). This third wave of testimonial

content in digital media led Wardle, Dubberley and Brown (2014) to claim that the production of testimonial content by regular users, which we propose to call tUGC, is growing in a global scale, meaning that “usable eyewitness footage will simply become more of a regular occurrence” (p. 14). Mortensen (2015b) states that “during war, conflict, natural catastrophe, and other situations of unrest, witness testimonies gain centrality by offering details or giving perspectives on matters unknown, uncertain, or disputed” (p. 4) and Polydoro (2016) claims that amateur video production of relevant events potentially “imposes a dilation of viewpoints, acts on a redefinition of places of speech and of the represented subjects” (p. 163, my translation), therefore the relevance of the processes portrayed in this chapter.

Before jumping into what I suggest to call **testimonial User-Generated Content**, or tUGC, it is necessary to explore the literature of testimonial research, with focus on its crossroads with media in general and digital media in particular.

II.1 Testimonial Content

This section is dedicated to the exploration of the testimonial process: the content that results of an individual that, on finding herself as witness to a relevant event, decides to record it. Such act may be considered an immediate response of the individual to the call of Felman and Laub, who, in the words of Mortensen (2015b), assign to witnesses in the context of World War’s atrocities the “privilege and obligation of survivors to claim responsibility not only for their own story but also for the general writing of history” (p. 5). To Laub (1992), “the not telling of the story [of injustice] serves as a perpetuation of its tyranny” (p. 79), referring to the tyranny performed against the victim-witness (in this case, both roles coincide with the same person). According to the author, the silence distorts the witness’ memory, which may even lead to the person questioning her own memory.

The assessment of the importance and responsibility associated to testimony as a constitutive element of the non-fictional narrative is present in different fields of the literature, such as humanities (Oliver, 2004) social sciences

(Felman, 1992; Felman & Laub, 1992; Givoni, 2011; Lehman, 1997), but this research privileged the field of communications (Allan, 2007; 2014; Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014; Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009; Chouliaraki, 2010; Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009; Mortensen, 2015a; 2015b; 2015c; Pantti, 2013; Reading, 2009; Wahl-Jorgensen, Williams & Wardle, 2010; Wardle, Dubberley & Brown, 2014; Wardle & Williams, 2010; William, Wardle & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2011). Nevertheless, what brings us here is the perception that a transformation is taking place in the field, led by autonomous communicative practices that allow the very witness to produce testimony, in what I consider a form of political participation, much clearer than before digital media and Internet, when many times witnesses were used as a mere instrument for the mass media to enhance or authorize the evening news.

Ashuri and Pinchevski (2009), on a time when smart mobile devices were still a distant reality, stated that “arguably, the very definition of what it means to be a witness in this day and age has changed with the expansion of media technologies” (p. 133). Updating the context with the penetration of smartphones, mobile Internet connection and all the elements discussed in the previous chapter, such discussion is even more important and urging.

1. From Testimony to Testimonial: Witnessing as a political act

According to Givoni (2011), the word ‘testimony’ is an evolution of Latin word *testis* that means literally “one present as a third party”. Other epistemological roots originate a variety of interpretations, that, according to the author,

[V]acillate between a detached reporting and a thick narration of experience; between the transmission of facts and the expression of suspicion; between the precision of the statement and the visibility of the act; between prolonged observation that sets the conditions for the production of truth-claims, and self- destruction that is perceived as the ultimate sign of truth (Givoni, 2011, p. 156)

The author includes, in his appreciation of the phenomenon, a range of interpretations that vary from the pursue of objectiveness in the journalistic search

for denotative aspects of an event supported by witnesses, to what he calls *self-destruction*, which would be the ultimate embodiment of the testimony in the form of scars, diseases or, in the limit, the very own death, where witnessing does not convert into testimony and the very *body* becomes discourse: a testimony without a witness. Such interpretation is reinforced by Levi's (2012) observation that the testimony of the survivors of Jew's persecution during World War II is not entirely honest exactly due to the fact *they had survived*. Peters (2009) asserts that witnessing "lies in the liminal space between the universal experience that knows no witness (death) and the being who knows everything in its most intimate details (God)" (p. 43).

As discussed, the tradition of studies and contemporary literature on witnessing departs from harsh reports of human atrocities during Second World War, with particular attention to the Jew ethnocide. During the second half or the 20th Century, there is reference to the "age of testimony" (Felman, 1992, p. 5), not only in the literary genre (Givoni, 2011, p. 153) but also following the growing mediation of testimonies by mass media along the same period of time, which led to the creation of the concept of *media witnessing* and even the defence that it should be considered as a *field* (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009).

To Peters (2001), there are three modes of testimony that unfold after the two dimensions of *time* and *space*, as per Table 5:

Table 5: Sorts of witnessing an event, classification proposed by Peters (2001, p. 721)

Sorts of witnessing an event		
	Presence in time	Absence in time
Presence in space	BEING THERE Assembled audience e.g. concert, game, theater	HISTORICITY (dead not 'live') Serial mass audience e.g. shrine, memorial, museum
Absence in space	LIVE TRANSMISSION Broadcast audience e.g. radio, TV, webcast	RECORDING Dispersed, private audience Profane, witnessing difficult e.g. book, CD, video

Besides “Being There”, the other categories contain traces of witnessing, but in a more indirect mode, separated from the event either by *time*, *space*, or both –in the case of *Recording*. However, it is important to pinpoint that Peters appreciations were developed during times of mass-mediated testimonies, that is, media content based on testimony, produced and edited by and transmitted through mass media, what Frosh and Pinchevski (2009) called *media witnessing*. The authors define it as the “witnessing performed *in*, *by* and *through* the media” (Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009, p. 1): the first refers to when witnesses are documented in media, such as an interview by a news outlet; the second refers to when media itself is witness, for example, when transmitting a live event; the third refers to the audience that indirectly witness an event mediated by a media representation, such as a spectator watching the news on TV at home (Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009). As to the third type, witness *through* media, authors such as Boltanski (2004), Ellis (2000), Levi (2002), and Frosh and Pinchevski (2009) sustain that the visibility of events in mass-mediated society impregnates subjects with a moral effect: “in a world of mass media where all is visible, excuses like ‘we did not know’ will no longer be acceptable” (Frosh & Pinchevski, 2009, p. 6). Oliver (2004) alerts for the double meaning of the idea behind witnessing: the historically situated act of eye witnessing and the transcendental, wholly meaningful act, charged with “infinite

respons-ability²⁸” (p.81) of the testimony as a document, a record, a legal procedure and so on.

Oliver (2004), while theorizing about the relation between subjectivity and testimony, asserts that the latter “both politicizes the subject (...) and insists on a fundamental ethical obligation at the heart of subjectivity itself” (p. 82). Those thoughts perhaps are most viscerally captured in the words of Primo Levi (2002), one of the survivors of the (in)famous Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz:

The urge to talk to “the others”, to let “the others” know, had assumed amongst us, before our liberation and after it, the quality of a violent and immediate impulse, to the point it rivaled with our more elementary needs (p. 4)

The *act of witnessing*, though, all through the literature that dealt with the phenomenon before the popularisation of UGC due to the drivers discussed previously, is disconnected from the *record of the testimony*. As Peters (2001) stated, “the witness (...) has two faces: the passive one of seeing and the active one of saying” (p. 709). Such authors assume, therefore, the existence of a separation between witness and testimony: the lived experience is divorced from the documentation of such experience. Givoni (2011) analyses critically this aspect of the testimony. Amid other suggestions, the author problematizes the association made by authors such as Felman and Laub (1992) between *witnessing* (as the act, in presence) and the *testimony* (as the discourse, the registry), attributing such dissociation to the excessive subjectivation of testimony’s theorisation (Givoni, 2011, p. 154). An important effect, according to the author, is the loss of perspective of the *political potential of testimony*, potential that is reinforced, according to Wagner-Pacifici (2005), in unstable circumstances, as witnesses play “a crucial hinge in moments of social and political transformation” (p. 303), such as the present case study.

²⁸ The hyphen is intentional, adverting for the double meaning: the ability to perform testimony as well as the responsibility to do so.

Mortensen (2015b) updated the state of the art on the field going through studies from the 1990's on about testimonial content, synthesizing the variety of approaches into three general interpretations of the "tension between the individual and the collective" (p. 5):

1. "The individual speaking on behalf of the collective" (p. 5);
2. "Collective witnessing of events mediated in the mass media", meaning the testimonial understood as what is lived mediatically through the shared experience of mass media, in a way alluding to McLuhan's (1999) idea of a *Global Village*²⁹, dated from the 1960's: "Today, after more than half a century of electric technology, we project our own central nervous system in a global embrace, abolishing time and space" (McLuhan, 1999, p. 17, my translation) or yet "electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village" (p. 19);
3. "Eyewitness images entering the news circuit as 'mass self-communication'" (p. 5) referencing both Castells concept (2009) of *mass self-communication* and the idea of *embodied collectivity* by Pantti (2013) according to which the very body of the witness is part of the first person account.

The author indicates, in this third interpretation, a whole segment of the literature that is attempting to deal with the transition of witnessing as a departed experience from the record, that is, the testimony to be performed *ex post*, to the testimonial as a documented presence, *mediated* but not *mediatized*³⁰. The author then proceeds to conceptualize what she calls *connective witnessing*, defined as "the prevalent form of witnessing today that combines personalized political participation and connective action in the recording and sharing of visual documentation" (p. 1), alluding to Bennett and Segerberg's *logics of connective*

²⁹ This is my parallel, not the author's.

³⁰ In the sense that it has not been mediated by professional media (edited, selected, framed etc.).

action (2012). The concept includes the idea of personalized activism, intensively mediated by technology, to a great degree detached from traditional social movement organisations and hierarchies in reference to. In her study that explores CNN's platform of citizen journalism iReport, Mortensen (2015b) claims that *connective witnessing* implies a political attitude, an immediate civic reaction that takes place in social media platforms. In a dialogue with Peters (2001), she states that "digital technologies have *collapsed the distance from the seen to the said* by transforming witnessing into a participatory and self-reflexive act that instantly *turns experiences into representations*" (p. 6, my emphasis).

Chouliaraki (2010) discusses testimony in a time she defines as 'post-television' news, suggesting there is a process of "technologisation of witnessing" (p. 313) in which authenticity becomes an aesthetic problem by "increasingly replacing the television logic of story-telling as 'dramatic action' with a logic of techno-textual interactivity, whereby the timeline, the source and the hyperlink become an explicit component of the interpretative engagement of audiences with distant suffering" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 313).

Andén-Papadopoulos (2014) develops the concept of *citizen camera-witness*, defined as:

[C]amera-wielding political activists and dissidents who put their lives at risk to produce incontrovertible public testimony to unjust and disastrous developments around the world, in a critical bid to mobilize global solidarity through the affective power of the visual (p. 754).

Following a similar line, I argue that new autonomous practices of testimonial documentation and diffusion, particularly those carried on with the aid of smartphones equipped with cameras and Internet mobile connection, merge *witness* and *testimony* in the same direction of what Andén-Papadopoulos (2014) calls "camera-mediated mass self-publication" (p. 753). The author also claims a change in the field of testimony studies due to the collapse of the vertical hierarchy where mediators are replaced by horizontal diffusors in a "new media ecology,

which is increasingly networked, interactive, participatory and globalized” (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014, p. 759).

Based on the previous discussion, I propose that there is a transition in the communicative practices: from the professional media instrumentalisation of ‘passive’ witnesses as a ‘source’ for mainstream media to a communicative practice of the witness herself that is, to a much higher degree, autonomous and self-converted from witness into testimony. As the distinction between *passive* and *active*, between *seeing* and *saying* collapses (Mortensen, 2015b, p. 2), the passive act of witnessing is merged with the active one of bearing witness, which is also merged with producing the testimony as a document of some sort. *Testimony* becomes *testimonial*. *Testimonial* is, therefore, a *communicative practice*, result of the significant social appropriation of ICT (Proulx et al., 2007), which turns it into an eminently political communicative practice, as suggested by Givoni (2011), Levi (2002) and Mortensen (2015b).

2. UGC and Testimony

2.1 The ‘t’ of tUGC

Following the same approach as last chapter, the ‘t’ of tUGC cannot be atomized, understood within the particularities of the ‘testimonial’ detached from the other concepts. This section will develop *testimonial* as another component of the acronym tUGC, with the objective of developing a definition to the concept, following the idea of interdependency between its four juxtaposed attributes. Each of the variables affects the other: the act of creating a testimony is not only a form of generating content; the witness is not solely a kind of user; and so on.

Why I chose *testimonial User-Generated Content* over *User-Generated testimonial Content*? The reason is because it is not just a type of content that is generated by users, amid many other types of content. The testimonial content creation, in the context of social movements, imply an active political role of the witness who at some point chooses to create a tUGC. Someone that is, to a greater

or lesser degree of chance, witness to an extraordinary event, is not automatically an active communicator. As it will be demonstrated further on, the (re)action of picking up the media device to create a record of the event is an effect of the disposition of the subject to appropriate to the techno-communicative tools at hand –first level of ICT social appropriation by Proulx and colleagues (2007)- then the decision to employ her socio-technical skills –second level- and consciously create content –third level- turn *testimony* into *testimonial*. It is what Mortensen (2015b) calls a “participatory act” (p. 8), which, according to the present conceptualisation of tUGC, culminates with the publication on social media and diffusion on individual’s digital media networks.

The subjacent logics of such a process is not that of a content creator of many types, that decides fortuitously to produce testimonial content: ‘since I am a testimonial content creator now I am going to create testimonial user-generated content’ or still ‘I produce other UGC and now I’m going to head out and create testimonial ones’. It would be something more along these lines: ‘I *can* create content and *this* testimonial content seems to have value’, embedded into a critical approach, justified from the perception that it corresponds to a communicative practice encapsulated in a process of significant social appropriation of technology at hand (Proulx et al., 2007), that is, technology usage with significant purpose, in this case a political one, which context is relatively well understood by that who creates it –though the effects occasionally are under or over-estimated, possibly surprising the creator, as the interviews will point out (refer to section V.4 Social Appropriation Process).

2.2 Active Users and Activism

In the context of alternative media adoption for activism, prior to the massification of Internet and especially mobile technologies and social media, Downing (2001) claimed that radical alternative media “constitute the most active form of the active

audience and express oppositional strands, overt and covert, within popular cultures” (p. 3). For Cammaerts (2012)

[C]ommunication practices by activists are not merely limited to the use of media and communication as discursive weapons, nor can the use of ICTs by activists be reduced to mere facilitators of protest in the offline world, ICTs have also become instruments of direct action in their own right” (p. 127).

In other words, communicative practices are more than mere symbolic representations for they may, among others, contradict, extend, complement or even, according to Rentschler (2015) and Cammaerts (2012) reframe media discourse in line with a more suitable vision to social movements (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford, 1986). Ashuri and Pinchevski (2009) discuss the relationship of mass media with witnesses as a field (built on top of Bourdieu’s conception) and talk of intra and inter-competition within the witnessing field. For them, such tensions due to differences in discourse between what is narrated by witnesses and what ends up in media conform a ‘vertical competition’ on a ‘political arena’:

The foregoing discussion has suggested that competition is part and parcel of the field of witnessing; indeed, competition is what makes it a political arena. It is possible to distinguish in this respect two levels of competition: across zones and between zones. The former relates to the competition among eye-witnesses for the attention of mediators and among mediators for the attention of audiences; hence, horizontal competition. The latter relates to the discrepancies between eyewitnesses and mediators and between mediators and audiences; hence, vertical competition (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009, p. 146)

The level of planning of the role each media is expected to play within protest is an important issue. Tilly (1977) suggests that tactics of contention that are previously known are more efficient, as *spontaneity* and *contagion* are effects of a sort of previously rehearsed play. Reflecting on the anticipation of the importance and role of traditional media on social mobilisation, Delicath and Deluca (2003)

propose the concept of *Image Events* as a mobilisation tactic of activist groups, such as Greenpeace, that have as objective attract the attention of mass media in order to put their topics in the public agenda, on times where it was much more difficult to widely disseminate messages without them. *Image Events* are, therefore, events conceived as rhetorical tactics under the expectation to earn media coverage, more than an expectation to succeed as direct action (Delicath and Deluca, 2003). This is evident in actions like the small inflatables struggling against gigantic whale hunters, actions rewarded mostly with attractive pictures and/or video footage to send out to media –and, of course, nowadays to publish through Greenpeace own channels. Tarrow (1998) also detects this kind of tactics, naming it *public performance*, characterized by the rational planning on the part of organizers. Such logic responds to what Manovich (2001) calls *transcoding*: the cultural adoption of different behaviours as an adaptation to respond to the demand of a medium format. Examples abound in daily media usage: taking a picture anticipating the filter to be used in Instagram; thinking ahead the name of the event in function of an attractive hashtag on Twitter; taunting an interviewee to get a lead to the news article and so on. Under such perspective, *image events*, so typical of social mobilisation supported by performative action in a mass media centred social communication context, are a sort of reverse engineering anticipating and incorporating the media *modus operandi*.

The idea of a planned, previously known repertoire of collective action seems, to a great extent, alien to UGC as a communication practice, for the present definition indicates a practice that empowers the user as an autonomous creator, independently from third party mediation either to *create* or to *publish* content. In that sense, there's no need to trick media into getting attention of morphing an action into something attractive to their *modus operandi*, for the means to capture, publish and publicize are relatively at hand to a regular person, and frequently also the skills needed to make it happen. Furthermore, a lower level of planning on the creation of content by an uninterested user –that is, not an activist, a politician or a

professional media journalist working on its coverage- is sort of a seal of its commitment with the authenticity, as I will further explain on the next sections. The growing adoption of tUGC as a tactics either to document the protest, to mobilize constituents or with another function may, though, lead it to be a growingly standardized tactics in the repertoire of contention, lowering the expected level of spontaneity of the act itself, but on the other hand enhancing the contagion of such tactics, as proposed by Tilly (1977). There may reside one of the most important potentials for tUGC as a tactic for social movements, as we will discuss after analysing the results.

2.3 tUGC as a Form of Political Participation

Building on Verba and Nie's seminal definition, Theocharis and van Deth (2018) elaborate on the "minimal definitional features" of political participation. The authors conclude that "any voluntary, non-professional activity concerning government, politics, or the state is a specimen – a form – of political participation" (Theocharis & van Deth, 2018, p. 143). It becomes evident that tUGC contains the dimensions posed by the authors discussed above: it is a political activity, it is voluntary, people act in their role as non-professionals and, at least in the present case studied, it most definitely concerns the government. There are also aesthetic and semiotic aspects that have interpretative implications and contextual attributes that reinforce, considering its political character, made explicit in the disputes for visibility, subjectivity, collective image, representation and meaning, some of the expected effects of social mobilisations.

Other researches explore these interfaces between UGC, testimonial content and political participation. Renó (2015), in the context of videoactivism, develops the idea of "citizen documentary image" and argues that mobility, along with the possibility of *creation* –that existed since VHS, despite being less accessible both from technical and economic perspectives- and *distribution* –strengthened in the Web 2.0 era- propel videoactivism to a new dimension with higher degrees of

autonomy by activists. The author suggests the creation of two new categories to videoactivism, building upon 1980's work by Santoro (1989): *Real Time Reality* and *Factual Record* alluding, in the former, to alternative live streams, while the latter refers to the recording act. In both, what matters is the referentiality, that is, the connection with the registered event, more than aesthetic or semiotic preoccupations with the narrative sequence or artistic standards (p. 108). In this sense, *Real Time Reality* could be interpreted as a subcategory of *Factual Record* holding the condition of being streamed in real time. Both, nevertheless, have as their main preoccupation a recording of the reality beyond any pre-planned discursive intent or aesthetical expression, both attributes of professional communication. Though the author seems excessively optimistic in his conclusions by stating "media lost their power (...) and social justice has been served" (Renó, 2015, p. 110, my translation), the research points to the importance of such activist testimonial content in media, especially on social media, for the studies in the crossroads of social movements and social communication.

Andén-Papadopoulos (2014) refers to the expansion of the audio-visual universe of traditional media with the inclusion of social media –and its respective User-Generated Content– pointing to the creation of a new "wild zone of representation" that "has become a key battlefield of contemporary political struggles, allowing for previously disenfranchised forces to take on an important role in the production and contestation of geopolitical power" (p. 755), requiring us to "rethink what it is to bear witness to brutality in the age of fundamentally camera-mediated mass self-publication" (p. 753).

The importance of the visibility attained by alternative means of diffusion of self-generated content is highlighted by Givoni (2011) who, after analysing the literature on testimonial content, make a call, just like Ellis (2010) and Mortensen (2015b), to consider this kind of communicative practice beyond the atrocities against the Jews. Givoni analyses, "humanitarian testimonial content" (Givoni, 2011, p. 153) using as example the political instrumentalization of such content by

NGO *Doctors Without Borders* (Médecins Sans Frontières). The organisation use such content with the purpose of sensitizing the distant population to the “mediatized exposure of underreported facts about distant crises” (p. 161). The political characteristic of the testimonies, beyond the memory and reconstruction of a historic past is also, to the author, imbricated with power struggles of the present: “Bold or laconic, informative or subversive, testimony is ineluctably the idiom in which individuals speak back to power” (Givoni, 2011, p. 149). Thus is how the author, updating the discussion over testimonial content, besides conferring to it a political and collective attribute, enhances the spectrum of its applications, removing the exclusive tie from humanitarian socio-psychological tragedy reconstruction such as World Wars I and II and highlighting the possibility of being used as “political testimony”, that she defined as “a way to say ‘we’ without dissolving the ‘I’ and without excluding the other” (p. 165). The author concludes that:

This contentious character of testimony is, in fact, a symptom and a consequence of its contemporary migration to the moral-political sphere (...) Witnessing and testimony are, or rather have become, public issues in and of themselves; this must be the point of departure for any conceptual weaving together of testimony and the political (Givoni, 2011, p. 165)

In a study that theorizes and applies empirically what she calls “eyewitness images”, Mortensen (2015c) studies Saddam Hussein’s hanging, Muammar Gaddafi’s assassination, leaks and other cases where citizen images, or better still, non-official sources have unfastened important social processes. Founded on mediatization theory, she argues that media have “permeated” institutions, obliging them to understand media as an integrated part of them: “The media are inside society and form an integral part of virtually all institutions and organizations, which adjust to and incorporate media technologies and logics in their production, organization, and communication” (Mortensen, 2015c, p.6). It seems similar to how politicians and political communicators had to do a decade ago with analogue

media, adapting to its routines (Gomes, 2004). Within the context analysed by Mortensen, there is an extraordinary production and distribution of images “unobtainable” before, in massive scale through digital platforms (Mortensen, 2015b, p. 1). The result is that

When citizens or participants produce, distribute, and mobilize images, they engage in the ongoing battle to control and shape the public’s mediated knowledge and experience of conflict: a veritable ‘conflict of images’, which comprises an inevitable part of contemporary conflicts (Mortensen, 2015b, p. 2).

A few decades ago, the politicized citizen with an extraordinary content in hand (be it a witnessing act or a testimonial content) would by all means pursue mainstream media to circulate it. But Renó’s (2015) current account of Brazilian reality -as would be applicable to other countries- seem to be pointing to a polarisation between traditional media and social movements and consequently to the politicisation of this sort of testimonial content circulated via social media and other alternative media, as will be discussed in forthcoming chapters. It is the sharpening of the ‘vertical competition’ Ashuri and Pinchevski (2009) refer to, between ordinary users and established media for the meaning of their testimonies. Users may act as watchdogs, while at the same time there is the emergence of a ‘diagonal’ competition (not horizontal nor vertical) between such agents: ordinary users and traditional media struggling for the meaning audience will make of events. The classification of *mediators* as the “dominant” agent of the field (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009, p. 146), implying its hierarchy over the other agents –*witnesses* and *audiences*- is put to the test (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014) as cyberspace becomes a political arena where potentially may circulate the discourses and content created, published and disseminated by the very same witnesses. With that in mind, I join Mortensen’s (2015b) call to move “beyond understanding eyewitness images in relation to their circulation in the news media and conceptualizing witnessing as a **participatory act**” (p. 8, my emphasis).

II.2 Characteristics of tUGC

tUGC is a communicative practice with specific (testimonial) content and semiotic attributes, as will be discussed in the following sections. But in the context of collective action its creation is not exempt of political intentionality. This section will characterize tUGC as a communicative practice, product of the process of significant social appropriation of ICT (Proulx et al., 2007), i.e., the intentionality behind the political act of producing and disseminating a tUGC during a social protest, and describe and analyse its semiotic characteristics.

1. tUGC as Social Appropriation

Having access to Web 2.0 sites, social media or mobile Internet does not equal creation of content. The comprehension of those artefacts as socio-technical objects and their critical adoption by users are mandatory to propel its usage for political participatory practices such as the creation and circulation of tUGC. The *ICT Social Appropriation* perspective proposes that different levels of appropriation of technology may or may not enable citizen engagement on political participation such as the creation of testimonial content that documents, denounces, and/or publicizes social protests. As suggested by Van Dijck (2009): “‘participation’ does not equal ‘active contribution’ to UGC sites” (p. 44). The potential to act in innovative ways, therefore, will depend not only of the potentials embedded in technological advances, but on the appropriation the individuals or social groups make of it.

1.1 Social Appropriation

Plenty of studies have demonstrated that innovation in general (Rogers, 1986) and technological functionalities in particular are appropriated by users in a variety of forms resulting in distinct communicative practices (DeSanctis & Poole, 1994; Livingstone, 2008). Isaac, Bresseire Des Horts & Leclercq (2006) criticize a binary view of the adoption of technologies in organisational environments, recognizing

different levels of appropriation including when users are submitted to top-bottom guidelines, obliging them to do so (Gallivan, 2011, cited by Isaac et al., 2006). Still within the pragmatic context of productivity analysis in organisational environments, Lindtner, Anderson and Dourish (2012) point out two main appropriation processes: *personalisation*, which can be “unanticipated” by designers of the system; and *customisation*, which are personalized uses, only that within the predicted possibilities of the designed system. The authors define appropriation as “the adaptation and transformation of information systems after they are deployed” (Lindtner et al., 2012, p. 77). Harrison and Barthel (2009) posit that “the history of email has taught us that users may appropriate computer-mediated technologies and fashion them for their own purposes, which sometimes supersede or are at odds with the original purposes of designers” (p. 157).

Reyes (2015) makes a detailed review of the theoretical models that approach from different perspectives the technology adoption, coming up with three main perspectives: *Diffusion*, *Innovation* and *Appropriation* (p. 74). The *Diffusion* model, attributed to Everett Rogers (1986), is epistemologically positivist, since the user plays a more passive role (Isaac et al., 2006, p. 9). It is centred on the idea of dissemination and considers innovation as a definite object, leading, according to Reyes (2015), to a permanently positive bias to innovation. The *Innovation* model is perceived as a more iterative process, aligned with the idea of appropriation by Lindtner and colleagues (2012) previously mentioned. Within this paradigm, “the concept [of innovation] refers to a whole process, that is, precisely the work of social actors mobilized by the objects conception” (Reyes, 2015, p. 79), supported by Bruno Latour’s *Network-Actor-Theory* (NAT). According to NAT, the subject “is not source but a moving target of a wide set of identities that swarm in his direction” (Latour, 2012 as cited by Di Felice, 2013, p. 64, my translation). Lemos (2015) defines NAT by dissociating it from technological determinism, sustaining that “all technical device must be recognized not as an individuality, closed, finished and autonomously acting upon others, but as a

monad, as a network-actor that acts and is acted upon depending on the formed associations (always irreducible ones to the others)” (Lemos, 2015, p. 31). However, I agree with Reyes (2015) when the author, building mainly upon Proulx’s work, advocates for the adoption of the theoretical framework of *Appropriation*, indicating that “the significance of the use people grant to technologies is the most verisimilar answer” when a researcher tries to understand “why people integrate a technology in their daily life” (p. 81). As we will see, the ICT Social Appropriation framework by Proulx and colleagues (2007) is composed by different levels of such appropriation, allowing for the distinction of where different communicative practices fit.

Much of the research that adopts *Appropriation* as a framework pursues answers in the first two of those levels of social appropriation: technology adoption and technology skill development. As we’ll see, this research focus on the third level, which is when people make technologies useful for their own purposes, in this case, with political intent.

1.2 ICT Significant Social Appropriation

According to Proulx (2005) and Reyes (2015), though the concept of appropriation draws back to Marxist critique to workforce exploitation by capital owners –as in appropriation of the production means- the same concept appears, in the context of media, with the theory of Uses and Gratifications (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974), that was trying to let go mediacentrism and media research centred exclusively on its effects on audience (Proulx, 2005). In the context of ICT social appropriation Proulx (2005) defines the concept of social appropriation as the **“process of progressive internalization of technical and cognitive skills operating among individuals and groups who use such technologies on a daily basis”** (p. 3, my translation).

Proulx and colleagues (2007) further develop the framework dividing the process of ICT social appropriation into six moments: (i) *access*; (ii) *cognitive skills*

acquisition; (iii) *significant adoption*, where old practices are replaced by new ones that incorporate technologies; (iv) *creative use*, that divert from original predicted uses for such technology; (v) *collective intelligence* phenomenon that rise from the incorporation of the previous steps in a community or a group; and (vi) the *complete realisation* of the appropriation process that culminates in the active engagement of the user or group of users in processes of technology innovation or development of public policies related to such technology.

Let's go through a few examples. The hashtag adoption in Twitter as a means for organizing information, aggregating content, thanks to the unforeseen effect the # symbol had in the system -being automatically converted into a hypertext that leads to a search with all of the hashtagged content- is an example of moment (iv). It is a very advanced and quite tech-savvy appropriation that makes a divergent use of technology at hand, unpredicted by the developers -at least by the first users and by the one that invented it. On the other hand, the programmers of a Linux community that work collaboratively to develop parts and pieces of the operational system or Wikipedia contributors that add up content to the site would be examples of users in the moment (v). People who currently advocate, for instance, in favour or against Net Neutrality, free or open source software, the Wikileaks creators and so on, are examples of communities pursuing their own interests or they ideal for public policies regarding their metier, exemplifying moment (vi). However, as advanced in the end of last section, moment (iii) is the one that applies to the heart of this research: *significant* appropriation of ICT, in which regular users, not necessarily with high levels of technical skills, understand or interpret possibilities and potentials of the technologies and give them an intentional, propositional use, articulated as a communicative practice, amongst others, with political intent.

As previously discussed, content is not disseminated just because it is online: there are different types of contents, different motivations (Katz et al., 1974) that attract users to adopt social media (Valenzuela, 2012) to generate and

share content (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009; Leung, 2009). According to Jenkins and colleagues (2013), besides the technical facilities offered by the tools of content diffusion and the economic structures (norms and laws) that support such circulation, there are “the attributes of a media text that might appeal to a community’s motivation for sharing material, and the social networks that link people through the exchange of meaningful bytes” (p. 3).

Both facets of User-Generated Content –*creation* and *diffusion*– reflect modes of social and significant ICT appropriation to a higher or lesser degree, regardless of the context, be it for leisure, work or politics. Within that range of possibilities, there lies the potential to create and publish testimonial content of socially relevant events, providing alternative narratives to mainstream media, individual opinion or even taking a selfie. In the case of participating and documenting a street demonstration such as the cases studied for the present research, such act implies that the user has at her disposal not only the means (both technical and cognitive) to carry out this communicative practice, but also that the user is motivated with political intent. Therefore, a tUGC creator goes through at least the three first levels of Proulx and colleagues’ (2007) ICT social appropriation model: *access*, *cognitive skills* and *significant use*. However, in the stage of diffusion, the user may be assisted –and many times he is– either by other ordinary citizen-users with better visibility –in a sort of a reversed two-step flow (Katz, 1957) where information travels from the bottom-up– or by public figures or traditional media that pick up her message and embed in their content. Such is the case of Al Jazeera during Arab Spring in Egypt (Robertson, 2013) and broadcasters like BBC and Sky in the UK in the context of London bombings of 2005 (Allan, 2007; Reading, 2009) and more recently the much-circulated citizen footage of 2015/2016 Brussels and Paris’ attacks (Bruns & Hanusch, 2017) and *Las Ramblas* terrorist attacks in Barcelona (Levy, 2017).

1.3. Reimagining Political Participation

Jenkins and colleagues (2013) highlight the profound social, economic and institutional/legal changes related to the irruption of digital media, in an inversely analogous form to what have been previously established as conditions to the rise of UGC:

Our approach doesn't presume that new platforms liberate people from old constraints but rather suggests that the affordances of digital media provide a catalyst for reconceptualizing other aspects of culture, requiring the rethinking of social relations, the **reimagining of cultural and political participation**, the revision of economic expectations, and the reconfiguration of legal structures (p. 2, my emphasis)

What are those 'reimagined forms of political participation'? Many authors have tried to identify, understand and define them. According to Rheingold (2002), new devices and technologies such as wireless networks, mobile phones and GPS "enable people to act together in new ways and in situations where collective action was not possible before" (p. xviii). One of those ways is what the author calls *Smart Mobs*, defined as "mobile ad hoc social networks (...) the new social form made possible by the combination of computation, communication, reputation, and location awareness" (169-170). Earl and Kimport (2011) divide online activism into *e-mobilizations*, *e-tactics* and *e-movements*, in a continuum that goes, respectively, from *low* to *varying* and *high* leveraging on affordances of the web. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) developed the concept of *connective action* to account for changes in the modes of organisation of protests. According to the authors, intensive use of technology enables the coordination of loose-tied people with similar political demands, at the same time that it allows the personal framing of issues, as opposed to strongly tied traditional social movement communities that subscribe a top-down unique framing of the issues at stake.

Costanza-Chock (2011) develops a theoretical framework around the concept of *transmedia mobilization* that "involves engaging the social base of the movement in

participatory media making practices across multiple platforms” (p. 113). On the same vein Zimmerman (2016) presents the concept of *transmedia testimonio* that refer to the ‘coming out’ of “undocumented youth [who] declare their undocumented legal status at protests and meetings and through social media, including digital videos, blogs, and podcasts” (p. 1886). Such participatory media practices mark, according to Costanza-Chock (2011), “a transition in the role of movement communicators from content creation to aggregation, curation, remix, and circulation of rich media texts through networked movement formations” (p. 114). Theocharis (2015) developed the concept of Digitally Networked Participation (DNP), composed by two core elements: (i) “the act of (digital) communication as a form of mobilization” (p. 5) and (ii) “The frequent embeddedness of self-expressive, identity, and personalized elements as part of the action” (p. 5); both characteristics are clearly identifiable on tUGC, as we will see.

I propose that tUGC is a relatively new form of political participation through digital media, within the realm of *Digitally Networked Participation* (Theocharis, 2015) and more specifically a mode of *Digitally Networked Political Participation* (Theocharis & van Deth, 2018). Nevertheless, it is very difficult, as it happens with any form of ICT or media (device or system), to assess its impact as a tool for social movements to advance their political demands. Furthermore, it is not exempt from criticisms, as Malcom Gladwell (2010) argues: “The revolution will not be tweeted”. Building upon the history of civil rights struggle in USA during the 1960’s, Gladwell claims that the weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) of the activists on digital social networks were not enough to create relationships that survive the setbacks of a social movement, not to mention a revolution (Gladwell, 2010).

Beyond new theorisations on digital media and political participation, the question that echoes behind such debate is an old one: what is the role of technology and media –and particularly Twitter in Gladwell’s essay- when it comes to social conflict and street protest? Such question is inscribed in the efforts present in the social sciences realm to sort out the clash between technological

determinism of those that seem to believe that media *per se* hold social meaning – what Mattoni and Treré (2014) call “technological fascination bias” (p. 3)- and the scepticism of others as Morozov’s (2011) “couch potatoes” that perform “slacktivism” or the “alienating agents” of Lanier (1995).

One way or another, if recent cycles of social movements are effectively based, more frequently than not, on weak-tied digital networks (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012; Gladwell, 2010; Granovetter, 1973), ICTs may still end up being fundamental tools for its articulation (Castells, 2012). Gerbaudo (2012) states that Twitter was used mainly as a tool for building the *choreographies of assembly* on three events that depicted social unrest on 2011: Egyptian uprisings, Occupy Wall Street in USA and *Indignados* movement in Spain. In the author’s words, Twitter was used “to give a shape to the way in which people come together and act together” (p. 3). It could be read, then, that Twitter was a form of bringing together those loose networks, mostly connected by nothing or little more than political affinity, as “in the absence of a formal organisational structure, collective action is always structured by the forms of communication responsible for ‘setting the scene’ for its display” (Gerbaudo, 2012, p. 21). Meunier & Condeza (2012) studied “how, when the organization of collective action and the development of ICTs intertwine, emerges a space of communication, both virtual and material, that cannot be studied but in action” (par 6, my translation). In face of a vast heterogeneity of communicational practices, including websites, e-mails, SMS, videos on YouTube and more than 100 blogs, the authors opted for a heuristic approach supported by the metaphor of the rhizome (Meunier & Condeza, 2012, par 36).

In sum, while a technological breakthrough *per se* is not responsible for social change, it brings forward new or, at least, different approaches to the communicative possibilities that relate to political participation. Advances in its technological attributes (speed, interface hardware, etc.), affordances (functionalities, interface design, networking etc.), socio-economic (cost,

penetration etc.) and possibly other factors, allow for innovative practices in some aspect or to some degree, be that for democratic (social change and social justice) or autocratic (censorship, surveillance) purposes.

It is not obvious, though, that such capacities will lead to changes in the balances of media and political power, i.e., “who is inside and outside, who may speak, who may not, and who has authority and may be believed” (Marvin, 1988, p. 4). Pavlíčková (2012) puts the optimism behind ‘technological fascination’ in historic perspective asserting that “media historians have shown that the introduction and spread of every new medium in society has always been accompanied by the tendency to see the technology as an agent of social change” (p. 39). Marvin (1988), for example, downplays the importance of technological issues along the rise of electric media -such as speed, capacity and performance- while highlights the struggles for power, describing its history as “a series of arenas for negotiating issues crucial to the conduct of social life” (p. 4).

This research will add a contribution to such debate by discussing the role of tUGC on Twitter in the selected protests, supported by a theoretical and empirical approach to this relatively new form of political participation.

2. Semiotics of tUGC

Semiotics is the science of the signs, i.e., the study of representations. Any testimonial media, be it produced by an ordinary citizen, by a criminal lawyer or by the media, is a representation of some past event. It is, then, constrained at least to the potentials and limitations of the medium selected and the discursive skills of the producer: framing, editing, rhetoric and so on. In that sense, all forms of UGC represent some ruptures of the relation between *semiotics* of media content and its perceived *authenticity* for the latter has been ceasing to be related to the professional media semiotic qualities. The characteristics of *immediacy* and *unconstructedness* associated with the spontaneity of an occasional witness, diametrically opposed to media professional standardized practices, synthesized

perhaps in Silverstone's "proper distance" (2004), have become a new standard for authenticity, as it will be explored in detail in the following section. The second section below (*Testimony as Representation*) deals with the power of the *indexical content*, that is, representations physically linked to the represented object, such as pictures and videos, when compared to *textual content*, as testimonial representations accounting for an important event such as a street demonstration.

2.1 Unconstructedness as a form of Authenticity

Montgomery (2001) discusses the notion of authenticity that derives from media industry jargon: "Because broadcast talk by its nature takes place in the mediated public sphere, it is frequently –to a greater or lesser extent- staged for performance (...) 'Authentic talk' in the public sphere might, by contrast, be seen as the reverse of this" (p. 397-8). According to the same author, the etymological root of the word *Authentic*, as per the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), means 'of first hand authority, original', which in turn can be traced to expressions of 'original authority' and 'one who does a thing himself, a principal, a master, an autocrat'. This association between spontaneity and authenticity, with the addition of the autonomy of the 'autocrat' are relevant to the present conceptualisation of testimonial User-Generated Content.

Wahl-Jorgensen et al. (2010) conclude their study on audience perception of UGC on media stating that audience content is perceived as "immediate and fresh, authentic, emotionally engaging and democratizing" (p. 190) and reinforce that "The more fresh and spontaneous an appearance is judged, the more 'truthful' it seems" (p. 181). On the same direction, Polydoro (2016) asserts the value of what he calls "amateur aesthetics", even suggesting a change in media industry's power balance:

The value of documental evidences gathered by amateurs, whose strength resides on a renovated realism and on the effect of presence (in contraposition to the scepticism before TV broadcasters' sharp, technically

refined imagery), suggests changes in the balance of power between journalists and general public (p. 19, my translation).

Gomes (2004), supported by Bourdieu's fields' theory, describes journalism as a social field, highlighting the factors that compose its value system, amongst others, the effect of reality that it seems to be loosing for amateur testimonial media:

All of its prestige and recognition distribution systems are associated to the displayed capacity of each one of its agents to obtain information that unites quality, relevance, speed and –with a supreme degree of distinction-exclusivity, and to write it in the appropriate form, publish and produce **with it an effect of reality** (pos. 690, my translation, my emphasis)

Analogously, the idea of field could be extended to media, including the logics and dynamics of legitimation and recognition in content related to entertainment, education and others, which maintain in common certain practices regarding the way the author/sender holds the “capacity to speak and act in forms that are authorized and hold authority” (Gomes, 2004, pos. 709). This means the introduction of other variable, associated with the gradual incorporation of UGC, destabilize the value system, opening new possibilities of criteria alien to the field or at least not recognized as such until about a decade ago. According to Marvin (1988), the rise of electric media also experimented such scenario of uncertainty and opportunities when it first appeared: “in the uncertainty of emerging and contested practices of communication that the struggle of groups to define and locate themselves is most easily observed” (p. 5). The valorisation of the expert, the professional, the semiotic structures normalized in mainstream media –framing, text, discourse, enunciation forms- are challenged by the emerging practice of UGC, which claims the authenticity of the spontaneous and/or the spontaneity of the authentic. The semiotic aspect of UGC that enhances this perception of authenticity is its *unconstructedness*, that is, the fact that it is not edited (or at least, not professionally). When tUGC is created in the context of social demonstrations, such

perception is very important to legitimate to some measure the content published by ordinary users.

Levi (2002) suggests that the language of the testimony should pursue the objectiveness, as it would confer it more trustworthiness. In that line of thought, the role of the witness is not to make judgements, as it is to “feed” the proper judges with the necessary facts:

In order to write this book I’ve used testimony’s sober and restrained language, instead of the plaintive language of the victim or the raging language of the avenger: I thought that my words would result more believable the more objective and less passionate it be; only this way the witness in a trial fulfils his purpose, which is to prepare the way for the judge. The judges are yourselves (Levi, 2002, p. 99, Appendix of Spanish Version, translation by author).

This perspective of neutrality is much present in the literature and points to the importance of the language behind the sign that stands for the testimony in order for it to sustain its validity or, in other words, to enhance its potential to function as a “surrogate sense-organs of the absent” (Peters, 2001, p. 709).

Tom Gunning (1985) deconstructs the myth that during the first cinema projection by brothers Lumière of the movie *L’Arrivé d’un train à La Ciotat* (“The arrival of a train to the city”), spectators allegedly panicked and ran to the exit, for the movie depicts a train approaching the camera –therefore, the spectator of the movie. Gunning analysed documentation of the time and suggests that the only plausible conclusion is that “Far from credulity, it is the incredible nature of the illusion itself that renders the viewer speechless” (p. 118). He draws the attention back to the fact that, though people were conscious of what they were seeing, they were no less awed by the wonderful phenomenon they were experiencing. In what could be a McLuhanian allusion, the author concludes: “What is displayed before the audience is less the impending speed of the train than the force of the cinematic apparatus” (p. 118). In the context of this research, the fact that tUGC is present in

media (social media mostly) is more important than the content itself: **the ability to watch almost-live, non-edited imagery of an event has an importance in itself, regardless of the quality of the imagery.**

Such perception is reinforced by the analysis Renó (2015) performs on videoactivism, underlining the prominence of the message over the format in certain cases, also pointing to the value of *spontaneity* and *opportunity*, stating that “what matters most is to record reality, the fact, without worrying about a narrative or artistic sequence” (Renó, 2015, p. 108, my translation) resulting in a language that “abuse spontaneity and naturalness when recording with the camera” (p. 110).

Pantti (2013) studies citizen-generated imagery used by traditional media in Finland and emphasizes the “more epistemic authority” of “amateur images as less-mediated versions of reality” (p. 304). The author identifies four characteristics of such “aesthetic of citizen imagery”:

1. Unconstructedness, in reference to spontaneity, absence of planning, which is evidenced by the absence of narrative structure proper of such kind of image;
2. Unconventional Framing, distinguishing this images from the professional framing practices: “The unconventional camera angles, which are often due to the photographer’s hiding or escaping, reinforce the significance of the event through the bodily danger of the photographer-witness” (p. 208);
3. Mobility: “The mobility of citizen imagery, then, is not only about the camera movements but also about the moving photographer” (p. 209);
4. Embodied Collectivity, in which images “invite the viewers to engage through their [author’s] embodied points of views” (p. 209), pointing a finger, through the record of her own voice, face and so on, as opposed to the characteristic physical and ethical distance of the professional photographic journalism aesthetics.

Though Pantti analysis refers specifically to citizen imagery that end up in mainstream media, the discussion about the semiotic and aesthetic attributes of nonprofessional images may be extended to the context of ordinary citizens' content creation during protests, where the importance of the traits of spontaneity, mobility, absence of professional skills and embodiment of the author are equally present.

These studies indicate that *unconstructedness* relates to perception of *spontaneity*, which relates to *authenticity*, reinforcing the potential for associating *unconstructedness* as a form of *authenticity*.

2.2 Testimony as Representation (Sign)

Furthermore, there are semiotic aspects of a tUGC that also should contribute to the perception of authenticity, supported by Charles Peirce's *orders of signs* (2003). In what follows I will demonstrate why tUGC must be *indexical*, that is, forms of representations linked to the object represented, such as photos or videos, and explain how this characteristic relates to perceptions of authenticity and immediacy.

Peirce (2003) identifies three kinds of representations of an object, which he calls signs: *icon*, *index* and *symbol*:

The icon has no dynamic connection whatsoever with the represented object; its qualities are simply similar to those of the object and excite analogous sensations in the mind for which is a similarity. **The index is physically connected with its object; they form, both, an organic pair, but the interpreting mind has nothing to do with such connection,** except the fact of recording it (...). The symbol is connected to the object by the power of the idea of the mind-that-uses-the-symbol, without which such a connection wouldn't exist (Peirce, 2003, p. 73, my emphasis, translated by author)

The *icon* is related to its representing object mainly through similitude, therefore has a "high power of suggestion" that allow our minds to develop

“imponderable comparative relations” (Santaella, 1983, p. 64, my translation), such as a realistic painting. The *symbol’s* power of representation is due to its being “carrier of a law that, by convention or collective pact, determines that such sign represents its object” (Santaella, 1983, p. 67, my translation), such as words and phrases, learned by social and cultural conventions. On the other hand, what makes the *index* is “a sign that refers to the Object it denotes because it is really affected by such Object (...) it is not the mere similitude with the Object (...) but the effective modification it undergoes by the force of the Object” (Peirce, 2003, p. 52). Such would be a footprint, a scar, a food stain, a burning smell and so forth. The very nature of the index, then, demands that it can only be attached to **one** event, fact, object: “a sign that operates as such because it indicates another thing to which is connected in a factual manner” (Santaella, 1983, p. 66, my translation).

The index is “a sign that as such works because it indicates another thing to which is connected in a factual form” (Santaella, 1983, p. 66). Such is the factual characteristic that Primo Levi (2002) uses as argument to abstain from judging what he had lived: “I prefer the part of the witness than that of the judge: I must testify about the things I’ve suffered and seen” (p. 104). Levi is an index of the crimes against the Jew community in Germany during World War II: his scars, his expression, his body, all represent indexically those tragic experiences.

Bolter and Grusin (1999) claim that media maintain necessarily a reality status for, though they are representations, they keep a “point of contact” (p. 30) with the represented object and suggest there is a sort of “transparent immediacy” (p. 30) when this point of contact is more evident. In the case of analogue photography (static or cinematographic), for example, the point of contact is film, which is the result of the action of light over light-sensitive material. On a similar line of thought, Barthes (1984) employs a division of linguistic signs, specifically applied to imagery, between *denotative* and *connotative* in order to explain the different processes of semiotic relationships between sign and meaning. In that sense, states Barthes, a drawing’s denotative effect is less “pure” than a photo for

“the operation of drawing (the codification) immediately causes a separation between signifier and signified” (Barthes, 1986, p. 39, my translation). Therefore, the analogue photograph would be a “message without a code” (Barthes, 1986, p. 39), without symbolic signs, embedded in culture and interpretative possibilities. At the limit of the representation of the real, Bolter and Grusin’s *transparency* (1999) is expressed in what Barthes (1986) calls the “iconic uncoded message” (p. 34, my translation): the literal image, denoted, as opposed to the connoted image, symbolic, charged with implicit meanings.

One of the definitions for “testimony” in Merriam-Webster is “first-hand authentication of a fact” (Testimony, 2016); in *Spanish Royal Academy* dictionary³¹ (RAE, 2016) the equivalent term *testigo* stands for “person that witness or acquires direct and truthful knowledge of something” (translated by author). The transfer from *first-hand* or *direct* experience to a mediated testimony in form of any sign is known to be problematic (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009; Laub, 1992; Levi, 2002; Peters, 2001; 2009), but if the representation is indexical, as our semiotic analysis proposes, these imperfections should be perceived to a much lesser extent. “As I was going towards the exit there was this smell. Like burning hair” (Zoulia, 2005, par 3), states to The Guardian a witness of London subway bombings of 2005. Such a powerful first-hand sensorial account loses much of its impact when translated into text to be externalized and distributed to others, as Levi (1959) anticipates when he explains his recurring dreams in which none in his family would understand his words describing the horrors he had been through:

This is my sister here, and some unidentifiable friend and many other people. They are all listening to me and it is this very story that I am telling: the whistle of three notes, the hard bed, my neighbour whom I would like to move but am afraid to wake because he is stronger than I am. I also speak at length about our hunger, and about how we are checked for lice, and about the Kapo that hit me on the nose then sent me to wash because I was

³¹ <http://dle.rae.es/?w=testigo>, Retrieved December 2016.

bleeding. It is an intense pleasure, physical, inexpressible, to be home, among friendly people, and to have so many things to recount: but I can't help noticing that my listeners do not follow me. In fact, they are completely indifferent: they speak confusedly among themselves of other things, as if I were not there. My sister looks at me, gets up and goes away without a word (Levi, 1959, p. 64).

Both accounts are supported by symbols (language, oral or written text) instead of the indexes that couldn't be captured in order to transmit it as an index (such as sounds or pictures, or the very smell that Zoulia felt leaving the metro). The coded information, in Barthes' sense, loses its immediacy. From this perspective, I highlight the power of representation inscribed in indexical registries of first-hand ordinary witnesses in situations of conflict.

The *denoted* image that (i) carries predominantly non-symbolic signs (ii) in amateur form –unconstructedness and lower media standards- (iii) with an embodied author –first person perspective- and (iv) the detached ethics described by Levi, challenges professional images' monopoly of authenticity and objectivity. The testimonial record, the more devoid from connotative and symbolic elements, the more powerful should be as a sign that, as Peters suggests, substitutes the audience's senses.

3. tUGC as a Communicative Practice

After going over the semiotics of tUGC, in this section I will discuss some traits of its process of creation. As will be exposed, tUGC must be opportune media created by ordinary user and, as such, should simultaneously enhance the perception of authenticity of the content and the perceived obtrusiveness of the user that receives it with the object represented.

3.1 Opportune or planned?

The purpose of this section is to establish the distinction between the opportunity of an occasional cameraman or photographer and the systematic, planned

professional of media that searches for the next *in fraganti*. In between lie those ordinary users who understand the power of testimonial image, but who do not pursue, as a premeditated objective while participating on a protest, the creation and publication of tUGC. So, though they are aware of the tool on their pocket, they *react*, instead of *acting*, caught in an opportune situation to do so, moved by triggers such as awe, a sense of injustice or others, pertaining the recorded event.

Following Frosh and Pinchevski (2009), there may be identified three kinds of media testimonies: (i) *mediatized testimony*, as when the witness testifies via media; (ii) *media testimony*, as when media is the witness; and (iii) *mediatized witness*, when the subject is an indirect witness through media –what the authors characterized as *in*, *by* and *through* the media, respectively. tUGC differs radically from those for it bypasses that kind of mediation at all, being only subject to a new kind of mediation: social media algorithms. Still, the creative process, the editing, the timing of the publication, the final product are 100% carried out by the individual. The focus of the present discussion is on what a television news professional called “accidental witness of events” (Wardle & Dubberley, 2014, par 2). Such user is definitely not the same as a journalist, an activist or even a NGO worker. User’s profile is key to think of the expected communicative practice:

While accidental journalists, or eyewitnesses with camera phones, create some of the UGC used by broadcasters, people with a specific agenda film a great deal more. That could be an activist group in Syria or an aid worker in the Central African Republic (Wardle, Dubberley & Brown, 2014, p. 8).

Within the context of media industry, it is clear that the value of User-Generated testimonial material is related to the **opportune** attribute it contains. That is asserted by Wardle and Dubberley (2014) as they conclude that UGC is used by mainstream media when other images are not available, such as conflict areas inaccessible to journalists or eyewitness material from a typical breaking news event. In the context of social mobilisations, Meunier and Condeza (2012) sustain that “modes of use [of ICTs] do not exist prior to the action, but that they are

activated (and take various forms) in contingent situations which, in turn, trigger action during which different uses are produced” (par 11, my translation).

There are plenty of forms of planned activist media-related activities: *Image Events* (Delicath & Deluca, 2003); *Smart Mobs*, defined as “nonviolent political swarming” (Rheingold, 2002, p. 162) supported by “networked-structured communications” (p. 163) and *citizen journalism* (Gillmor, 2004; Bowman & Willis, 2003) are just a few examples. Martín Patino’s documentary *Libre que te Quiero* of *indignados* movement in Spain (Feixa, Sánchez García & Nofre, 2013, p. 199) is in between, for is a quick reaction with little planning to a spontaneous event. Also, human rights observers equipped to record any such violation during street demonstrations, alert for those “underreported” events that Givoni (2011) mentions and videoactivism in general, as Renó (2015) states: “videoactivism may be elaborated, or at least planned, not incidental” (p. 105).

Such is not the logics that lie behind tUGC. The planning ahead distorts the values of spontaneity and authenticity, as discussed in the previous section. Therefore, I highlight the relevance of the *opportunity* as the main motivator for the realisation of a tUGC. The omnipresence of potential *citizen camera-witnesses* (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014) characteristic of *digital ubiquity* (Ganesh & Stohl, 2013) leads us to social events for which, like stated by Linus Law, “all [programming] bugs are shallow” for there are way “too many eyeballs” (Raymond, 2000, par 1). Translating Linus’ law to tUGC: with many eyes watching, no anomaly passes unnoticed. The Foucaultian trap of Bentham’s Panopticon is prone to be inverted, for the tendency seems to be for all public events and institutional action to be observed and recorded by a myriad of civic eyes, the “small brothers” (Chadwick & Howard, 2009, alluding to the Orwellian imaginary). Bentham’s (1989) panopticon now looks the other way, from periphery (NGOs, citizens, clients etc.) to centre of societal power (Government, police, businesses etc.). To Yasmin Ibrahim (2007, as cited by Reading, 2009) such is the *post-vigilance society*, in

which content -such as tUGC- can be used to “challenge and provide a counter-gaze against powerful and entrenched institutions” (p. 65).

The performative character of staged mobilisations –such as the *image events* or *smart mobs*-, the intensity of engagement of activists and the special interest of media professionals covering the event contrast, therefore, with one of the essential traits of tUGC: its authors are occasional users that assume a *role* of content creator as an answer to a perceived opportunity, more than being predisposed to do so. **They are *opportune*, more than *planned*.**

On the other hand, it is important to note that the discussion about spontaneity in the production of content is a complex one, since the very same digital ubiquity pushes for a gradual incorporation of technology as something natural, as it gets “domesticated” (Peil & Röser, 2010). Thanks to this incorporation in the routine, the user, as time passes by, becomes more conscious, a priori, of the opportunities of recording an event, since he is aware that his devices allow it – what Reading (2009) calls “wearable digital mobile prosthetic” (p. 65). It is expectable, then, that content with amateur aesthetics (Polydoro, 2016) should pass by a double transformation: its current unconstructed, embodied, unconventional framing, becomes more familiar, losing part of its historically situated trait of authenticity derived from its amateur aesthetics (Polydoro, 2016) and could even be reversely emulated –as it has been, for example, by the movie *The Blair Witch Project* (Cowie, Eick, Foxe, Hale, Monello, Myrick, Sánchez, 1999) and by advertising, frequently. At the same time, amateur-produced media should become gradually more similar to professional standards, as devices and skills evolve and new generations of users that incorporate media standards in a process of cultural *transcoding* (Manovich, 2001) – though there is a high probability that media standards also evolve, resembling a sort of mouse and cat chase.

3.2 Extraordinary event, ordinary witness

Hall and colleagues (1982) claim that the “primary or cardinal value of news” resides in the concept of *out of the ordinary*, defined as items which “in some way breach our ‘normal’ expectations about social life” (p. 53). Extraordinary, they say, is necessarily contextual. On the other hand, though the relevance of the event to be documented through tUGC depends on its condition as *extraordinary*³², the subject that captures it, on the contrary, should be in the role of an *ordinary* person, as discussed previously. Chouliaraki (2010), in that matter, defines ‘ordinary’ in the context of what she calls *post-television news*:

The term ‘ordinary’ signifies precisely this break with the monopoly of professional witnessing in favour of a valorisation of the ‘person on the street’ as the most appropriate voice to tell the story of suffering (p. 308).

As discussed previously, I emphasize the idea of ‘roles’ more than static definitions –either of a professional nature, such as ‘journalist’, or in relation to the media, as ‘audience’, ‘producer’, ‘consumer’ etc.- for any social figure, witness to an extraordinary event, may be living it as an ordinary citizen and, by recording, publishing and publicizing it, conceives a tUGC. In the case of a political event, specifically a street demonstration, politicians and activists are excluded for the political events occupy a central role on their lives; the former as part of his work while the latter as an ideological/political commitment. These distinctions will be discussed in depth further on.

3.3 Obtrusiveness as Perception of Authenticity

We’ve seen previously how semiotic elements of tUGC may lead to an enhanced perception of authenticity. But there is another important issue that builds on it, related to the perception of closeness attributed to the first-hand, non-edited,

³² Though this research focuses on one specific kind of extraordinary event, *street demonstrations*, tUGC should be relevant for different contexts in which they record extraordinary events of another sort, such as disasters, criminal events, sports and so on.

unconstructed, indexical tUGC: the perceived obtrusiveness, that we will explore as follows.

Obtrusiveness, in the context of media, is an attribute of an issue and may be defined as the amount of relative personal experience that the audience has with such issue (Ju, 2014; McCombs, 2004; Winter, 1981; Zucker, 1978). The less obtrusive is an issue for someone, i.e., the less personal, direct experience that person has with it, the more relevant is media content to her understanding of such issue (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2007). At the same time, the obtrusiveness of an issue moderates Agenda Setting effects (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McCombs, 2004) that media has in audience regarding an issue (Ju, 2014; Zucker, 1978). That means that tUGC, in the context of a protest with strongly biased coverage by media, possibly downplays the effects of such coverage as it enhances the perceived obtrusiveness with first-hand and sometimes first-person footage from the event.

The question of obtrusiveness and the perception of authenticity of tUGC become even more important in the present case due to three reasons: (i) a severe general crisis of legitimacy of classic social institutions of liberal democracy, from political parties to mainstream media (García, 2012); (ii) a historical distrust, in the case of national media systems that have been 'captured' by economic and/or political elites (Guerrero & Márquez-Ramirez, 2014) and (iii) the rise of *need for orientation* (NFO) as social protests usually reflect social crises that enhance the necessity for information (Weaver, 1980). In such a scenario, alternative sources of information, such as tUGC, should play an important role during extraordinary political crises, as is the president's ousting.

I argue, then, that there is a more powerful perceived obtrusiveness in a tUGC than in professionalized media discourse, characterized by what Silverstone (2004) calls 'proper distance': "We [media] need to be close but not too close, distant, but not too distant" (p. 444). It becomes evident the contrast of perceived authenticity of unconstructed, embodied, immediate tUGC versus the coldness

embedded on the “proper distance” of the media professional. Wahl-Jorgensen and colleagues (2010) comment the issue:

People like audience content because it is immediate, and allows early coverage before news teams can be on the scene; it adds drama, human emotion; it is seen as more ‘real’ and less ‘packaged’, providing different perspectives and insights on events; it facilitates coverage of events and locations difficult to reach normally; and it can be seen as a way of democratizing news production (p. 181)

After running focus groups with audience to assess the impact of UGC on the news, the aforementioned authors conclude that “there is clearly a feeling that if something has been filmed, photographed or reported by a member of the public this makes it somehow more believable” in contrast with expert testimony which is “rejected because it is seen as ‘unreal’, cold, disembodied and distant” (Wahl-Jorgensen et al., 2010, p. 184).

This idea of immediacy as in non-mediated is also present in the description of Galán (2012) within her efforts to update the “aesthetics of urgency” present in 1960’s videoactivism, now in the format of videoactivism 2.0:

Many times the video is uploaded as is, like it was recorded, with no edition whatsoever, and when it is edited, it is so with simple editing procedures with no postproduction effect (...) **The appeal behind these works in such cases lays upon the recording of reality with no sort of manipulation. You live it, you tell it** (Galán, 2012, p. 1099, our emphasis, translation by author).

When facing a tUGC, then, even though it is still a mediated experience, so much the perception of proximity (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014; Pantti, 2013) as that of authenticity are enhanced by the formal aspects of the content: “Subjective witnesses potentially bring us closer to the lived experience of crisis-events than viewing images taken by a third party such as a journalist or human rights worker” (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2014, p. 766).

However, Reading (2009) highlighted how user generated content is selected by media editors. In the case of the London bombings episode of 2005, the iconic image created by an ordinary metro user and circulated first on a blog ended up being a “grainy, blurry portrait” (p. 69), instead of vivid pictures of the victims sent by other witnesses. Such a portrait carried the qualities I have been highlighting: “It is poor quality and blurred and yet purports to truth and authenticity” (Reading, 2009, p. 70). Discussing the same event, Allan (2007) also underlines the authenticity brought by citizen video clips made with personal cameras, which “were judged by some to be all the more compelling because they were dim, grainy and shaky, but more importantly, because they were documenting an angle to an event as it was actually happening” (p. 13).

Moreover, the visible physicality of the author pointing a finger, or through his voice, for instance, called “embodied collectivity” by Pantti (2013), enhances even more the perceived authenticity and obtrusiveness of the narrative, as suggested by Andén-Papadopoulos (2014): “The physicality of witnessing thus takes centre stage, with the pained body of the videographer-witness showcased as a criterion of truth and credibility” (p. 754).

Chouliaraki (2010) analyses the value of authenticity of testimonial material produced by ordinary persons in a context that according to the author is in transit from a *televised news era* to a *post-televised one* (p. 305). To her, “The valorisation of ordinary witnessing introduces into the news a different epistemology of authenticity that relativises the empiricism of facts in television news, by placing it side by side with the empiricism of emotion” (p. 308). Wahl-Jorgensen and colleagues (2010), as discussed previously, come to a similar conclusion, stating that audience feels that citizen imagery is more believable than expert testimony (p. 184).

Through the effects of obtrusiveness and authenticity, tUGC have, on one hand, the potential to operate as a reversed *panopticon* (Bentham, 1989) from the bottom-up, ignited by citizen watchdogs (Bowman & Willis, 2003), in which every

extraordinary event is being recorded. Or, as Foucault (2002) remarks, the acknowledgement of the *possibility* (or probability?) that it *might* be recorded might be the most relevant phenomenon at large, as the impression of vigilance overcomes the importance of the punishment. In that context, the abundance of testimonial imagery enhances the perceived closeness with the event, therefore augmenting the obtrusiveness. On the other hand, the immediate, amateur aesthetics-based language of such media enhances the perception of authenticity. Both together, in the context of street protests, enhance the persuasive potential of tUGC both as a tool for denunciation and for mobilisation, as well as open the possibility for a collective approach to the documentation of the event through the eyes and phones of its ordinary participants.

Chapter III: Defining tUGC

III.1 tUGC Definition

In light of last chapter's discussion, testimonial User-Generated Content, or tUGC, the focal concept of this research (Chaffee, 1991), is defined as follows: **tUGC is the product of a communicative practice of an ICT user, who as an 'ordinary citizen' being in a privileged time and place, witnesses an extraordinary event, appropriates socially and significantly digital communication technologies at hand to document (recording directly in a media device) and disseminate (publishing, sharing by own means) such event, with traces of spontaneity characteristic of an opportunistic testimony –as opposed to the planned registry.**

III.2 tUGC Operationalisation

According to Chaffee (1991) “most of our propositions about communication are statements about general concepts, but empirical research can only be about operational definitions” (p. 4). This section will provide the operational definitions for the concept of tUGC previously presented, then present and explain the attributes it is composed of. In fact, according to the same author, “we evaluate objects in our environment in terms of their similarities and differences on **specific attributes**” (Chaffee, 1991, p. 9, my emphasis). This chapter identifies such attributes regarding tUGC to the present research, which means applied to the analysis of the tweets with the hashtag #ForaTemer published during the period of time comprising the selected street protests.

Wardle, Dubberley & Brown (2014) described their proceedings to operationalise UGC while researching its adoption in broadcast media, which can be pertinent to tUGC operationalisation as well:

The majority of content was not explicitly labeled as UGC, so we had to investigate many individual cases to confirm that it was user-generated content. This was achieved by **cross-referencing content (...)** **One of the best clues that a piece of content was filmed by a professional was the raw skill of the camera operator.** Often, professional skills could be identified—such as the way the camera panned slowly across the action rather than the quick, jerky, or uneven movements associated with camera-phone video taken by amateurs. (...) **we acknowledge there is undoubtedly a small margin of error resulting from the difficulty of coding unlabeled UGC.** (p. 19, my emphasis)

Three aspects were rescued from the above described procedure: (i) the steps involved cross-referencing content; (ii) an analysis of the *Media Standards* appreciated by expert coders (with background on journalism or social communication in general); and (iii) the perception that it is quite difficult to work around the subtleties of UGC, and its environments and procedures of creation, publication and circulation. A great part of this difficulty is because digital media is very easy to manipulate due to its nature as reproducible, modular, binary nature (Manovich, 2001). Such characteristics have as one of its consequences, the difficulty to assess the originality of a content.

In what follows I present the operationalisation for classifying *general testimonial tweets* and then funnelling down *tUGC* with the attributes of testimonial content, with which they were classified with the purpose of describing and analysing it.

1. Attributes of Testimonial Tweets

The table below presents general testimonial tweets' *attributes*, along with its respective *descriptions* and the composing *metadata* (the options for the classification of each tweet pertaining each attribute). The different combinations of metadata characterize and differentiate (i) *non-testimonial* tweets from *testimonial* ones and also distinguish (ii) *testimonial tweets* from *tUGC* (as we will

see further on). Besides, each attribute allows for a categorisation that will enable us to identify patterns of tUGC creation and circulation for the case studied.

Table 6: Attributes, description and metadata for the Content Analysis process. (Source: Author)

Attribute	Description	Metadata
Testimonial	Attribute that simply identify Testimonial Tweets in order to enable a closer look through the classification with the other attributes. Other content is not coded, except for <i>unavailable</i> content that enables to assess one dimension of the limits of the method.	Testimonial ³³ ; Unavailable; (Erased Content, Erased User, Suspended Account, Unavailable; Protected Account); None ³⁴
i. Level of Planning	This attribute indicates the level of anticipation that the user had prior to creating the tUGC (charged phone battery, freed up some space in mobile phone's memory, bought a data plan etc.)	Not Coded , only assessed in a qualitative manner for the interviewed users.
ii. Twitter User	Classifies the user according to his/her main role on Twitter, as analysed by the metadata, bio description, and other available data (picture, links, information in other linked social media profiles etc.).	Activist; Alternative Media; Fake/Character; Journalist; Ordinary; Photographer; Political Association/Party, Public Figure.
iii. Attached Media	Metadata describing the media attached to the Tweet or to its URL (Ex: a Twitter photo, a photo on Instagram or a live video stream in Periscope).	Photo(s); Video; Live Stream; Animated GIF; Location (Foursquare-like).
iv. Constructedness	Brief interpretation of how much the media text is intervened by the author-publisher.	Unedited, Quick edit, Edited.
v. Media Standards	Category that indicates semiotic properties of the text related to media professional standards (framing, discourse, camera movements etc.).	Amateur, Professional.
vi. Obtrusiveness	Classifies the level of closeness that can be inferred from the media text, as perceived from the perspective of its enunciation (e.g. the direction of the	Personal Experience (1st person), Witness (3rd person), Mediated Protest (engaging from distance via

³³ Other categories are built in regard to this one, which comprises the final set of messages to be coded in depth.

³⁴ *None* means the tweet will not go through the rest of the classification scheme for it was coded as non-testimonial.

	camera).	#ForaTemer).
vii. Discursive Function (Primary)	Category that results from the interpretation of the main goal intended by the author.	Accuse; Astonishment; Identity/Selfie; Mobilize; Communicate.
viii. Political Stand	Political stand as an attribute of the Tweet, <i>not of the user</i> .	For, Neutral, Against, Unclear.
ix. Channel (Early Diffusion)	Classification of the channel through which the media is interpreted to have been first published.	Individual channel; Network, Organizational Channel.
x. Exposure	Indicates if the attached media is linked or embedded in the message as it is displayed on Twitter's native environment.	Linked; Embedded.

Level of Planning, though, cannot be operationalized from a heuristic perspective³⁵, for it involves what happened in the minds of the users or during a past event –in this case before or during the protests. Another qualitative assessment accessed via the interviews is the consequences for the users' personal lives as perceived individual or collective effects of the messages, part of RQ5.

The first step to be able to code and analyse the messages in further detail and to define operationally tUGC within the presented set of attributes is to select *testimonial tweets*, filtering out those that do not fit such conceptualisation. In order to be *testimonial*, then, a tweet must be or have:

1. Indexical or iconographic: merely symbolic content (e.g. purely text) was not considered *testimonial* in the present operationalisation, as discussed previously. The filter to screen out text-only tweets was performed, so to select only tweets with media attached, including links for some content from other hosting sites that were circulated via links or embedded on Twitter.
2. Testimonial character: content is of testimonial nature when it is, in some form, indexically linked to the event it aims to represent. It may be so in two different levels: (i) direct, which means the content is somehow physically linked to the event itself, such as a picture or a video of the protest; or (ii)

³⁵ I.e., standard practices or forms observable by an external expert. In this case it means with no contact with the tweet's author.

mediated, meaning the content is a *second order index*, or an indexical representation of an indexical representation, such as a photo of the television speech of the president while it is broadcasting live -the live broadcast is the first order index and the photo of the television is the second order index.

3. Authorship: the 'author', who takes the picture, or the 'mentor', when someone asks to have a picture of himself taken, of the content must be physically attached to the created content. To the extent that is possible with mere observation of the message and its metadata, it is important to try to assess whether the Twitter user that publishes a picture (or video or other) was both the author/mentor of the picture *and* was present where the picture was taken. A testimonial media created by someone else is considered, to this research, someone else's testimonial media, even when circulated in the person's channel. That is because it would be centred only in the *circulation* of the content rather than both *creation* and *circulation*.

All content that contained testimonial media, therefore matching the aforementioned conditions, was considered a *testimonial tweet*. That is a broader definition than *tUGC*, which involves, as we will see, limitations regarding two attributes: *Twitter User* and *Channel* of early diffusion of the content. The resulting sub-dataset composed of such *testimonial tweets* was then coded according to the rest of the attributes, aiming to frame the different dimensions of this kind of content and identify the smaller sub-set of *tUGC*. In what follows I will explain in detail such attributes.

2. Attributes of tUGC on Twitter

There are ten attributes identified as proper variables to describe testimonial content in terms of observable measures using Twitter as the platform where the content is published: (i) *Level of Planning*, (ii) *Twitter User*, (iii) *Attached Media*, (iv) *Constructedness*, (v) *Media Standards*, (vi) *Obtrusiveness*, (vii) *Discursive Function*, (viii) *Political Stand*, (ix) *Early Channel* and (x) *Exposure*. All of them are present on *tUGC*, though they present variations in the metadata associated. All of them but *Level of Planning* were designed to be observable within the data analysis (the visible tweet, its contents or its metadata) and/or its ambient (such as user

information or information from links that the user provides in her Twitter profile). As such, they are part of the coding scheme developed to classify and analyse the data. *Level of Planning* is an attribute that was approached in the qualitative stage through semi-structured interviews, so it will be analysed from a different perspective and is not part of the content analysis.

To draw the scope of the attributes, I rely on Zecchetto (2002, p. 194-5) who, supported by Verón's work, argues that "objects from the reality form *systems of relations*, as much in its creation as to its effects (semiotic network)" (p. 194, my translation, emphasis original) and such semiotic networks "forge each other interweaving the paths of *pretexts*, *texts* and *contexts* (p. 194, emphasis original). This framework allows for the contemplation of elements beyond the message itself, such as *user*, *channel*, *level of planning*. *Pretextual* attributes are those that precede the sign as a material form (be it phonetic, graphic, audio-visual etc.), such as user's characteristics (in this case information as *profession* and *political orientation*), motivations, infrastructure, method, and it adds a social dimension to the purely media text analysis. *Textual* attributes are those pertaining the actual sign, the media product itself, which possesses an "expressive form and a content" (p. 195). Lastly, the attributes of *context* are those "related to the **circulation and reception** of the texts and that originate **social discourses**" (p. 195, emphasis original). So, when asking for how is the *level of planning* that a person elaborates before attending to a protest and creating tUGC, or inquiring about her profession, level of activism, political orientation or her infrastructure (smartphone model, mobile Internet access data plan etc.), we are referring to *pretextual* factors. The *textual* attributes have two facets, which coincide, in terms of speech acts (Searle, 1976; Austin, 1962), with the *locutionary* (as in form) and *illocutionary* acts (as in meaning). This means that when analysing the viewpoint from which a tUGC is recorded (e.g. a picture or a video), its *Media Standards* (amateur or professional-like) or which media is attached to the textual message (e.g. photo or video), the formal aspects of *text* that are being analysed; while other categories such as the

Discursive Function and *Political Stand*³⁶ are related to meaning, therefore, the illocutionary act. Finally, when discerning the channel through which the *text* is published on Twitter, it comprises an element of analysis of *context* (related to the **circulation** of the text). This research is not going to deal in great depth with other elements of *context* related to the reception process³⁷, for it is not the scope, but it would be an interesting further approach to deepen the subject.

Table 7: tUGLC attributes as per semiotic categories (Source: author, adapted from Zecchetto, 2002).

Level	Pretext	Text		Context	
Description	Elements preceding the Text	Formal Aspects of the Text	Intended meaning (as interpreted by author)	Circulation of the text	Effects on the audience
Categories	Level of Planning Twitter User	Attached Media Constructedness Media Standard Obtrusiveness	Discursive function Political Stand	Early Channel Exposure	-

2.1. Pretext

i. Level of Planning

As discussed previously, the level of planning is determined by the extent to which the media text has been created in a premeditated, calculated manner. This should impact the discussion between *opportunity* versus *premeditation* behind the creation of the content. This attribute is not analysed from the quantitative perspective for in most of the cases it is not possible to assess with a reasonable degree of certainty to which level the user had planned to create and/or publish testimonial content –an obvious exception being mainstream institutional media. I am interested in details that may define this level of planning such as if the person: makes space in the phone before leaving; takes a special camera; takes precautions

³⁶ Both these attributes are as interpreted by the coders, according to the codebook guidelines. More on the next chapter and on Appendix A.

³⁷ This also means that the research doesn't inquire on the third part of the speech acts which is the effects on the audience (*perlocutionary* act), for it is not amongst the objectives of this study.

to be able to breath tear gas and make pictures; buys extra Internet mobile data packages to be able to broadcast of upload content; takes an extra battery/charger etc. This should help distinguish this phenomenon from the traditional videoactivism (Feixa, Sánchez & Nofre, 2013; Galán, 2012; Renó, 2015) or from a deliberate audio-visual work such as Martín Patino's (2012) documentary on the *acampada* at Puerta del Sol Square during *indignados* movement in Spain. Nevertheless, two of the following attributes indicate some degree of spontaneity to the communicative act of creating a testimonial content, as we'll see in detail further on: *obtrusiveness* and *constructedness*. This is useful for it helped set some starting points, regarding this specific issue, for the interviews.

ii. Twitter User

The purpose of this attribute is to differentiate the background of users that create testimonial content on Twitter. Two analytical reasons lie behind this attribute: to filter a specific trait of tUGC and to understand the role each kind of user has in the whole conversation. To identify tUGC, three particular groups of users are relevant: (i) *ordinary* people, circumstantial users that create testimonial content without a strong prior commitment such as an activist or a politician; (ii) *journalists* and (iii) *photographers*, who are not covering professionally the protest are considered also regular citizens participating on the protest. They are segregated from ordinary users to allow for deeper analysis on their patterns of tUGC creation. This is a category of *pretext*, meaning the user is coded according to his/her main role on Twitter, as analysed by the metadata, especially bio description, but also other available data (Twitter timeline, bio picture, links, information in other linked social media profiles etc.) in case of need to clarify or verify. This means also that the media text itself is not considered –so an ordinary person's tweet may resemble a media professional's and vice-versa. The possible metadata are:

- 1) Activist: An activist is a user that explicitly defines him/herself politically, either on the profile, on the analysed tweet or in the ramifications of the bio (links).

- 2) Alternative Media: Media outlets that are not linked to big media groups and are not affiliated to any political party, the most outstanding example being “Midia NINJA”, notorious for its coverage on the social protests since 2013. Others examples are *Jornalistas Livres* and *Agência Democratize*.
- 3) Fake/Character: Not a real person or organisation. Could be made up characters (ex: *Dilma Bolada*), fake profiles of famous real people or non-existing/dead people, which may or may not have political intent.
- 4) Journalist: User that describes him/herself as a journalist or his/her activities as journalism. Advertisers, PR and other professionals of the communications are not considered in this category.
- 5) Ordinary: An ordinary user is defined by exclusion, as a user that doesn’t appear to have a defined or professional role in the activities that take place around a protest. He is an individual, a citizen but he is not an activist, neither a journalist nor a photographer. Bio description, picture etc. are not strongly related with political aspects.
- 6) Photographer: User that describes him/herself as a photographer or shows explicit signs of being a photographer (e.g.: user photo with a camera).
- 7) Political Association / Interest Group: Includes political parties, associations, partisan media, networks and interest groups around political issues, ideologies and others. Can be either explicitly identified as such, or be implicit with wording like “left”, “workers”, “anarchism” etc.
- 8) Public Figure: User that has a remarkable social recognition for some reason, such as celebrities or politicians.

2.2 Text

iii. Attached Media

This category indicates the kind of media attached to the tweet. It entails no interpretive dimension to its assessment, except a guideline: when there is more than one kind of media (such as an image and location), the coder should choose a protagonist media element (see Codebook on *Appendix A* for details). This attribute comprises the following metadata:

- 1) Video: audio-visual content, regardless of quality or if the image or the audio.
- 2) Photo(s): photographic material, that could be edited or not, with different levels of intervention, so long as it doesn’t characterize another format such as a *Meme* (option number 5).
- 3) Live Stream: video transmitted live (on periscope or other platforms, publicized on Twitter).

- 4) Audio: audio files or pages in which the audio is the main content.
- 5) Meme: slightly edited images, usually with a few words to emphasize some part or to add humour, satire, political critique, current affairs comment and/or others.
- 6) Animated GIF: animations consisting on a sequence of images. It may be extracted from video or just may be a sequence of images of any nature, so long as they are testimonial.
- 7) Location: publications that point to a place, as an attachment, a map or a link.

iv. Constructedness

Twitter is a mobile platform that has become famous for its velocity in times of crisis. In the words of Rogers (2014): “Twitter increasingly has come to be studied as an **emergency communication channel** in times of disasters and other major events” (p. xxi). This category is a brief interpretation of how much the media text has been intervened by the creator/publisher between the act of creation and the act of publishing. I argue, along with other authors, that in the context of tUGC that time-lapse is collapsing and creating-and-publishing have been becoming an entangled process. It is anchored on the assumption that on Twitter, users in general and politically engaged users in particular, privilege *speed* over *quality*, *fact* over *story* (Renó, 2015), so it should be expected that the urge leads to more *unedited* or *quickly edited* content than to well *edited* content. The composing metadata reflect three stages of editing:

- 1) Unedited: Media text with no clear signs of editing after the capture process.
- 2) Quick Edit: Media text displays signs of brief edits between capture and publication on the tweet, such as a filter (Instagram or native camera’s filters), a text addition or a simple video edit (a few cuts, logo insertion and such).
- 3) Edited: Major editing has taken place. In terms of this research it indicates that the velocity was not the main premise, but the aesthetic and diegetic quality of the content -what might impact its testimonial value related to the heat of the moment.

v. Media Standards

The coding procedure includes a brief analysis of semiotic elements such as framing, composition blurriness, narrative, camera movements (speed, steadiness, angle.), lighting, colouring and others to assess if the content has an *amateur* or a *professional* Media Standard.

- 1) Amateur: The media text depicts an amateur-like composition, narrative, framing and/or other. It may lack a proper protagonist, a sense of composition, focus, the light may not be properly adjusted or image is grained, amongst other traces of non-professionalism on the making of the images.
- 2) Professional: media text attached resembles professional standards and could possibly be published in mainstream media, at least in terms of its form -not considering, for instance, values as *speed* or *newsworthiness*.

vi. Obtrusiveness

In the context of the present study, where witnesses are the creators of their own mediatic testimony, three forms of autonomous authorial content creation could emerge: (1) documenting one's own experience, (2) documenting someone else's experience and (3) joining the protest from distance with content creation that embed testimonial traits but which are unrelated to the protest physical location.

- 1) Personal Experience displays and documents the first-person experience of the witnessed event –such as it would be the filming of the one's own incarceration or a suffered aggression. Such cases substantiate Mortensen's (2015b) observation of the collapse between the "two faces" of witnessing, that is, "the passive one of seeing and the active one of saying" celebrated by Peters (2001, p. 709): sender, enunciator and subject of the created content are the same: the author.
- 2) Witness is the proper name for tUGC that depict an event where the author of the content is not the protagonist, but assumes a *third-person* perspective to document a scene, such as someone else's rights violation or a video from above showing the protest. Author's sensorial connection with the event depicted is still present –visual, auditory, tactile or even olfactory in the case of tear gas testimony-, but the author is not "incarnated" (Pantti, 2013) or embedded within the tUGC. In such cases, the event or experience documented is more mediated, more distant from the author's own experience, than the previous case.

- 3) Mediated Protest is a sort of projected indirect personal intervention in the protest that needs necessarily the media to convert the author into a participant of it. Selfies with messages or pictures of the TV live transmission, published over the Internet with the intent to join the conversation, for example, through the adoption of a protest's hashtag, are some frequent examples of this sort of mix of self-expression with political participation. This kind of protest brings up what Peters (2001) calls *liveness*, that is the coincidence in time but not in space; a practice called *removed eyewitnessing*³⁸ by Vis, Faulkner, Parry Manyukhina and Evans (2014, p. 395), anchored in a the practice of *second screening* (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2015).

vii. Discursive Function

The coding of the attribute *Discursive Function* has the objective to identify the main communicative purpose embedded on the messages. Understanding tUGC as a form of political participation, its discourse is a means of social action that encapsulate “strategic *realizations* by users of the language in action” (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 22).

To compose the metadata, I rely on the concept of *illocutionary acts* by John R. Searle (1976), as “the minimal unit of linguistic communication” (p. 2). It has been applied by others when performing analysis of Computer-Mediated Communication (Nastri, Peña and Hancock, 2006), specifically Twitter messages (Nemer, 2016). Einspänner, Dangh-Ann and Thimm (2014) justify the adoption of speech acts in Twitter messages analysis: “The objective of a speech act analysis is to identify different types of purposeful utterances, such as command, complain, compliment, etc.” (p. 103), which serves the idea behind this attribute (see Table 8). For a more detailed theoretical foundation of this attribute, refer to *Appendix E*.

³⁸ Vis et al. (2014) describe their conception of *removed eyewitnessing*: “eyewitnessing in this instance involves a mediated and spatially removed relationship to the unfolding crisis event (...) Here, the eyewitness is both a spectator of mainstream media news and an image-maker who utilises the camera phone as a communication-connection device to produce images and distribute them through Twitter (p. 394-5).

Table 8.1: Basic Classification of Illocutionary Acts (Purposeful Speech Acts) by Searle (1976)

Speech Act	Paradigms of Verbs (Examples)
Assertive / representative	Describe, call, conclude, deduce
Directive	Ask, order, command, request, beg, invite, permit
Commissive	Promise, swear
Expressive	Thank, congratulate, apologise, condole, welcome
Declaration	Declare, nominate

Table 8: *Illocutionary Acts* as a framework to discursive analysis on Twitter (Source: Einspänner, Dangh-Ann and Thimm, 2014, p. 103)

The metadata for this attribute is:

- 1) Accuse: Moral judgment of injustice and/or sentiment of indignation with clear identification of an aggressor or persecutor. Speech identifying the president as the author of a coup d'état or a criminal; the police as aggressive or disrespectful regarding the human rights; accusatory hashtags such as #TemerGolpista (referring to the president Temer as the author of a coup) are a few examples.
- 2) Mobilize: Message contains a clear call for action, either textual such as "Vem pra rua" (*come to the streets*) or under a hashtag, such as the popular #LutarSempre (#*FightAlways*)
- 3) Identity/Selfie: Either most important element of the picture is the form (a *selfie*) or its speech is mainly identitary. In a *selfie*, the protagonist of the picture is the author and at the same time the user of the account where it was published. In the second case, the text reveals the importance of the identification of the user with the event in a self-referential form, such as "I am at [Avenida] Paulista"³⁹.
- 4) Astonishment: Demonstration of perplexity in face of the facts seen or lived. Must be overly expressive, with emphasis put on the emotion, either positive or negative. That could take the form of repeated use of emoticons or exclamation points; superlative wording such as "wonderful", "unbelievable", "horrible" and so on.
- 5) Communicate: Stands alternatively also for *Narration*, *Documentation* and *Diffusion*, predominantly an informative function, many times emulating journalistic jargon, even if the enunciator is another type of user. Leaves

³⁹ <https://twitter.com/lanegrao/statuses/771099320175255552>, accessed on September 23rd 2017.

mainly to the audience the interpretation of the facts documented on the tweet. Diffusion or visibility would be its most clear implicit objectives.

For analytical purposes, sometimes this attribute will be grouped following a broader understanding of the speech acts (as per Table , on Appendix E). The result is three categories, as follows:

- 1) Political Action: contains both *Accuse* and *Mobilize*
- 2) Self-Expression: contains both *Identity/Selfie* and *Astonishment*.
- 3) Communication: is maintained since the original already includes all variations of the communicative function.

Coding for this attribute is performed either (i) from the mere analysis of the text that accompanies the media content (photo, video etc.) on Twitter (or other platform linked on the tweet) or (ii) the combination of both when there is a relatively evident composed meaning effect of the interplay between both *media content* and *text*, as is the case with irony, for example. Considering the complexity of judging visual or audio-visual testimonial content, the text is a more reliable indicator of intent (see more on *Appendix E*). Such analysis disregards, then, elements of its context, such as user's bio, recent messages and others, that will be considered in other attributes related to the *pretext* or to the *context*.

viii. Political Stand

Considering #ForaTemer as the starting point for the dataset, it was expected that the content would be, if not entirely, predominantly favourable to the protest and its political stand. Still, there are three factors that are important to analyse: (i) just like one sympathetic to the cause uses the hashtag to engage in a larger conversation with peers and to reinforce the importance of the conversation, antagonists many times also engage in order to question aspects of the messages published or to express his/her own take on the subject; (ii) the hashtag had been used for quite a while, so it became a sort of "name" to the protest (tweets with content like: "Gathering to the #ForaTemer act..."; "People arrested in #ForaTemer

act were taken to...”); and (iii) it is not uncommon to find messages that express a pretence neutrality, though using the hashtag, and others that just express the hashtag, which is uncertain. For these reasons, it is interesting for the research to assess to the best possible the *political stand* embedded in each message. The options for this attribute are:

- 1) For (the protest): Clearly supportive of the protest or participant of the protest, besides the evident #ForaTemer (which is present in all tweets in the sample);
- 2) Neutral: Discourse, imagery, all media text elements seem to pursue a desirable neutrality.
- 3) Against: Though it was unexpected to find testimonial content against the protest tagged with #ForaTemer, the metadata was maintained. There are many critics that joined the conversation adopting the hashtag, but their content is usually argumentative, purely textual, many times just responses to pro-protest posts, or with meme-like imagery. Still, a few tweets ended up coded as *against the protest*.
- 4) Unclear: It is not possible to assess the political position of the media text, texting or media are ambiguous or could somehow lead to different interpretations or the political stand behind the message.

2.3. Context

ix. Channel (Early Diffusion)

This category refers to the kind of channel the media text was first published. Twitter was launched as a personal channel and was recognized primarily as “an urban lifestyle tool for friends to provide each other with updates of their whereabouts and activities” (Akcora & Demirbas, 2010, as cited by Rogers, 2014, p. x). This very personal characteristic –Twitter at some point was called “my.stat.us” (Rogers, 2014, p. xi)- has gone through a lot of change since then. But the relevance of the personal seems to stick. This category is meant to distinguish testimonial content first propagated through *individual* channels versus other collective channels (*organizational* or *network*).

- 1) Individual Channel: Channel is attributed to an individual person, independently of being more or less notorious or other attributes associated

with the account. Names that sound real, pictures of a person, data related to geographical locations or profession and other information linked to a real life person should be indicators of an *Individual Channel*. An exception is when it is a fake or made up character, that provides context, but a fake or an invented context. In case of uncertainty, coder should check the timeline to watch the pattern: personal information, opinion, personal events should indicate an Individual Channel (see more on the coding process on Appendix A).

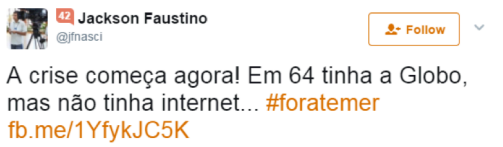
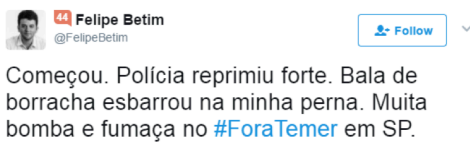

- 2) Network: Loose-tied organisations, such as a collective, a community of practice or an interest group. This is an analytical category that expresses an important trait of social media: the convergence of the personal/individual and the collective/organisational and many times the blurriness between those two, reflected in the category of *network*. It may be composed by groups of interest, communities of practice or other informal networked groups represented by the Twitter user without institutional background, or other forms of more formal organics.
- 3) Organizational Channel: Channel linked to traditional forms of organisation, such as Media Outlets, NGOs, Political Parties and so on.

x. *Exposure*

To be able to analyse if there are differences in the exposure of Twitter content in its repercussion in the conversation, the *embedded* content was differentiated from the *linked* content, such as the examples on Table 8 demonstrate. The objective behind this category is to be able to distinguish the level of impact perceived by media when *embedded* versus when *linked*. It is not difficult to hypothesize that content published through a link in a speedy media environment such as Twitter, have a much bigger challenge to engage the audience, for the user must click and follow the tweet to a different platform. In the case of embedded content, the user does not have to leave the platform to engage with the content, be it image, text, video or others.

- 1) Linked: Content is under a link that takes user to another application or website, such as Instagram or Facebook.
- 2) Embedded: Content is loaded into Twitter's interface.

Table 9: Metadata of category *Exposure* explained with examples. Screenshot of the Codebook. (Source: Author)

Example of linked media:	Example of embedded media:
<div>  <p>A crise começa agora! Em 64 tinha a Globo, mas não tinha internet... #foratemer fb.me/1YfykJC5K</p> </div> <p>In this case, the coder should open the link and check if it is or not a testimonial content. Since it links a different platform, it is not possible to assess its nature without visualizing it. In case it is protected, user doesn't exist, content doesn't exist or other signs that indicate it will not be possible to access the content, mark as "unavailable".</p>	<div>  <p>Começou. Polícia reprimiu forte. Bala de borracha esbarrou na minha perna. Muita bomba e fumaça no #ForaTemer em SP.</p> </div> <p>Translate from Portuguese</p> 

III.3 Example of Analysis



Figure 5: Example of coding attribute related to the *Pretext* (Source: Author).

The example depicted on Figure 5 shows how the attributes related to the *Pretext* of the content are applied in the analysis of a tweet. In this case, just the Twitter User is analysed, for the *Level of Planning* is to be assessed through the interviews and will neither be subject of the content analysis process nor will be assessed to all the testimonial tweets of the sample.

- i. Level of Planning: Not assessed for this particular user was not interviewed.
- ii. Twitter User: Though the biographical description is more poetic than descriptive, it is evident that she is a *photographer*, something that not only indicated by the quality of the picture but by the links

on her profile that lead to two websites where the user displays her photographic work.

The same example is applied to the attributes related to the *text* of the tweet in Figure 6:

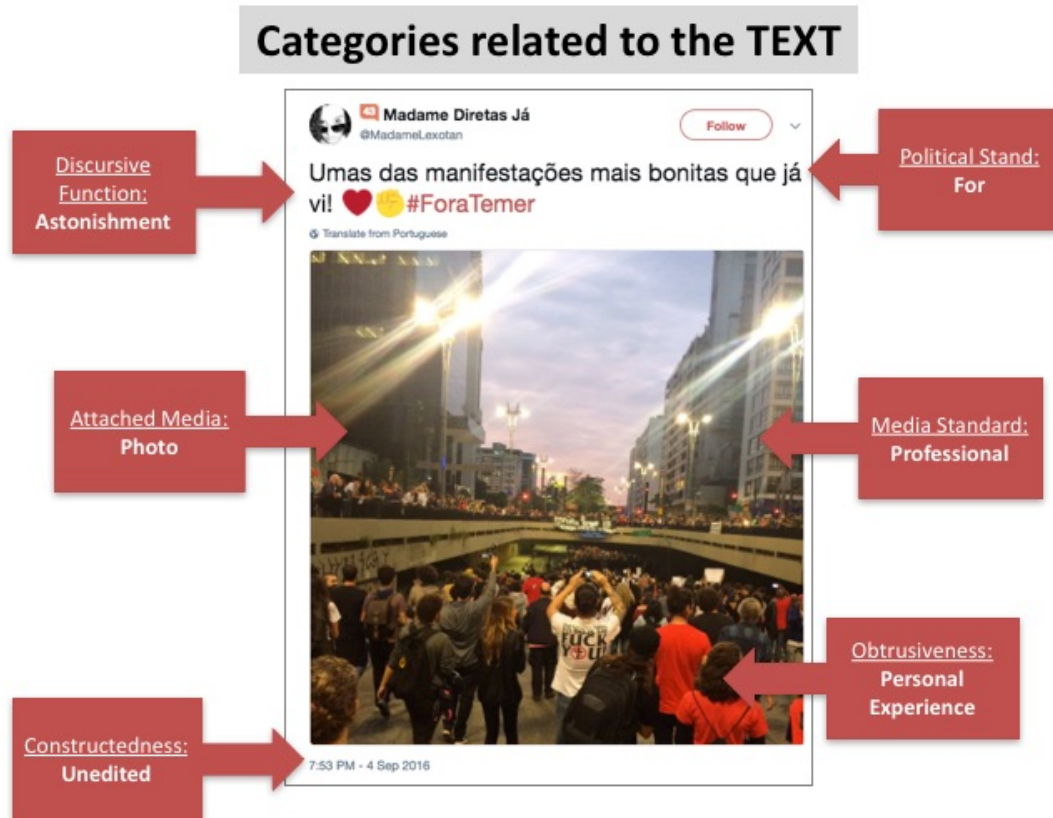


Figure 6: Example of coding attributes related to the *Text* (Source: Author).

In order, from top to bottom, left to right, in Figure 6, the attributes are:

- iii. *Attached Media: Photo*. This category is more objective; it refers to the media that is attached to the message.
- iv. *Constructedness: Unedited*. The timestamp indicates proximity between the photo and its publication on Twitter, according to the day-lighting and the timeline of the protest, so there is a lesser probability that this user has published from home (or another place where she could have edited) or copied from somewhere else. Also, the same user publishes other pictures later on. It is possible that the user has applied some sort of filter embedded in the camera or some mobile application, for the picture seems a bit 'reddish', but there

- seem to be no major evidence or signs to indicate so, since the other colours don't look unnatural.
- v. Media Standard: *Professional*. Symmetry, balance of colours and lighting, adequate framing. Also, considering the difficulty of taking a picture at dawn, this photo can be classified as *professional*.
 - vi. Obtrusiveness: *Personal Experience*. The perspective of the picture is as a participant, translating visually a first-person narrative.
 - vii. Discursive Function: *Astonishment*. Extensive use of emoticons (and the choice of which ones), use of words that lead to interpret as a state of excitement by user (text says: "One of the prettiest protests I've ever seen!"), the use of exclamation mark in the end. All of those elements lead us to conclude that the main function of the message written is to express a sense of overwhelming, related to the aesthetics properties of the experience of being in the protest.
 - viii. Political Stand: Enthusiastic comment with positive emoticons clearly state a *favourable* political stand.

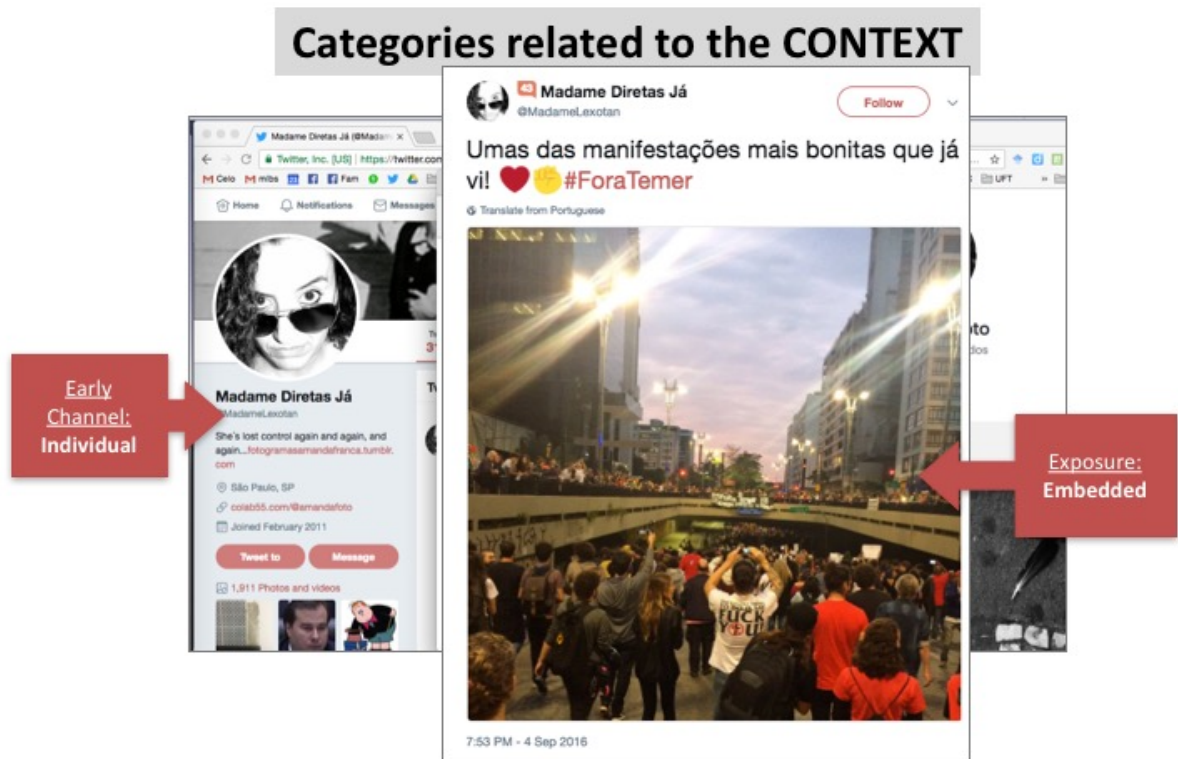


Figure 7: Example of coding attributes related to the *Context* (Source: Author).

The example depicted also shows how the categories related to the *context* are applied in the analysis of the same tweet as in the previous example:

- ix. Early Channel: *Individual Channel*. Though the user does not adopt her real name, it is her personal and *individual channel*, which is evident by the photo of the user and the links to her professional portfolio.
- x. Exposure: Content is *Embedded* for it is displayed automatically when the tweet is loaded on Twitter native platform.

III.4 tUGC and Testimonial Tweets

Two variations of testimonial content will be analysed in different contexts on Chapter V (*Results*): *tUGC* and *testimonial tweets*. While the latter is the subset of data of all the tweets coded as *testimonial*, the former is defined empirically by applying a filter with two attributes that are inseparable from the theoretical definition: (i) *Twitter User* must be in the role of an *ordinary citizen*, which includes, as previously stated, those coded as *ordinary*, as *journalists* and as *photographers*, as long as they are publishing in their personal channels on Twitter, and (ii) the *Channel* through which content has first been published must be *individual*.

This means admitting the following variations: that ordinary users are capable, in their condition of ordinary, non-professional, non-media-savvy users, of creating and quickly editing content prior to its publishing (attribute of *Constructedness*), of creating narratives that emulate professional communicational frames such as journalistic standards (creating third person-like, witness perspective on *Obtrusiveness* and reaching sometimes professional aesthetical *Media Standards*). Considering, amid other factors, the level of penetration of digital media creation technologies, it is not a far-fetched possibility.

Chapter IV: Research Methods

IV.1 Case Study

It is clear by the retrospect presented at the introduction that the case of Rousseff's impeachment is socially relevant. But besides the socio-political and even mediatic relevance of the selected wave of protests, there are also operational reasons for the case selection. And furthermore, within the case, for the selection of the two street demonstrations, within the wide range of protests that took place in 2016 related to the impeachment process, in order to apply the theoretical developments of tUGC in the context of social unrest. The following criteria were considered to select the case:

1. Recentness: Due to the ephemeral nature of information on the Internet and even more acutely on social media like Twitter, the **more recent the case, the better the chance to have a fair assessment of the data**⁴⁰. Even if the metadata gets registered in the databases provided historically as with databases built through the Streaming API, assessments that rely on the actual visualisation of the live Tweet in its real environment, such as this research, present difficulties. That happens because part of the data (a certain amount of tweets in the sample) is deleted, protected or changed in any form⁴¹. Also, and perhaps even more importantly, the memory of the informants is affected in greater measure as time passes, so the qualitative stage that entails interviews with a selection of users that generated tUGC is less affected by time, as the case is more recent.
2. Street Demonstration: I chose street protests for, since users are gathered and move collectively about in physical spaces, they are **more prone to the creation of indexical content** –i.e. physically connected to a location/situation. The tUGC produced in this context entail, as we will see, a great variety of discourses, types of users, kinds of media produced,

⁴⁰ While selecting a case to apply this research design, the recentness of the case became a crucial part of the case selection. After observing data from a protest in 2011, I realized most of the imagery circulated was not available. Other accounts ceased to exist or became protected. This makes it much harder if not impossible to access the media publicized on those tweet messages, such as videos, pictures or other URLs.

⁴¹ Even with relatively 'recent' datasets, the average of Unavailable (deleted or protected content or suspended account) has fluctuated between 10-20% of the available tweets that contained some sort of media.

accounts where circulation took place and others. Identifying the patterns generated within this variety of possibilities is one of the objectives of this research. Also, in both cases selected, there were reports of conflicts with the police, which should create a fertile environment for audio-visual registry and denounce, beyond the regular documentation of the protest activity such as pictures of posters, multitudes, people, selfies and so on.

3. Variability: By having the opportunity of analysing more than one protest related to the same event (Rousseff's impeachment) I expected to find continuities and discontinuities on the patterns of creation and circulation of testimonial tweets and tUGC, for the process of significant appropriation of ICT includes its instrumentalisation to respond to the needs at hand. In that sense, it is expected that contextual variables such as the level of predictability of a protest should lead to more or less planned media coverage, more or less spontaneous and emotional response by the participants.

Within the selected broader case, though, there were dozens of protests, even daily for a short period of time following the vote on the Senate. In order to understand the phenomenon of the tUGC I found more relevant to pick *dissimilar* protests, following the abovementioned principle of *variability*, because they imply some differences that should be revealing to the analysis and should help understand with better amplitude the communicative practices that lie behind the circulated tUGC those days. With that in mind, four criteria were developed to help sort out two protests with different attributes in order to frame the research with as much variety as possible within the case:

1. Level of Planning: coincidental with one of the variables related to the operationalisation of tUGC, the level of planning of a protest should reflect directly upon the level of planning of users to prepare themselves to create tUGC. An unplanned event is expected to be more prone to spontaneous communicative practices by users while a planned event should encourage participants to prepare: free space on the cell phone, take a camera, take memory cards, let friends know you will be livestreaming etc. On the other hand, during an unplanned event, the probability that many of the messages circulated were posted from remote places instead of the street protest is bigger, so proportion of testimonial content should be smaller in the whole dataset.
2. Geographic Distribution: A focus on a more local protest should lead to less overall circulation of content, while national protests should have

more content. On the other hand, by analysing a local event, the story is easier to grasp for the references superpose, the imagery become familiar and users repeat themselves. Those factors could mean a better interpretation of the information accessed through the tweets. Since actual georeference in Twitter is still very limited⁴² this is a good way to enhance the precision of the dataset.

3. Time and Duration: A protest on a weekday, after working hours, considering that by 18:30 it becomes dark in most of the country, presents difficulties for the creation of audio-visual content, which is my focus. Also, considering the levels of criminality in São Paulo it becomes less safe, so there should be expected biases on the diversity of participants. Furthermore, the duration of the protest is limited since next day the population in general is expected to go to work, school and other activities.
4. Political Orientation: As a direct effect of the first variable (Level of Planning), and the third (Time and Duration) the more planned the event, the more we could expect diversity of attendance since people with obstacles to attend (family, work, accessibility etc.) could organize their lives to attend. Those attending to an impromptu event must live or work close to the point of gathering (whoever have experienced traffic or public transportation in Sao Paulo must acknowledge that!) otherwise it would be a challenge to engage. A broader audience necessarily should mean a wider variety of motivations, competencies, communication practices that lead to a deeper comprehension of tUGC as a phenomenon during protest.

Regarding the described parameters, I chose two different moments that were expected to generate different tUGC patterns⁴³: (i) Wednesday, August 31st: Nation-wide, relatively spontaneous –though not at all surprising- protest due to the negative outcome for Dilma Rousseff following the vote on the Senate. It happened mainly during the evening for it was a weekday (Wednesday) so people

⁴² In the dataset of August 31st, approximately 7,4% of the tweets are georeferenced while in the second dataset, September 4th, approximately 2,3%. Some other data are also georeferenced in other platforms, such as Instagram. Still, it is a very small sample and would create an accentuated bias on the selection of the users that adopt it.

⁴³ There were other protests, but their similarity with one or the other should allow us to discard them, such as, for example: September 1st was a Thursday, also weekday, very similar to the 31st; September 7th there were protests, it was a holiday (Independence Day in Brazil), so it would behave similarly to our second selected protest, with the difference that it was more nationwide, and a more local protest, as discussed, has some favourable aspects.

in general are expected to have joined the protest after work and it would be expected to have a predominance of young people, with more flexible schedules and less personal commitments at home; (ii) Sunday, September 4th: organized protest in the aftermath of the impeachment results, predominantly in the city of Sao Paulo, with secondary ramifications like Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. This second event happened during the day (the call was to 14:30 at MASP, Paulista Avenue, typical point of gathering in São Paulo), aimed at whole families, not just activists or strongly politicized people.

The following table sums up the criteria considered for the selection of the two events around the same case, with the respective comparative datasets:

Table 10: Criteria for choosing the protests for comparative analysis (Source: Author)

	Wednesday, Aug 31st	Sunday, Sep 4th
Name of Dataset	DS01 (Dataset 1)	DS02 (Dataset 2)
Level of Planning	<i>Unplanned</i>	<i>Planned</i>
Geographic Distribution	Mainly Nationwide	Mainly Local (São Paulo)
Duration	Protest takes place during the evening, after working hours. Dataset goes from 18:30 to 22:30 (4 hours).	During the entire day, comparative dataset from 16:30 to approximately 20:30 (4 hours) when police used force to disperse the gathering
Expected Political Orientation	More engaged activists; people that live or work nearby; Alternative Media; young people.	Activists, Public figures (such as politicians), Entire families, Social Organisations, Alternative Media, Journalists, Photographers among others.

The second day (Sunday, September 4th, 2016) has been grouped in two subsets of data in order to answer to different inquiries. DS02 was limited to four hours, from 16h30 to 20h30 (duration of four hours), to allow a comparative perspective between different datasets. DS03 is an extended dataset for day two, with a duration of seven hours (from 16:30 to 23:30), for it is focused on observing the different patterns of tUGC within one same protest. Since the protest was during the day, on a Sunday, there was a possibility to analyse in a more

longitudinal perspective. Also, and perhaps more important, around 20:30 there were accounts of police brutality, so the expectation was to find variability in the tUGC patterns within the same dataset. To visualize and analyse the data, other operational datasets were created merging DS01 with DS02 (resulting in DS 04, the comparative dataset for both days) and merging DS01 and DS03 (resulting in DS 05, the total dataset for both days). Details on the datasets are depicted on the tables below.

Table 11: Characteristics of each Dataset (Source: Author).

Datasets	Description	Justification	Date	Initial Timestamp (Brazil)	Final Timestamp (Brazil)	Extent (Hours)
DS01	Comparative Dataset Day 1	Dataset used to analyse on an isolated form day 1	31-08-16	18:30:00	22:30:00	4:00:00
DS02	Comparative Dataset Day 2	Dataset used to analyse on an isolated form day 2	04-09-16	16:30:00	20:30:00	4:00:00
DS03	Extended Dataset Day 2	Dataset used to perform a more longitudinal analysis on one single day (Day 2)	04-09-16	16:30:00	23:30:00	7:00:00
DS04	Comparative Dataset (Merged Days 1 and 2)	Comparative dataset to portray the whole picture of the comparison between both days considering the same duration of the single datasets	Both dates	Comparative (DS01 + DS 02)		8:00:00
DS05	Total Dataset (Merged Day 1 and 2 (extended))	Total amount of data subject to analysis and coding, used to extract better patterns of testimonial content creation and circulation	Both dates	Comparative (DS01 + DS 03)		11:00:00

Table 12: Quantitative aspects of the three main datasets (Source: Author).

	Date	Time		Duration (hours)	Tweets (Total)	Tweets / hour (AVG)	Original Media Tweets	% Total	Testimonials	Testimonials / hour	% Originals	% Total
		Start	End									
DS01	August, 31, 2016	18:30	22:30	4	63,147	15,787	2,634	4.2%	443	111	16.8%	0.7%
DS02	September 04, 2016	16:30	20:30	4	29,089	7,272	1,412	4.9%	595	149	42.1%	2.0%
DS03	September 04, 2016	16:30	23:30	7	52,452	7,493	1,712	3.3%	780	111	45.6%	1.5%
				Totals	115,599		4,346	3.8%	1,223		28.1%	1.1%

More details on the data captured to analyse the protests will be provided further on. Now I will focus on the research design to approach, through the datasets, the object of this research: testimonial User-Generated Content.

IV.2 Research Design

1. Mixed-Methods Approach

Richard Rogers (2015) defines *Digital Methods* as “techniques for the study of societal change and cultural condition with online data” (p. 1), specifying that not only the *data* used in this kind of study is natively digital as the *methods* are too (see Figure 8).

Data	Method	
	Digitized	Natively digital
Digitized	Culturomics* Cultural analytics*	
Natively Digital	Virtual methods webometrics	Digital methods

*Culturomics and cultural analytics may have digitized qualitative method, but they employ digital methods in part because they use *search as research*.

Figure 3 Situating digital methods among other approaches in the computational turn in the humanities and social sciences, according to their use of natively digital or digitized data and method.

Figure 8: Two epistemological approaches that define, for Rogers, what are Digital Methods: *Data* and *Method* origin (Source: Rogers, 2015, p. 7).

When we talk about tUGC we'll necessarily be talking about native digital data. Some of the methods presented in what follows respond to this specificity, being themselves digital methods, especially *Social Media Analytics* (QUT, n.d.). On the other hand, some respond to different research questions that call for traditional methods adopted and adapted to understand digital media related behaviours, such as content analysis and semi-structured interviews. This research ascribes, therefore, to mixed methods, not only in its traditional sense (quanti-quali approaches) but also in its digital-non-digital orientation.

Some of the study's research questions are better answered with quantitative methods and others with qualitative. Furthermore, the selection of

units of analysis for the qualitative stage –in other words the *interviewees*- was informed by the data processing/screening and the patterns of circulation of testimonial User-Generated Content on the sample studied, following Einspänner, Dang-Anh and Thimm (2014), who discuss the application of quantitative content analysis on Twitter to inform a further qualitative approach:

Peaks in patterns of communication (e.g., significantly more or less tweets containing a certain hashtag in a given time frame) or distinctive features within a user's tweeting style (e.g., changing retweeting or linking habits) can be the (exploratory) basis for formulating specific research questions and hypotheses, and give the researcher an idea of where to start with a qualitative, more in-depth analysis. (p. 101)

Following Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) I will use the *Embedded Design* approach, "appropriate when the researcher has different questions that require different types of data in order to enhance the application of a quantitative or qualitative design to address the primary purpose of the study" (p. 91). The model was applied to conceive the present research, except for one aspect: there is no primary and secondary purpose attached to the current method, as the authors sustain as the standard for this design. This research values as much the insights provided by the quantitative as by the qualitative phase of the research. The results are at the same time *dependent* since the qualitative sample is a result of the quantitative screening but also *independent*, for they address different research questions. In that sense, the analytical integration of both will take place at the stage of the late analysis and conclusions.

2. Research Questions and Methods

RQ1. WHAT IS TESTIMONIAL USER-GENERATED CONTENT?

The first research question was elaborated and answered mainly through literature review and conceptual reflection. Later, empirical results enriched the

discussion and triggered some adjustments of the concepts, according to what data has revealed from the tweets' and the interviews' analysis.

The quantitative phase of data collection and analysis addresses the second and the third research questions:

RQ2. HOW DID THE ATTRIBUTES OF TESTIMONIAL TWEETS AND TUGC CIRCULATED ON TWITTER VARY DURING THE PROTESTS AGAINST DILMA ROUSSEFF'S IMPEACHMENT?

RQ3. WHAT WAS THE OVERALL ROLE OF TESTIMONIAL TWEETS AND TUGC ON TWITTER DURING THE PROTESTS AGAINST DILMA ROUSSEFF'S IMPEACHMENT?

To address RQ2, the datasets were first filtered with programmed routines (machine/software-assisted screening processes⁴⁴) in order to identify original content that could potentially be testimonial. The resulting tweets were then viewed live on Twitter platform with an updated Google Chrome browser, one by one. The method of choice to prepare the data for analysis was Content Analysis, which implied the development and application of a Codebook with the guidelines for the application of the aforementioned attributes and other indications of the process (see Appendix A for the complete Codebook). Though Content Analysis has some qualitative assessment evidenced in the coding process (interpreting a message and assigning an attribute), the result was analysed in a quantitative manner afterwards, as we will see further on.

To answer RQ3 the resulting data was confronted with the whole dataset to check the dynamics of tUGC and testimonial data within the whole of the data over time and to visualize the communicative patterns of the coded attributes, also over time and across datasets, allowing for the visualisation of some proxies for the overall role tUGC had in the whole dataset. The whole process will be described in detail in the next section.

After analysing the communicative patterns, the research focused on the fourth and fifth RQs:

⁴⁴ During the process of screening I used mainly Tableau and Excel.

RQ4. HOW WERE THE DIFFERENT PROCESSES THAT LED TO THE CREATION AND PUBLICATION OF TESTIMONIAL TWEETS AND TUGC IN THE CONTEXT OF DILMA ROUSSEFF'S IMPEACHMENT PROTESTS? WHAT ARE THE USERS' MOTIVATIONS, MODUS OPERANDI, FEARS AND ATTITUDES?

RQ5. HAVE THIS COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE (TESTIMONIAL TWEETS CREATION AND PUBLICATION DURING PROTEST) HAD ANY TANGIBLE AND/OR PERCEIVED CONSEQUENCES IN THEIR LIVES?

They were addressed by the qualitative approach, for my interest is the perspective of the individual depth, not the pattern. As stated by Marwick (2014) "identifying large-scale patterns can be useful, but it can also overlook how people do things with Twitter, why they do them, and how they understand them" (p. 119). Therefore, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews that could at the same time profit from previously stated objectives as well as from the serendipity of a conversation with a certain degree of flexibility.

Still regarding aspects of the research design, it is important to notice that the qualitative part depends on a selection of Twitter users that were identified in the quantitative phase, configuring a *sequential* research process, as opposed to *parallel* (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Finally, both methods are *concurrent* (should lead to general conclusions to the research) and don't have an internal hierarchy of importance, for they just address different questions regarding the same object: tUGC.

IV.3 Research Stages

The empirical part of the present research was divided into 2 stages, as previously mentioned: quantitative and qualitative. Though there is an order to the execution of the stages of the research, this is an iterative process for two main reasons: (i) the scholarship on the subject is recent so each new work could have a reasonable impact on the present project, so much in the theoretical developments as to the methodological; and (ii) the partial findings of this very research feed back the theoretical and methodological assumptions, opening up opportunities to strengthen the conceptual assumptions with the empirical findings.

1. Quantitative Stage

1.1 Data Selection

Platform: Twitter

Twitter was not chosen merely by convenience, though it *is* convenient for a number of reasons. It was chosen because of how its characteristics fit the needs of the research, such as its characterisation as an “event-following tool” (Rogers, 2014, p. ix). Bail (2014) highlights the importance of Twitter as a source of data in a natural environment, which for this research implies a higher possibility to reach the spontaneity of tUGC: “it is naturally occurring –unlike survey research or cross-sectional qualitative interviews- and therefore critical to understanding the evolution of meaning structures *in situ*” (p. 467). Bail refers also to the “real time” characteristic of Twitter, which for this research is central and Bruns (2018b) justifies the perceived immediacy of Twitter, as in lack of mediation, arguing that more than 95% of its accounts are public (p. 9). That means the flows of information are more direct and publicly accessible, differently than Facebook, for example, where breaking news processes “are relatively slower [than on Twitter] and take more circuitous routes” (Bruns, 2018b, p. 9). Bruns and Stieglitz (2014) state that “large amounts of data might be used to **better understand issues or events retrospectively**, detect issues or events in an early stage, or even to predict certain real-world developments” (p. 70, emphasis added), as the present case, analysed retrospectively. Risse, Peters, Senellart and Maynard (2014) also highlight Twitter’s value as a source of documentation of contemporary society:

As a side effect of its active and pervasive usage, Twitter documents contemporary society in rich detail. Tweets give valuable insights into individuals, groups, and organisations, and enable an understanding of the public perception of events, people, products, or companies, including the flow of information (p. 208).

Though Twitter's ambiguous interpretations over its adoption as a personal use as a social network or as a news-on-the-fly media outlet has been discussed (Rogers, 2014; Burgess & Baym, 2016), it has undoubtedly suffered a transformation from a personal, social media platform to a more event-oriented one; or in other words, "less sociable and more newsy" (Burgess & Baym, 2016). This inclination has led to and at the same time was motivated by its adoption by journalists, media news outlets, celebrities, public and private organisations and ordinary users in general as an important –if not the most important– means to react quickly in times of crisis. Bruns (2018b) highlights the role of Twitter during the outbreak of acute events: "social media (and here especially Twitter) are now without doubt the space where acute events break first and are tracked in the greatest detail" (p. 4). The immediacy allowed by Twitter's socio-technical conception and adoption by its users creates a live and lively channel to broadcast and narrowcast competing accounts for real live events. It is the case with what Mortensen calls "eyewitness images", for, according to the author, they "provide counter-narratives to officially sanctioned narratives" (2015b, p. 4).

Though tUGC is not created nor published and circulated exclusively on Twitter and its research might benefit much from a multiplatform approach, or an 'information ecologies' approach (Treré, 2012), this study is centred on the **first channel** where testimonial content made *in situ* by users during situations of protest was published in pursuit for the trait of immediacy, more than the diversity of ecology. One turnaround to this 'single-platform limitation' is that I have followed the selected testimonials to its original content, that means opening up its platform of publication whichever it was. If a user published on Instagram or Facebook and automatically (or manually) re-published on Twitter⁴⁵, I have followed that publication to Instagram context in order to analyse its content. One

⁴⁵ There are several ways to do so, from services that users have to subscribe to robot-like applications that can be authored or adopted in platforms like ITTT (If This Then That). Refer to website: <https://ifttt.com> retrieved May 12, 2018.

in every three tUGC's analysed had this format of linked media from a different platform. I have also identified different social media accounts of users, when possible and necessary, to assess his/her role as a user: ordinary, journalist, activist etc. This enables a certain degree of inclusion of a diversity of platforms, obviously biased by a selected group of users that connect one platform to the other or that reproduce their content on both.

As to the representativeness of the sample, it must be noted that the penetration rate in Brazil, scenario of our research, is not very deep. Even though Twitter doesn't disclose users per geographic area, other sources appoint to somewhere around 20% to 30%⁴⁶ of Internet users in Brazil owning a Twitter account. Considering that the country has approximately 50% of Internet penetration -included mobile access facilitated by smartphone⁴⁷- it should account for approximately 12,5% of the overall population of the country. Also, looking at the digital consumption scenario, according to a comScore report users spend less than 1% of the overall time spent on social media on Twitter, while 96,7% on Facebook⁴⁸. Any research designed exclusively around a media with this kind of penetration and use rate is necessarily biased towards a specific population. This research, though, is not about *the protests*, therefore its sample is not designed to be representative of the population on the streets, its socio-economic diversity etc; it is designed to analyse one very specific communicational practice, that can be delimited to the specificities of Twitter. The possibility stands open, for future

⁴⁶ Data may vary according to source, probably related to method, since Twitter, as previously stated, doesn't release the official data: 23,7% according to a 2011 research by ComScore (<https://tecnologia.uol.com.br/ultimas-noticias/redacao/2011/04/26/brasil-e-o-3-pais-com-maior-penetracao-do-twitter-entre-internautas-diz-pesquisa.jhtm> accessed on May 7, 2017) and a very similar number, little over 20% in the young population (18-34 years-old) in 2016; 29% in 2016 according to eMarketer (<https://canaltech.com.br/noticia/redes-sociais/brasil-e-o-pais-que-mais-usa-redes-sociais-na-america-latina-70313/> accessed in May 7, 2017).

⁴⁷ Annual report by Internet Steering Committee department of studies (CETIC), available at http://cetic.br/media/analises/tic_domicilios_2015_coletiva_de_imprensa.pdf accessed on May 7, 2017.

⁴⁸ Data from report *State of Social Media in Brazil* from September 9, 2014, by comScore Media Matrix.

research, to check whether or how the findings apply to other platforms. More about the data selection will be presented and problematized in the following section.

Aggregator: #ForaTemer

This research has one unique main entry point for the data (or *query*, to use database language) that define the population of the communicative practice studied: all the messages circulated on Twitter on two different days during the occurrence of protests against Rousseff's impeachment *that included the hashtag ForaTemer* ('out with Temer' in a free attempt to translate it). To use Rafail's (2017) classification, within timeframes of the protests, it would be a *Topic-restricted semibounded population* (p. 4), for it is restricted by topic (#ForaTemer) but not by user (for the criterion includes all messages with the former hashtag).

This is an original first study of the phenomenon of tUGC and the protest is a privileged scenario to observe and analyse it. It intends to serve at least the purposes of: (i) enabling the development of a framework of analysis for tUGC; (ii) identifying patterns and pattern differences that could be related to the described variables of context of the protests or different moments during a single protest – such as differences when people are gathering or moving or when police use brutality after hours of a peaceful protest- and (iii) enabling the identification of subjects of interest to the interviews.

The use of a hashtag on Twitter works as an aggregator of content, making possible to create –intentionally or otherwise- an *ad-hoc publics*: “Twitter’s user-generated system of hashtags condenses such processes [emerging issues and acute events] to an instant, and its issue publics can indeed form virtually ad hoc, the moment they are needed” (Bruns & Burgess, 2011, p. 7). At the same time its adoption can be considered as a performative statement with political intent:

including a hashtag in one’s tweets signals a wish to take part in a wider communicative process, potentially with anyone interested in the same

topic. Where used in such a way, hashtags can aid the rapid assembly of ad hoc issue publics (Bruns & Burgess, 2011b), **especially also in response to breaking news or other sudden developments. (...) tweeting to a topical hashtag resembles a speech at a public gathering**—a protest rally, an ad hoc assembly—of participants who do not necessarily know each other, but have been brought together by a shared theme, interest, or concern. (Bruns and Moe, 2014 p. 18, our emphasis)

The adoption of ForaTemer hashtag responds most of the times to the intent to take part in a larger conversation, bypassing the restriction of the audience by the user's networks of followers-followees and entering a *macro layer* of communication on Twitter (Bruns & Moe, 2014). This is very important to the present research, since the idea behind social appropriation of technology indicate, at a certain stage, a conscious intent, which for the case analysed I argue that is a *political* choice. Adopting the hashtag implies an engagement of some sort with the movement, even if to criticize it, especially if the hashtag had been existing for a while, as is the case; even up to the date this research is being concluded, a bit less than two years after the case studied, #ForaTemer is still quite active. Even content with a more socializing inclination –*selfies* and mentions- are read politically since putting the self along with an aggregator that is a calling to take out the president of the country is a statement of one's political side with the question at hand.

Another point to make is that the selection of data around a politically charged aggregator such as #ForaTemer -though it was widely used with an indexical function (the "name" of the protest⁴⁹)- should be interpreted, at least by those unsympathetic to the protest, as a *rally* rhetorical function (Daer et al., 2014). This means professional traditional media, opposition politicians and several other publics are mostly left out, since they unlikely would use such a hashtag. Also, people who engage in political counter-argument on Twitter do not produce

⁴⁹ Common references to the hashtag as the name of the event were clear in many narrative tweets: "Around 50.000 people on Paulista Avenue now, no signs of violence #ForaTemer".

testimonial content, as the data showed, for they are not expected to attend to the protest. In the whole sample I did not identify original messages from the main national or international news outlets, only retweets or mentions in another message in which the author adopted the hashtag⁵⁰.

The choice of working with data using a hashtag as the sole criteria of collection could be problematic, though, if the purpose of this research would be to make general conclusions. This happens because the sampling strategy affects the reach of the pattern analysis to be performed. In that sense, a research with such data sampling strategy could not be considered as a pattern analysis of the tUGC for the *protest* per se, neither a representation of what happened in Twitter as a whole; it must be limited to the conversations around the hashtag since it is the trigger of the sample. That is not considered a problem, though, since the purpose of the data selection strategy is “to establish a dataset of the most visible tweets relating to the event in question” (Bruns & Liang, 2012) and #ForaTemer was the most visible hashtag during those events (Malini, 2016).

This research is not about the general political debate on Twitter; it is about how activists, constituents, sympathizers, bypassers and other social groups move **from a passive witness or a mere participant to a tUGC creator**, by taking their mobile technologies to create and publicize content their content during the protest. The research interprets tUGC as a form of political participation, through which users make political statements founded on the evidence of the streets. The hashtag, then, works as a pre-screening key to filter such kind of content to manageable samples of data. In that sense, ‘restricted’ is not a negative adjective for the dataset and the hashtag entry point proves to be adequate for the research.

⁵⁰ Those are off the scope of this analysis for they are not testimonial, except when they function as ‘mediated protest’.

1.2 Data Collection

An initial sample of the content was obtained with the configuration of an online spreadsheet in Google Docs platform called TAGS, developed by researcher Mark Hawksey⁵¹, in the form of live capture, since the application connects to Twitter's Streaming⁵² API (Application Programming Interface). This content served as a pilot to develop the content analysis codebook (see Appendix A) and to develop some of the techniques to be applied further on.

The final dataset was not collected live. It was purchased from a different tool that uses another port of entrance to Twitter's data: the *Search API*, which accesses historical data. In short, this means it connects to Twitter's database to gather data from the past, according to criteria provided by its buyers via what Twitter calls *Firehose*. This connection to the Firehose supposedly means that the buyer has unrestricted access to the data that matches the query (in this case two simple criteria: #ForaTemer and the time lapses), being equivalent to streaming tools such as TAGS, only with the advantage that it could be captured ex-post. I decided to use Sifter⁵³, a tool connected to Social Media Analysis tool DiscoverText⁵⁴. It was developed by researcher Stuart Shulman, targeted for research as well as for commercial uses, because my experience showed a very good support for researcher by the developers. Also, price was a limitation and the dataset pursued was affordable through such platform.

1.3 Data Cleaning and Screening

I filtered the messages down to create a subset of data that fitted better the description of tUGC. This is not the stage where tUGC are identified yet, it is merely a strategy to diminish the noise in the data and enable the coding process, which

⁵¹ Information available on the following address: <https://tags.hawksey.info/> accessed April 28, 2017.

⁵² This means the application captures tweets in "real-time" (the default configuration actually is every hour).

⁵³ <https://sifter.texifter.com/> accessed on April 28, 2017.

⁵⁴ <http://discovertext.com/> accessed on April 28, 2017.

entails visualizing each tweet in its native environment. Following Borra and Rieder (2014), “sub-sampling can be seen as a means for non-destructive data cleaning in the sense that tweets matching specific criteria can be excluded without being deleted” (p. 270). With that in mind, I did keep the original data intact, for the research anticipated that it would be very important to reinsert the coded data back into the dataset to study its role in the whole conversation.

I filtered the data according to the following criteria:

1. Original Content: tUGC must be *original* content, therefore *Retweets* had to be screened out;
2. Media Texts: tUGC should be, for this research, exclusively *media* texts, therefore *text-only* tweets had to be screened out;
3. Created Content: tUGC must be *created* content, so *non-created* content such as pictures picked up from media outlets were discarded.

These criteria were translated into a screening process with three main stages, as follows, and it was computer-assisted with professional business intelligence and analytics software Tableau Desktop⁵⁵.

Screening Stage 1. Original Content

There are a few very distinctive kinds of messages on Twitter that fulfil different communicative purposes and/or effects: (i) the *original* tweet, authored by the user him/herself; (ii) the *@reply* tweet, which indicates a more conversational content, originated when the user replies to another message or when one user mentions another using Twitter’s native *@user* identification functionality; (iii) the *Retweet*, which corresponds to the in-built retweet button or to a manual copy-paste adding the user-created standardized “RT @USER” syntax, responding to a logic of *magnification* or *diffusion* of the original content; and finally (iv) a variation of the retweet which is the *quoted tweet*, usually with either an *argumentative* nature

⁵⁵ Tableau Desktop is a commercial software (www.tableau.com) that defines itself as a “business intelligence and analytics” tool. It has a friendly interface to work with large amounts of data and plenty of tools to visualize and mine different kinds of datasets, such as excel files, csv or tsv formats. There is a 2 year free license to PhD students, subject to approval and free licensing to scholars and for building a lab to teach it to an academic course.

since the user adds content along the original message, either to support or contradict, or a *complimentary* nature, when user adds information, in the forms of text, links or emoticons. This research focus on the *authorial* content, which embraces *original* and *@replies* tweets.

To filter out non-authorial content, I identified the other tweet's content is registered on a specific field called TWITTER QUOTED STATUS BODY. In other words, if the tweet is some sort of retweet, this field registers the original tweet's body (text message). I then created a subset of data with the tweets that had no content on that field.

Screening Stage 2. Media Texts

In order to sort out text-only messages⁵⁶, I found out that all media content on Twitter is published as a link to a Twitter server that hosts the image (being the world-wide web, that is probably the only way to do it). When a user loads his feed, the interface loads the image from the server substituting the URL for the actual object (photo, video etc.), most of the times seamlessly. The text recorded in the metadata, thus, contains no actual image but its URL. Thus, by selecting only messages that have the necessary universal characters that identify Internet's protocol "HTTP" within the message text, all text-only tweets were discarded from the final subsample that was analysed individually.

Screening Stage 3: Created Content

As discussed in the previous chapter, tUGC blends the processes of creation and publication of content, so in order to qualify as tUGC the published content must have been created (or 'mentored'⁵⁷) by the same user. Besides the already filtered out retweeted content, the screening process to identify original created content is not a basic automated process. It involves, for example, identifying previous

⁵⁶ To the theoretical discussion on why text-only messages could be discarded refer to chapter II.

⁵⁷ As defined previously, by 'mentored' I mean the idea and the initiative behind the picture emerge from the account owner, even though he might ask a by passer to take a picture for instance.

references to the content or searching for previous publications with the same content. The main procedure to do so was through uploading a photo to *Google Images* and seeing if there are mentions to the author or previous publications of the same photo. This criterion was, then, not part of the screening process, but incorporated in the individual observation of the tweets, in the next stage of the research, to be described in more detail in what follows.

Screening Results

Screening for what I defined as *Original Media Tweets* was an important first step to reduce to a more manageable set of data, from a bit more than 100.000 units in the whole dataset to less than 4.000 *Original Media Tweets* (approximately 4% of the initial data). This assessment is very important in the context of the evaluation of the feasibility of the method proposed, since it includes the individual observation and coding of *Original Media Tweets* as testimonial or not and a deeper coding those that ended up coded as testimonial (1,223 tweets). Both steps take place after the Content Analysis described in next section.

Averaging about one minute per original media tweet and 3 minutes for the deeper testimonial tweet coding processes, the time estimated to perform this stage was of about 127 hours of work, or about 32 days working 4 hours/day. It seemed enough to do a comprehensive study and at the same time feasible to be done by one⁵⁸ sole coder⁵⁹.

1.4 Content Analysis

To identify the tUGC from the dataset of screened content (about 4.000 tweets) two steps of coding took place: (i) identifying *testimonial media tweets*, which I will call

⁵⁸ There were two other people that coded a sample of messages in order to perform a reliability test (see Appendix B for details), but still the third party's coded messages were compared with the author's coding, so I did code all of them.

⁵⁹ Though I had access to a python code to compare images semi-automatically, it was faster and more precise to detect non-original content manually during the first stage of the coding process as we will see further on.

*testimonial tweets*⁶⁰ from now on (1,223 tweets); and (ii) identifying *tUGC* (886 tweets).

Content analysis may be defined in a classical perspective as “an approach to the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner” (Bryman, 2008, p. 275). This definition includes the challenges of being replicable, which converts the method in a more reliable one (see Appendix B for more on *Reliability Tests*). In the context of Twitter research, Einspänner and colleagues (2014) define in a broader sense in the context of Twitter Content Analysis, “as a methodological framework within which various approaches of textual and non-textual analyses can be applied” (p. 97).

Content Analysis is an adequate method to classify qualitatively to the data, making judgements and interpretations over pre-established standards that fall into categories, and then analyse quantitatively, as the research moves forward in search for patterns of creation and circulation of testimonial content in the selected datasets. When designing the codebook, though, I’ve opted to be more flexible and inclusive than in the proper definition of tUGC, for a simple reason: content can be filtered out afterwards, but it cannot be filtered in. I am including, for instance, testimonial content produced by *alternative media*, by *public figures*, by *journalists*; content published first on *organizational channels*; *mediated protest*, such as photos of TV broadcasting of the protest; *edited* content that do not follow the speed associated with my definition of tUGC; and other attributes that might not coincide with the previous theoretical definitions, so it is more appropriate to call the subset of coded messages as *testimonial tweets* instead of tUGC (see Appendix A for the detailed codebook).

⁶⁰ Textual content was not considered as testimonial even if it had text referring to the user witnessing an event, as explained before, so for this research both expressions refer to the same group of data.

The development of the classification scheme has had, as one would expect, a few iterations, between code, theory and data. Following Marwick (2014, p. 118) I coded a sample of about 2.000 tweets with tentative criteria based solely on the theoretical appreciation of the phenomenon and then adjusted the categories following the patterns revealed by the data. Those tweets were not included in the final datasets.

The coding process was divided in two steps, for the first classification determines the subset that should be coded with the more comprehensive list of attributes, as shown below by Figure 9.

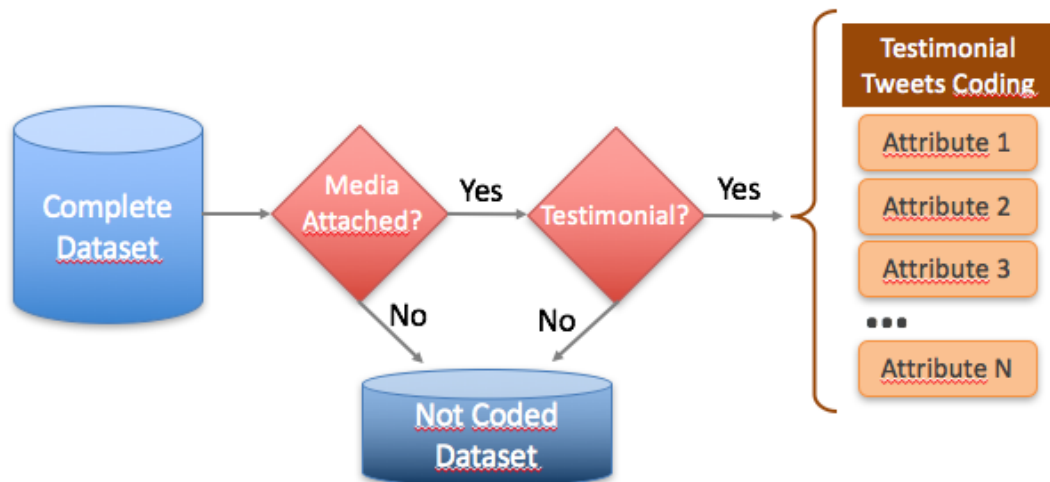


Figure 9: Two-step procedure for the coding process (Source: Author).

The first step was to determine if the content of the tweet was testimonial or not, for there makes no sense to classify non-testimonial content under the attributes assigned to testimonial content. The result was that 1,223 tweets were identified as testimonial and thus were subject to the coding process regarding the attributes defined in the previous chapter:

Table 13: Attributes of tUGC to be coded during stage of Content Analysis. (Source: Author).

Semiotic Level	Attributes	Metadata
Pretext	Twitter User	Activist; Alternative Media; Fake/Character; Journalist; Ordinary; Photographer; Political Association/Party, Public Figure.
Text	Attached Media	Photo(s); Video; Live Stream; Animated GIF; Location (FourSquare-like).
	Constructedness	Unedited, Quick edit, Edited.
	Media Standard	Amateur, Professional.
	Obtrusiveness	Personal Experience, Witness, Mediated Protest.
	Discursive Function	Accusation; Astonishment; Identity/Selfie; Mobilization; Communication.
	Political Stand	For, Neutral, Against, Unclear.
Context	Early Channel	Individual channel; Network, Organizational Channel.
	Exposure	Linked; Embedded.

The code was then put to test when the *intercoder reliability* verification process took place. During the process, the code had to go through a last fine tuning, strengthening the theoretical foundations of the attributes that had resulted in less accordance between coders. The final result was simpler categories, in ways that drew clearer distinctions between mutually exclusive attributes, maintaining the theoretical background that sustains them. Three different coders were put to the task, all with knowledge in the communication field, and the results calculated using the ReCal2 software (Freelon, 2010) indicated an average 0.70 using Krippendorff's α and 87,1% using percentage agreement (see Appendix B for methodological implications, reliability estimates and descriptives of each variable).

1.5 Quantitative Analysis

This is, to some degree, an analytical stage, even though it implies a lot of data management: importing and exporting data, writing code to select, merge, extract

etc., plotting results to cross-tables, graphs and other forms of analytical visualisations. This was performed on top of two main sources of data: tweets metadata (original data on the tweets, such as number of followers, number of status updates, number of retweets etc.) and coded attributes (metadata attributed by this research during the stage of Content Analysis). Those approaches, combined, enabled the following quantitative procedures:

- *Descriptive and aggregated data and metadata analysis*: Procedures applied to determine frequencies of different kinds of tweets such as testimonial tweets and tUGC, frequency of hashtags, number of retweets, users, followers and so on;
- *Temporal analyses*: Procedure used to show how different metadata and content attributes behave over time in each or both protests;
- *Normalised analysis*: Normalisation of the timelines of tweets creation to compare testimonial creation versus the whole data. That means both timelines were divided by its maximum respective value to indicate the exact variations within an equivalence scale (-1 to 1) and the Y-axis of the graph varies from 0 to 1 (maximum number of tweets).
- *Longitudinal analyses*: Implied the identification of variations of tweets' metadata and attributes within one day for different stages of the protest;
- *Cross-tables and combined visualization techniques*: Such techniques were used to appreciate patterns of incidence of attributes (i.e., frequencies of different combinations of attributes);
- *Rate of retweets* according to different patterns of tUGC's attributes;
- *Retweeting patterns*: Procedure to identify the retweeting patterns when compared to the whole data
- *Issue Mapping*: Is tUGC it a good source to follow what is happening? Do the issues identified reflect mainstream media agenda in some form (agreeing or disagreeing)?
- *Multinomial Logistic Regression*: A multinomial logistic regression was performed with the support of statistical analysis software Stata to identify which of tUGC's attributes predict more retweets to shed some light in the dynamics of diffusion of tUGC in the studied protests.

2. Qualitative stage

Probably the most important limitation of quantitative analysis is precisely that the researcher can only observe what has been made explicit through captured content, be it intentional (data inputted by users through Twitter interface, such as tweets, biography text, uploaded pictures etc.) or unintentional (timestamp,

number of followers, client software used, location from IP address etc.). Aggregated data can not explain many aspects of social behaviour, as Marwick (2014) states: “inferences made on the basis of the properties of a large data set are limited in what they can explain” (p. 109-110). In other words, metadata means a lot, but is still just metadata: data on data; it offers cues, but no evidence of thought, intent, context. Behind the 1,223 tweets analysed, categorized, visualized in the previous stage, it cannot be taken for granted that they were created by people. Those individuals made decisions, acted in some way, thought of something, had intent; all that information might escape the quantitative inferences or, in best-case scenario, qualitative assessments can adjust imprecisions.

To characterize the tUGC it is central to understand those aspects, since the concept is being defined from the perspective of a significant social appropriation of Technology (Proulx, Lecomte & Rueff, 2007). That means tUGC is a conscious act of instrumentalisation of technology for defined purposes, in this case, with political relevance and possibly political impact. In other words, the quantitative stage, besides informing results of its own nature, has helped prepare the interviews and allow the selection of specific actors that could shed light to those other kinds of questions. The selected actors and criteria of selection will be discussed as follows.

The following qualitative method contributes to many dimensions of the analysis but especially to the research questions 4 and 5:

4. *How are the different processes that lead to the recording and publication of testimonial content by Twitter users in the context of Dilma Rousseff's impeachment protests? What are their motivations, modus operandi, fears, and attitudes?*
5. *Have this communicative practice (testimonial tweets during protest) had any tangible and/or perceived consequences in their lives?*

Qualitative inquiry, in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews, provides the possibility to retrieve information precluded within the individual: “Research with interviews is an inter-view where knowledge is built through the

inter-action between interviewer and interviewee” (Kvale, 2010, p. 24, my translation). Even considering the well-known biases (social desirability) or limitations (human memory), this is the best method to access information to build upon the idea of social appropriation of ICTs embedded within the present definition of tUGC and the aforementioned research questions.

As previously discussed, the ICTs social appropriation framework goes beyond the content circulated on the media platforms; it implies a good degree of information on the processes behind the scenes before and/or after the message is produced –*pretextual* and *contextual* elements. It relies also on the socio-economic structure, the competencies, the motivations, or more generally put, the communicational practices behind and beyond the message itself.

2.1 Selection Criteria

The interviewees were selected to represent a variety of testimonial content creator profiles, within the relevant actors identified during the previous quantitative stage. The idea behind these interviews was to understand the contextual factors of the processes of creation and diffusion of *testimonial tweets* and *tUGC* and how different actors deal with such phenomenon, as well as to understand if it has had any perceived or clearly identifiable effects in the aftermath of the protest to the user.

To grasp the great variety of actors behind the dynamics of creation and diffusion of such content in the case studied, there are many criteria, including non-ordinary users that have created testimonial tweets but not tUGC. Users were selected either because they fitted at least one of the following criteria:

- User that produce tUGC in both protests: if a user has produced tUGC in both protests, it is expected that this practice has been incorporated in his political activity (if not, it is equally interesting to question why), the preparation for the events, his expectation, his perception of the effects/impact of the content created.
- Users with most tweets: the amount of status changes (or tweets) can be used as a proxy/indicator of heavy-user-like adoption of Twitter. This is an

interesting case to inquiry more on the technological aspects of Twitter, user's opinion of the platform, his/her imagined audiences, expected or concrete consequences of their activity etc.

- User that have erased content or inactive/closed account: this is important to understand whether the production of media content on Twitter in the context of the protests has had political/personal consequences in user's life, if user has suffered emotional consequences, such as political polarisation among close people or trolling by those who disagreed; and/or User(s) that have protected the Twitter account, became inactive or closed the account and that seem to have created a media content previously, detected in the quantitative analysis. Of course, if data is erased it is almost impossible to guarantee that such content was tUGC in first place and not other form of media content⁶¹.
- Patterns: User that repeatedly produce tUGC in accordance to the most frequent patterns, identified in the quantitative analysis could help explain specifically such patterns. Why they use such a point of view? Why they adopt a kind of discourse? And so on.
- Influencer: User whose tweets have had an outstanding repercussion in the dataset (amount of retweets or other forms of diffusion). Individual and collective (such as @MidiaNINJA or @j_livres) cases are to be selected. The motivations of the testimonial content creation and the consequences of its wide circulation are topics of particular interest in this case.
- Late adopter: User that has created a Twitter account in the context of the protests (all over the year, not necessarily during the analysed period), to understand if the user associates the adoption of the platform with a means for political participation.
- Broadcasters: User with many followers within the context of the dataset, a proxy for popularity. Could trigger questions of self-censorship, identity-building, self-image etc, in user's communicative practices. The responsibility user has when broadcasting to a wide audience is radically different than when narrowcasting to a few dozen followers.
- Journalists: There is a reasonable incidence of journalists that follow the protests through their personal Twitter accounts. It brings up many interesting questions on how they see Twitter in the public-private discussion, especially related to political expression and political participation. Also, they might adopt formal professional journalistic practices or behave as conventional users. If possible it would be interesting

⁶¹ I know it was media content for the metadata indicates so, but when content is deleted the URL ceases to exist and when content is protected, URL is redirected to user's initial page with no tweets and a message that the tweets are protected. Nevertheless, I was able to locate one person with such characteristics (Beatriz, as will be detailed in the following section) and her content was confirmed to have been tUGC.

to talk also to an international correspondent that participated on the protest(s) to see if there are any clues as to differences with national colleagues within the tUGC creation and circulation.

- Efficient User: User(s) that achieve higher proportion of retweets in proportion to the number of followers⁶², indicating a measure of efficiency (cost-benefit). It is of interest to reflect over the success of such tweet and check if this specific case has triggered behaviour changes in his/her tweeting practices, such as trying to repeat the formula.
- Cross-media Usage: User(s) that move across platforms and could help explain how such flows happen, in order to assess the different choices in the process of appropriation of digital media to create, publish and publicize tUGC.

A total of 10 interviews were made, in order to provide some cues over the coincidences and differences in the communicational practices by each type and in between the different segments selected. I also included one user that was not active on Twitter at the time of the protests for he was very active on other social networks (primarily Facebook) or digital communication tools (WhatsApp), in order to track down such flow of testimonial content channeled outside Twitter but that ended up on Twitter thanks to his friend. The final selection, following the above-mentioned criteria, is displayed on Table 14 below:

⁶² This rate is achieved dividing the number of retweets by the number of followers and multiplying by 1,000 (amount of retweets per thousand followers). If a user has 100.000 followers and had 100 retweets, the rate is 1 retweet for every 1.000 followers. If a user has 1.000 followers but had 100 retweets as well, his rate goes up to 100 RT/1,000 followers, a much more efficient rate.

Table 14: Interviewees selected per criteria (Source: Author).

Criterion	Interviewee									
	Driade (NINJA)	Roberta	Claudia	Marcelo	David	Beatriz	Hussein	Vivian	Luiza	Léo
tUGC in both Protests										
Heavy User (most status updates)										
Erased, inactive or closed account										
Clear Patterns										
Influencer										
Late Adopter										
Journalist										
Efficient User										
Cross-Media										

2.2 Profiles

The table below displays the interviewees ordered by date of interview, besides listing the means of their interview and their Twitter handle (for those that have it and opted for the maintenance of their real names).

Table 15: List of interviewed users ordered by date of interview (Source: Author)

#	User	Name	Date of Interview	Means of interview	Informed Consent?
1	@MidiaNINJA	Dríade Aguiar	September 22, 2017 September 26, 2017 (follow up questions)	Landline telephone conversation	Yes
2	@RobertaPrescott	Roberta Prescott	October 17, 2017	Skype audio conversation	Yes
3	@CacauCB_	Maria Claudia Branco	October 19, 2017	FaceTime video conversation	Yes
4	@screamyell	Marcelo Costa	October 25, 2017	WhatsApp audio conversation	Yes
5	@dgormezano	David Gormezano	October 31, 2017 November 1, 2017 (follow up questions)	Skype video conversation	Yes
6	@biaaleandro	Beatriz Leandro	November 13, 2017	Facebook Messenger video conversation	Yes
7	N/A	Hussein Augusto Mohammad Said Cavalcante	November 31, 2017	Skype video conversation	Yes
8	N/A	Andrea (Pseudonym)	November 14, 2017	WhatsApp audio conversation	Yes
9	@LuizaGeiling	Luiza Geiling Cruz	December, 11, 2017	Facebook Messenger audio conversation	Yes
10	@leoborjinha	Leonardo Silva	February 16, 2018	WhatsApp audio conversation	Yes

The social profiles of the users with their names, professions, age group, and characteristics that are of interest to the research, are as follows, listed by alphabetical Twitter handle⁶³:

⁶³ It is important to notice that though I tried and was able to contact many political associations, such as National Student Union (UNE) and politicians' social media managers, none of

1. **Andrea** (pseudonym) is in her 30's, makes a living as a self-employed filmmaker and photographer of events, such as marriages (in association with her partner). She is licensed but not graduated in sociology and, despite not having many followers, she is very active on Twitter and such activity is predominantly political. This characteristic turned her into an interesting source for she had tweets with up to 22 RT despite only having a bit more than 100 followers at the time. Thanks to the adoption of the hashtag she was retweeted by Spanish speaking users and that boosted this specific tweet. Also, she is a heavy Twitter user as a consumer, judging by her very large amount of likes (close to 12,000, while the average for the others was 1,600, refer to Table 16).
2. **Beatriz Leandro (@biaaleandro)**: Professional of International Relations, currently fully dedicated to her MSc studies in Sociology, in her late 30's. At the time of the protests, she worked with São Paulo's City Government. Has one son –who attended to a few protests with her. She was selected for one main reason: though she had left Twitter (currently, her handle belongs to another person), I was able to locate and interview her. The relevance was to understand why someone with political activity on Twitter decided to leave the platform and assess if it was somehow related to the protests and specifically with the tUGC created by her.
3. **Maria Claudia Branco (@CacauCB_)**: Maria Claudia Branco is in her early 30's and though she is a Data Journalist, her use of Twitter is as a very elaborate character, with a particular acid, humorous, political language. Probably due to that Claudia displays a good performance, for her tweets got some reaction from the audience. With only about 1,600 followers at the time of the protest, she had one tweet that received 90 RT and 104 likes and her other tweets also had high numbers with sophisticated and original choice of words and images, so she qualifies as an *efficient user*. She holds a MSc in journalism and works as an intelligence analyst for the presidency of the country in a Strategic News Agency. Her Twitter handle is her distorted name and her Twitter account does not connect directly with her professional life. There were multiple criteria that Claudia met, but the most important for choosing her is that a picture detected as tUGC was actually from a friend of hers that had published elsewhere –which was the successful tweet just mentioned. The friend (Hussein) was also interviewed to understand his options and how the cross-platform process worked from

them conceded an interview after several messages interchanged via Twitter, E-mail and/or WhatsApp –though many promised to do so. It is an interesting perspective but not central to this research.

his perspective.

4. **David Gormezano (@dgormezano):** David is a French journalist, works for the Spanish version of France 24, a French 24-hour news channel financed mainly by the government. David lived in Brazil because his wife had a job opportunity and though he was not working professionally when the political crisis took place, he followed the protests as an interested politicized citizen. He was chosen not only for being a privileged international observer, but also for being a journalist. It was even more interesting to find out he was not working at that moment, fitting well the profile of a journalist playing a role of ordinary citizen.
5. **Leonardo Silva (@leoborjinha):** Léo is a second-year advertising student at Unipampa (state-funded public University), in small town São Borja in Southern Brazil with little more than 60 thousand habitants. His profile was chosen for he seemed to be an ordinary user generating only content about the repression. After the interview, it ended up even more interesting for he was not present, he was retweeting from his hometown, but due to technical knowledge –he studies advertising and works with digital media and social network marketing- and his expressiveness it seemed that he was living what he was commenting. The interview was then redirected as someone that was not present but was performing *mediated witnessing* tUGC with a clear pattern. He is also very active on Twitter, since, though he is young and joined Twitter in November 2013, he had almost 13.000 status updates at the time of the protests, averaging 13 messages a day.
6. **Luiza Geiling Cruz (@LuizaGeiling):** Luiza is a 19 years old literature student who works at an NGO in São Paulo. She was chosen for her metadata on the Twitter profile: she joined Twitter exactly in September 1, 2016, right after the impeachment and she was quite active for a very short period, less than a week and she tweeted she would be monitoring for police brutality before the second protest (more details in the *Results* chapter). Her experience turned out to be very important to the research for she had the most visceral experience, having faced high levels of brutality from a short distance and being herself hurt during the first protest. The consequences in her process of ICT appropriation will be discussed further on.
7. **Mídia NINJA (@MidiaNINJA):** Interview conducted with social media manager Dríade Aguiar for this alternative politicized (even partisan, according to some sources) media. She personally has no formal education and has been in charge of social media for them for a few years, since the group started (circa 2011). Dríade was 27 years old by the time of the interview. Besides what became quickly obvious after analysing the data,

that this is the most relevant content creator within the datasets from a quantitative perspective (both as an *broadcaster* and as an *influencer*), Mídia NINJA is also known to be decentralized, so I assumed it could be an attractor of UGC –as was confirmed by the interview. So, looking from the perspective of an alternative, politicized, decentralized, young Media organisation promised to be very interesting, especially since there is so much work on big media’s use of UGC (as per literature review on previous chapters), and not so much dedicated to this kind of organisation.

8. **Roberta Prescott (@RobertaPrescott):** Journalist, specialized in IT and Telecom, at the moment of this research she was at her late 30’s working as freelance to national and international media. One of the main reasons for interviewing her is that she was the only interviewee that produced tUGC on both protests; others like Claudia also tweeted but not her own content, for she did not attend to the first protest; or participated on both events but did not create content for Twitter on one of them, like Luiza. Besides, she is the ordinary user with more tUGC tweets (30) and her patterns of tUGC creation were very enlightening for she moved from a more distant, journalistic-like content to more emotionally engaged as the repression took place. One of her tweets had a very good performance with 28RT and 28 likes though she had 1,001 followers at that moment.
9. **Marcelo Costa (@screamyell):** Publicist, works as a cultural journalist. Self defines as a “conteudist” (as in “content-creator”). Super active on Twitter with almost 180.000 status updates by the time of the protests (while the others’ average is below 7,000, as per Table 16), he is about 40 years old and runs a rock fanzine over the Internet that has been active for over 20 years. Demonstrated excellent Twitter and social media skills and knowledge. His profile mixes personal (such as personal and political opinions and even his hobby beer tasting) and professional (his fanzine information, that names the handle).
10. **Hussein:** Law student, Hussein was (and is) not active on Twitter, he is much more active on Facebook, for political matters and Instagram for personal. He’s on his early 20’s and lives nearby the typical gathering point for the protests, therefore he participated in plenty of them. He was chosen specifically as someone from outside Twitter that was included in such network by one of those unmapped organic flows of social media: he published on Facebook⁶⁴ and his friend Claudia (other interviewee) liked

⁶⁴ Just as a reminder of how these networked communication is fluid, Claudia thought she had accessed the picture via WhatsApp, so the variety of simultaneous sources an interested user accesses is rich and complex for the researcher to make sense and systematize.

the picture and ‘curated’ it, publishing it on Twitter. This is not uncommon for Beatriz also published a video received from a friend via WhatsApp, according to her interview. But as the source, the process also varies, as Beatriz gave complete credit (“Video: Tania Bustamante”) but did not ask for authorisation; while Claudia did ask, but wrote “I just received this emblematic image” with no attribution.

Table 16 displays some quantitative metadata for the users selected to perform the interviews:

Table 16: Quantitative data of the profiles. The variable values (all columns but the first one) are displayed at their maximum value within the combined dataset of both days studied (Source: Author).

(M) username:	Day	# Testimonials	Followers	Friends	Favorites	Status
Andrea	September 04	8	104	149	11,916	2,711
biaaleandro	August 31	2	99	91	0	1,325
cacauCB_	August 31	1	1,607	914	7,502	16,152
	September 04	2				
dgormezano	September 04	5	252	111	50	758
leoborjinha	September 04	4	381	301	2,263	12,784
LuizaGeiling	September 04	2	16	102	12	37
MidiaNINJA	August 31	25	121,344	1,185	2,488	10,812
	September 04	14				
robertaprescott	August 31	6	1,003	605	323	10,236
	September 04	24				
screamyell	September 04	11	16,819	803	165	179,141
	Average	9	15,736	473	2,747	25,995

2.3 Interview Model

The interviews are composed of two pieces put together: one general model that answers the research questions, anchored in the social appropriation framework (Table 17); and a specific part that is built upon the results of the quantitative pattern analysis and the analysis of the users’ metadata (number of tweets, number of followers, number of retweets of his/her tUGC etc.) as per Table 18.

Table 17: Set of default general questions to feed the interviews. (Source: Author).

ICT Social Appropriation Framework Stage	Examples of Questions
1. Access	<p>Since when the user is on Twitter</p> <p>What kind of devices does he access Twitter from (may be aided by the interviewer with metadata indicating which Twitter-client was used at the time)</p> <p>Did user have an internet access data plan (3G, 4G) at the time of the protest?</p>
2. Cognitive and technical mastery	<p>How frequent is the use of Twitter</p> <p>Which of Twitter's functionalities/affordances is the user familiar with</p> <p>Who has introduced him to Twitter or how has he learned</p>
3. Significant Use of the technology	<p>What were the motivations/intentions behind the practice of tUGC(s); is it a habit to produce UGC in other contexts; why does the user create UGC.</p> <p>When you create tUGC, does the user send to media or alternative media to get more visibility. If yes, in which cases, conditions.</p> <p>Does the user consume, believe, appreciate other people's tUGC.</p> <p>What is the meaning of the hashtag #ForaTemer?</p> <p>According to the user's perception, how the use of Twitter might have affected the participation on the mobilization, individually (his/her) and generally:</p> <p>i. Has the tUGC circulated on Twitter affected his/her perception of the protest (or previous protests); has it motivated or allowed him/her to acknowledge previously unavailable information such as amount of people, accounts of police brutality, protest dynamics etc.</p> <p>ii. Has the tUGC circulated on Twitter motivated or allowed people to acknowledge previously unavailable information such as amount of people, accounts of police brutality, protest dynamics etc.</p>
4. Creative use	<p>Has the user manipulated Twitter "binding" the rules or doing something unusual on the platform (ex: If This Than That, automatic Facebook or Instagram publishing, robots etc.)</p>
5. Collective adoption	<p>Have the user ever used Twitter in the name of an institution or organization</p> <p>Has the Twitter use been on behalf of a collective group</p> <p>Has the user learned something collectively that could not be grasped individually by using Twitter with a community (ex: community around #ForaTemer, followees, conversations etc.)</p>

The theoretical framework of the Social Appropriation of ICTs by Proulx and colleagues (2007) relies on 6 stages of social appropriation: (1) *Access*, (2) *Competences*, (3) *Significant use*, (4) *Creative use*, (5) *Collective adoption* and (6) *Public Policies advocacy*. It was thus important to detect, for each stage of the model, the characteristics of the process of appropriation by the user, with the exception of the sixth stage⁶⁵. The remaining stages inspired the questions depicted on Table 17, numbered from 1 to 5, in accordance with the framework.

⁶⁵ Such stage has other political implications regarding technology itself, which differs from a political process of other nature to which technology is instrumentalized. The former is, for instance, the struggle to enforce net neutrality, and the latter fits the case studied in the present research. Therefore the sixth stage of Social Appropriation is considered out of the scope of this research.

Besides those questions regarding the social appropriation framework, it was necessary to consider other contextual/personal factors, such as political affiliation, age, education, among other elements of interest, as detailed on Table 18.

Table 18: Contextual/Personal set of questions for the interviews. (Source: Author).

ICT Social Appropriation Framework Stage	Examples of Questions
Demographics	Age, education, gender Socio-economic status may be inferred by prior questions of mobile phone model and internet mobile access plan
Political participation	Where do you see yourself in the political spectrum: left, center, right? Any of these tags fit you: socialist, leftist, humanist, petist, activist, communist, midiactivist, feminist, liberal, conservative, neoliberal? Others? Are you affiliated or sympathizes with political parties, movements NGOs etc? Are you part of the organics of any such organization? Have you attended to many protests against the impeachment? And others ever since?
Coverage of the event	To whom are you speaking when you tweet? To whom are you speaking when you create a tUGC in the context of a protest? (show the tweets the user has created) How is your perception of the media coverage in general of the social protests against the impeachment? What is your appreciation of tUGC produced by other people/organizations for the protest? Do you value them? To what extent? How do you value them when compared with mainstream media content? How is your perception of the media coverage in the protest(s) where you participated? To what extent does that relate to your creating tUGC?
Personal context	Were you alone or accompanied by someone during the protest? Did you anticipate/prepare to create tUGC: backup mobile to empty space, take a better camera, buy data pre-paid credits etc.?

2.4 Procedure

To prepare for the interview, I have analysed the pre-selected group of users' Twitter feed during the period of the protests and in recent moments, to identify hypothetical differences in the appropriation and prepare a better contextualized interview. Also, I've analysed the quantitative data specifically for the user to understand if there emerged a pattern or if such pattern changes according to the stage of the protest, for instance while gathered or moving; when in peace or when facing police repression and so on.

Then I contacted the users first directly through Twitter (or other means available such as other social networks' profiles or websites connected to Twitter's profile), identifying myself as a researcher and attempted to schedule a remote interview (video or audio). An informed consent (Appendix C) was signed by each

interviewee, which was shared prior to the interview. The interview was recorded and notes were taken.

After the interview, the audios were listened as many times as necessary to complement the notes or to address specific issues that came up during the analysis. The notes were then digitized to ensure a proper storage, backup and to facilitate its usage in the stage of analysis.

2.5 Analysis of the Interviews

As it can be inferred by the sets of questions, the interview paradigm is predominantly *factual* (Kvale, 2010), since questions are directed to identify objective information (factual aspects) secluded within the knowledge of the individual person (or group/organisation) -such as age, education, technologies used, if the interviewee has attended to other protests etc.- or *narrative* (Kvale, 2010), oriented to identify practices and procedures, characterized by the narrative questions and answers -such as if interviewee was alone during the protest, how is his/her procedure to create and publish tUGC etc.

Short quotes were selected to illustrate the interviewees' point of view, backing up the analysis and conclusions, and a few patterns that deemed reasonable were interpreted, despite and in light of the limited number of interviewees.

Chapter V: Results

As previously stated, *tUGC* is a specific form of *testimonial tweets*, limited, according to the present operationalisation, by two attributes: users/authors acting in a role of *ordinary citizen* and the use of their *individual accounts* on social media as the early means to publish and publicize the created content. Those two concepts (*testimonial tweets* and *tUGC*) are present crosswise along the chapter, with particular attention on tUGC, the focal point of the research. Additionally, when I refer to “total tweets” it should mean the sum of all kinds of tweets, including mentions, original tweets, retweets and quoted tweets, and by “original tweets” I mean tweets composed by the user. So, for instance, “original testimonial tweets” means tweets with testimonial character, created by the user, not only the tweet, but the media it contains, such as a photo or video. Should the media be not original, it classifies as *original tweet* but not as *original testimonial tweet*.

This research aimed to accomplish four specific objectives that will be addressed in different forms across the sections of this chapter:

1. Define theoretically and operationalize empirically testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC);
2. Identify and analyse the patterns of testimonial tweets and tUGC creation and circulation in the datasets studied and how such patterns may vary according to contextual factors;
3. Assess the relative importance and role of the different variations of testimonial tweets and tUGC in the datasets studied;
4. Understand the process users/authors have gone through before and after the production of testimonial tweets and tUGC messages in the context of the case studied.

The results that address such objectives are displayed in four sections:

- i. *Testimonial User-Generated Content*. In this case, tUGC was analysed quantitatively in more detail in this dedicated section to account for the differences within the patterns of tUGC creation and circulation. That includes frequencies of the attributes as per Content Analysis, cross-sectional analyses, quantitative metadata analyses (tweets, retweets, followers etc.) and a multinomial logistic regression. It also attempts to assess the reach of and the engagement generated by different types of testimonial tweeting, including tUGC, as possible outcomes for the protesters. Altogether these findings help define tUGC (objective 1) beyond the theoretical conceptualization;
- ii. *Descriptive Data Analysis*. Gives a quantitative sense of the dimensions and general patterns of the datasets. It helps, then, to set a base point for the other analyses pinpointing where the testimonial tweets and the tUGC stand in the whole picture of the datasets, comparing differences in testimonial tweeting between days with the equivalent datasets (DS01 and DS02). Such analyses addresses both objective 2 and add some insights to objective 3;
- iii. *Longitudinal Analysis*. This section will look in detail Day 2, with the longer dataset (DS03), in order to grasp the variations within the different stages of the protest, addressing objective 3; and
- iv. *Social Appropriation Process*, an analysis of the processes of creation and circulation of testimonial content from the perspective of the interviewees, under the framework of ICT Social Appropriation (Proulx et al., 2007). This section addresses directly objective 4.

V.1 Testimonial User-Generated Content (tUGC)

1. tUGC Descriptive Data

I found 886 tUGC that adopted the hashtag #ForaTemer and were produced during the analysed period, representing 72% of the total of *testimonial tweets* (N=1,223),

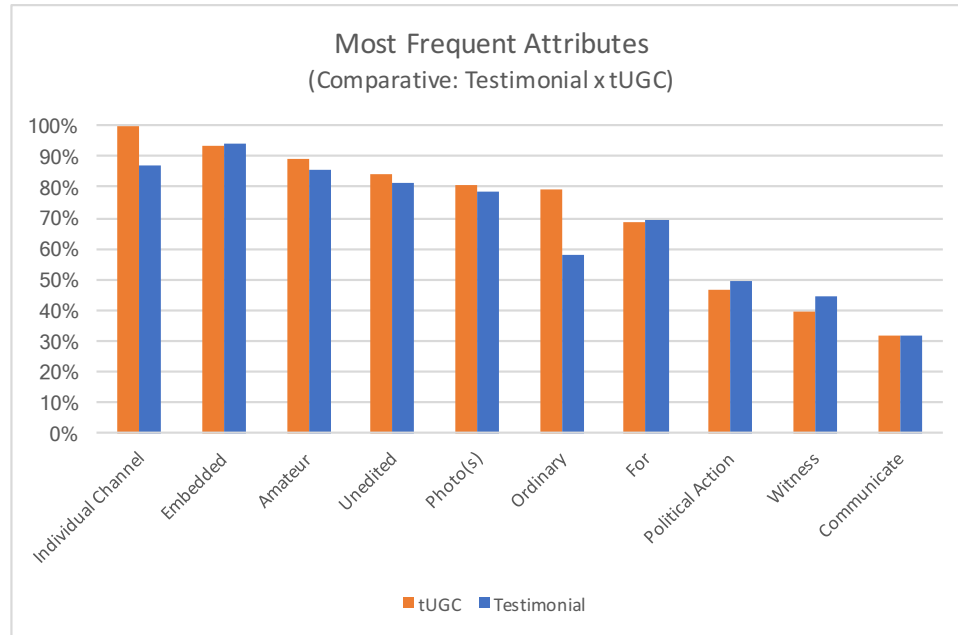
18% of the original media content, around 4% of the total original content. They generated an average of 2.8 retweets/tweet, which is very low when compared to total retweeting rate for testimonial tweets. This will be analysed in depth with statistical analysis in section 3.2 *Retweets per Testimonial Attributes* further on within this section, where I will focus on *Twitter Users* and on *Discursive Function* to understand how well and how much they might predict retweeting, controlled by other variables that could interfere.

Regarding the frequencies of the individual attributes, separately, most of the tUGC was composed by *unedited* (84.2%) content, mainly *photos* (80.4%) created by *ordinary* (79.5%) *amateur* (89,3%) users that published *embedded* (93.6%) messages *in favour* of the protest (68.7%) in their *individual channels* (100%) with *politically active* content (46,7%). The attribute *Obtrusiveness* was distributed more evenly, mainly between *Witness* (39.5%) and *Personal Experience* (38.8%) perspectives, which suggests that many people adopted an attitude of a certain distance or reproduced the professional media framing practices when creating their testimonial content⁶⁶.

The most frequent attributes of *testimonial tweets* also present a high dominance of the exact same elements as tUGC⁶⁷. The comparison is visible through Graph 1. The only attributes that stand out are the *Ordinary User* and *Individual Channel*, something elementary, since both define tUGC, operating as filters.

⁶⁶ Refer to Table D1 on *Appendix D – Other Tables and Graphs* for the complete data.

⁶⁷ Refer to Tables D1 and D2 on *Appendix D – Other Tables and Graphs* for the complete data.



Graph 1: Most frequent attributes (individually) for tUGC versus testimonial content (Source: Author).

Some of these frequencies, though, are worth a deeper analysis. Linked content might have had an effect outside of Twitter, but within the platform it seems to have been ineffective in terms of diffusion, with a very low retweet rate (3.9 RT/Tweet in average). Location services –such as *Swarmapp*- though were rare (5 such tweets in the sample), don’t seem to have engaged the audience on Twitter at all (zero retweets).

The most frequently adopted Discursive Function, when disaggregated, was the *Communicative*. That was a surprise for I expected to find the predominance of more evident politicized speech in the forms of *mobilizing* or *accusatory* messages. Even as we exclude journalists and photographers, who could allegedly have a professional bias for the discursive style adopted, the proportion even increases a couple of points (up from 32.1% to 34.2%).

2. tUGC Attribute Patterns

Differently than previous section that explored isolated frequencies for each attribute independently, this section analyses the patterns that emerge from

simultaneously occurring attributes as per Tables D6 and D7 and Graphs D1 and D2 (See Appendix D – Other Tables and Graphs). The most frequent pattern (Pattern 1) which stood out the most, was *Amateur Unedited Photographic* content calling for *Political Action*, from a clearly favourable position related to the protest demands with a first-person perspective (*Personal Experience*) while the second most frequent pattern (Pattern 2) is the same but from the third-person perspective (*Witness*). Though the former pattern had more retweets overall (3.5 versus 2.7 RT/Tweet) it is the pattern that better matches initial expectations of attributes from a theoretical perspective. This could be a more “rigorous” description of tUGC, in which velocity and opportunity define or constrain the prevailing attributes: *amateur* Media Standards is justified by opportunity; *unedited* content with speed; *Photo* with access and velocity (it is faster to create and to upload and it demands less resources in all aspects); favourable standpoint (*For*) and political call for action both announce the significant (which in a sense means *intentional*) appropriation of ICT with a political goal. These patterns, altogether, are labelled as *Political tUGC*.

Another pattern (Pattern 3) that stands out is the *journalistic-like* content, that is, content that, though had an *amateur* media standard, emulated journalistic discourse (either by *journalists*, *photographers* or *ordinary* users) characterized by a *Neutral* Political Stand and a predominance of *Communicative* Discursive Function. The perspective (*Obtrusiveness*) was relatively distributed in both cases, though the *Personal Experience* prevailed over *Witness* in Patterns 1 and 2 above discussed (N=90 against N=80, respectively) while *Witness* prevailed in the *journalistic-like* pattern (N=68 for *Witness* against N=56 for *Personal Experience*), as it would be expected since third-person perspective is part of the journalistic form, related to objectivity. In both cases, such perspective was not only the most frequent as it was also the most retweeted (in absolute terms). Pattern 3 is thus labelled *Journalistic tUGC*.

The overall tUGC content was dominated by *Amateur-like* content (90% of the tweets), and there was an expressive amount of *Self-Expression* tweets (21.2%), leading to the third relevant pattern: *Expressive tUGC*. Also, though there were more *videos* that call for *Political Action* with the *Personal Experience* perspective, other *videos* that adopted the *Witness* perspective had almost twice as much retweets per tweet (8.1 against 4.0) suggesting the relevance of this criteria from the perspective of the audience. This is exactly the example used by Mídia NINJA's social media manager Dríade Aguiar (Personal communication, September 22, 2017) to explain how, during events such as protests, she coached her sporadic collaborators ("floaters") via chat (Facebook Messenger was her example), asking them, for instance, to change their perspective to a third person, frontal perspective (coded here as *witness*) rather than from the participant's perspective (coded here as *Personal Experience*) which, according to Dríade, does not "tell the story [...] you only see the back of the heads, turning it into a great big mass of bald-headed people" (Personal communication, September 22, 2017, my translation).

Comparing the tUGC patterns with another subset of data containing all testimonial content except tUGC (see Table D7 and Graph D2 in Appendix D), we can see the contrasts with *non-tUGC testimonial content*. First and foremost, there is a domination of the *witness* perspective in the graph, specially considering those that had more retweets. Such prominence probably means that other users, either alternative media or organisational users, had more embedded this kind of point of view to document the events and at the same time suggesting that audience favoured such perspective when choosing what to retweet. Also, *Mediated Protest* as the predominant perspective for Obtrusiveness almost does not occur (N=4 or 2.6% against N=192 or 21.7% on tUGC), indicating it is something much more related to individual, non-political, non-media actors –such as *ordinary* users. The difference in the characterisation of users also explains a much more salient role of *Professional* content, accounting for almost a third of the tweets and half the

retweets while for tUGC the same type of content and accounts for barely more than 10% of the tweets and 13.2% of the retweets.

Also, there is a higher proportion of content coded as *Edited* and *Quick Edit* regarding attribute Constructedness. As to the Discursive Function, *Communication*, paired both with *Amateur* and *Professional* Media Standards, is a very frequent pattern, indicating its higher frequency in many different variations (total of 38% of the tweets) and *Self-Expression* is reduced to a minimum incidence with N=10 tweets. In all cases, though, *Political Action* content seems to have had a better level of engagement of users through retweeting practices.

Table 18 below displays the three main patterns of attributes pointing out the differences between them. While *Political tUGC* and *Expressive tUGC* share most of the attributes and variations, differing only as per the main Discursive Function, *Journalistic tUGC* emulates journalistic discourse, characterized by a presumed political neutrality and an intent to document information in a more objective, plainly communicative way, reflected on both attributes Discursive Function and Political Stand.

Table 19: Main three attribute patterns for tUGC (Source: Author).

Pattern	Discursive Function	Media Standard	Obtrusiveness	Constructedness	Political Stand
Political tUGC	Political Action	Amateur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st person • 3rd person • Mediated Protest 	Unedited	For
Journalistic tUGC	Communication		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd person • 1st person 		Neutral
Expressive tUGC	Self-Expression		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st person • 3rd person • Mediated Protest 		For

3. tUGC Reach

Though this research was not designed to measure the impact of tUGC, there are some quantitative traces that indicate how it stands in relation to the whole dataset and how it stands when compared to other testimonial tweets pointing, in a quantitative manner, to its role within the *ad hoc publics* (Bruns & Burgess, 2011) created around aggregator #ForaTemer on Twitter during the two protests studied. Some of the metrics presented as follows serve as proxies for the measurement of people's engagement with such content from such quantitative perspective. In the first section (3.1 *The Long Tail of tUGC*), I will analyse metrics that point to the reach of the messages based on metadata related to retweets. In the second section (3.2 Retweets per Testimonial Attributes) I will explore statistically how the retweets may be predicted by the different attributes coded during Content Analysis. Those results will be situated within the context of a social movement in order to better address its potential to such field.

3.1 The Long Tail of tUGC

Analysing the *reach* of testimonial tweets per Twitter User (Column "Relative Efficacy" on Table 19), as measured by the proportion of retweets, important differences emerge: while ordinary users have an average of 2.5 retweets per tweet published, other users such as Alternative Media have 114, almost 50 times more. That is explained to some extent by the average amount of followers each author (in the first case, ordinary users) had on Twitter (more on this on next section) as ordinary users had, in average, 1,416 followers against almost 67,000 by Alternative Media and almost 75,000 by Fake/Characters. That means, in simple terms, that the amount of testimonial tweets that ought to be created and published by ordinary users should be much larger to be displayed to the same amount of people as other Twitter Users in their timelines. In order to populate the data with content generated by ordinary people –who in average have less followers than the other kinds of users, one of the main factors that predict retweets- there should

either: (i) have a multitude of ordinary users producing content and/or (ii) the content created must be picked up by users that have a more broadcaster profile, spreading it out to larger audiences.

Testimonial Tweets Performance by Twitter User										
	Activity	Users	User Activity	Popularity	Efficacy	Relative Efficacy	Efficiency	Reversed Efficiency	2-step Reach (Corrected)	2-step Reach Efficiency (Corrected)
Twitter User	Number of Testimonial Tweets	Number of unique users	Average # tweets per user	Average # Followers	Efficacy (Number of Retweets)	Average Retweets / Follower Rate	Retweets / Follower Rate	Efficiency (Followers / Retweet Rate)	N Followers of unique users who Retweeted	2-step Reach / Activity
Alternative Media	85	16	5.3	66,922	9,683	113.9	0.170%	587	1,723,241	20,273
Political Association	67	23	2.9	36,268	5,072	75.7	0.209%	479	1,365,532	20,381
Fake/Character	26	15	1.7	74,550	2,537	97.6	0.131%	764	1,365,520	52,520
Public Figure	27	15	1.8	47,701	1,777	65.8	0.138%	725	1,723,196	63,822
Ordinary	708	509	1.4	1,416	1,786	2.5	0.178%	561	837,351	1,183
Activist	127	77	1.6	2,390	1,051	8.3	0.346%	289	192,054	1,512
Journalist	145	46	3.2	3,618	844	5.8	0.161%	622	55,131	380
Photographer	38	21	1.8	1,040	75	2.0	0.190%	527	76,824	2,022
	1,223	722	1.7	29,238	2,853	46	0.190%	569	7,338,849	20,262

N
Mean

Table 20: Performance of testimonial tweets in terms of retweets and followers of “retweeters” per Twitter User. The highlighted line is that of users coded as *ordinary* (Source: Author).

There were more ordinary users than any other kind of user creating testimonial content in the datasets: 509 ordinary users, that account for approximately 70% of the total users. But if tweets as those do not spread, it ends up very difficult to effectively challenge dominant versions of the same events or even content created by broadcasters such as alternative media, public figures or political associations that participate on the same *ad hoc publics* around #ForaTemer on Twitter, and, of course, mainstream media. That problem adds up to the previously discussed limitations of Twitter population as a proxy for the population of a country such as Brazil (or any other country, for the time being). Furthermore, in the present data there is no content authored and/or distributed by mainstream media. In that sense, it becomes difficult to envision a real horizontal communication pattern where the role of individual users that do not have a greater impact individually might be more relevant than the broadcasters that have a lot of followers. In the case of the events depicted, specially within the realm of the testimonial tweets, the role of alternative media was undeniably

important, especially Mídia NINJA, the user with more testimonial tweets created considering both days (N=39). Its prominence will emerge on many aspects of the results as we will see through the remainder of this chapter.

It is important, then, to assess the relative salience of each type of user's tweets to the 'conversation', i.e., to what measure testimonial content created by different types of *Twitter Users* were disseminated on the network. It is not possible to, with the current data, assess precisely, but we can get some clarifying approximations by creating relationships between individual and aggregated metadata according to each type of user, as displayed in other columns of Table 19. From left to right, the metrics displayed refer to the following concepts:

- Activity: Number of testimonial tweets. This gives an idea of the contribution of the group of users to the whole of the testimonial tweets.
- Users: Number of unique users in the subset.
- User Activity: Total tweets per total unique users, meaning the average number of tweets per user for each *Twitter User*
- Popularity: Average number of followers within each group of users. This number gives a first sense of potential reach regarding only the users' followers.
- Efficacy: Total number of retweets. It is calculated counting the total incidence of a testimonial tweet minus the number of originals. It gives a first approximation of the repercussion the tweets have had.
- Relative Efficacy: Total number of tweets (*Efficacy*) divided by number of testimonial tweets (*Activity*). It gives a sense of the repercussion of the Twitter User's content, tampered by the initial signal (amount of tweets in first place).
- Efficiency: Retweets per follower. This is a 'cost-benefit' approximation to the diffusion of content, estimating the rate of followers that retweet the content.
- Reversed Efficiency: Followers per tweet. The result is the same as the prior indicator, but reversed, meaning for how many followers there is one retweet.

- 2-step Reach: The sum of followers of all those who tweeted or retweeted testimonial content, as per group of Twitter Users. In other words, the sum of followers of “retweeters”.
- 2-step Reach Efficiency: Calculated dividing the *2-step Reach* by the *Activity* (number of testimonial tweets as per group of *Twitter Users*)

Most of these metrics seem to align with the number of followers as the main indication of potential reach. But when we look at relative metrics such as *Efficiency*, for instance, other logics take place: *Activists*, followed by *Political Associations* are those with better “cost-benefit”, that is, more retweets per followers. The most important indicator for the present analysis, though, related directly with tUGC, is what I’ve called *2-step Reach*. It is an estimate of how many people *potentially* could have seen the testimonial content directly in their feeds – i.e., not considering the aggregation result of the hashtag adoption- created specifically by each type of user using two levels of followers measurement. In other words, it is operationalized as a sort of *two-step Reach*: the sum of all followers of the unique users that retweeted the tweets by a Type of User⁶⁸.

Applying it, we have 509 ordinary users who had a total of 1.786 retweets. These users behind such retweets had different number of followers each, that altogether sum up 837,351 potential viewers for the content being retweeted. So, though ordinary users are plenty (and are potentially more, since they can be mobilized) both the individual (*popularity, efficacy, efficiency*) and the aggregated metrics (*2-step Reach*) point to a low outcome. The result is a very high *Activity* -the sum of the whole testimonial content production of other types of users was 515, about a quarter less than the number of ordinary users’ tweets, 708- but with a *2-step Reach* that is still very low. The most efficient user type regarding this metric are the Public Figures that could potentially reach more than 60,000 users in their

⁶⁸ This metric was not designed to estimate real reach. Burgess, Bruns and Highfield, for instance (QUT, n.d.) use a 10% rate to calculate an estimated reach. In the present case, it is designed specifically to serve as a comparative indicator. Everything times 10% will have similar results in such perspective. Additionally, I am counting per tweet, so these numbers do not represent different users, for some of them tweeted more than once.

timelines from each tweet thanks to the retweets received – as a comparison ordinary users reach an average of 1,183 users within the same metric. From an activist or a media activist perspective, this could mean **the only possibility that ordinary users have a chance to have a relevant role on the network is if they are massively mobilized**. It is the Long Tail logics put to work: **plenty of ordinary users with very little power of diffusion may add up as a very visible mosaic of testimonial tweets**.

This approximation is a projection, with severe limitations as to a concrete conclusion, for it does not consider other factors such as user behaviour (are all the followers active? Do they retweet?), content properties of the tweets, tweet formal aspects (has image, video, mentions, other hashtags?), and other previously discussed limitations (such as the users that stumble upon the content by searching for #ForaTemer, therefore outside their original feed), but from a quantitative perspective the suggestions it makes are worthy of pursuing further on with more detail and in other cases and contexts. The current numbers, though, are not very promising from the combative perspective of citizens against media bias, as we will discuss further on.

3.2 Retweets per Testimonial Attributes

In last section I have discussed just one attribute of testimonial content in relation to retweeting: the differences regarding the Twitter User that tweeted it, due to the defining role that such criteria has in tUGC definition. To deepen such analysis, in what follows it will be presented a binomial and a multinomial logistic regression⁶⁹ regarding the other attributes coded for the testimonial tweets so to understand how each of them predicts higher or lower amounts of retweets in the dataset analysed. To do so, the total number of retweets (N=1 to N=927) was considered as the dependent variable for most of the models. Since literature points to a positive

⁶⁹ The choice of using binomial and multinomial logistic regressions is due to the nature of the data. Since the number of retweets is a skewed power law, instead of a normal curve, it is a more appropriated statistical paradigm.

linear variation of retweets related to the number of followers and unconclusive variation according to the number of status updates (Suh, Hong, Pirolli & Chi, 2010), both variables were controlled for their effects.

In a first global look on all the attributes, *Twitter User* was the variable with more influence on the retweeting patterns. Looking closer to this variable, *Journalists* and *Photographers* had a statistical pattern whose differences in relation to Ordinary users were *not significant*, reinforcing tUGC definition and the operationalisation that considers them both as acting in their role of citizens rather than as media professionals in the context of a social protest as the present case. But others such as *Alternative Media* and *Political Association* had a very high impact on the retweets with marginal effects in the order of 25 more retweets than *Ordinary* users (Model 3, Table 22⁷⁰). Nevertheless, in the analysed context, it is not expected that people retweet based on users, except, perhaps, for public figures, such as politicians. On the other hand, it was expected that the *Discursive Function* of the tweets, an important variable of content, would have had a greater effect. On the first model, above mentioned, with all variables on a binomial regression, only the functions related to *Self-Expression* were significative, with positive values in relation to *Communicative* tweets; that is, *Self-Expression* tweets would better predict retweets than *Communicative* tweets, which at first glance does not make much sense in a database that revolves around a political protest⁷¹. But both variables could be very closely related in some cases, such as *journalists* who more often than not published *Communicative* tweets (almost half of their tweets); or *Activists*, who published *Political Action* content (near 60%); and so on (see table below).

⁷⁰ The complete table with all three models is a few pages ahead.

⁷¹ Indeed, further exploring this phenomenon indicates a few public figures that publish pictures of themselves (such as Selfies or pictures of themselves marching or making speeches) are outliers that push the curve, inflating the statistical effect. This will be detailed further on.

Table 21: Distribution of Discursive Function of testimonial tweets per Twitter User (Source: Author).

Twitter User	Discursive Function				
	Accuse	Astonishment	Communicate	Identity/Selfie	Mobilize
Activist	30%	6%	28%	7%	29%
Alternative Media	16%	5%	51%		28%
Fake/Character	38%	4%	27%		31%
Journalist	23%	8%	48%	6%	17%
Ordinary	29%	11%	29%	12%	19%
Photographer	16%	8%	34%	11%	32%
Political Association	34%	7%	22%		36%
Public Figure	22%	4%	15%	30%	30%

To get a clearer perspective of the effects of the variables, then, the statistical analysis was divided into 4 steps:

1. *Twitter User* (Independent Variable) on retweets (Dependent Variable) as a primary variable;
2. *Discursive Function* (IV) on retweets (DV) as secondary variable;
3. Both primary and secondary variables (IV) as to predict retweets (DV);
4. Primary variable (IV) as to predict secondary variable (DV).

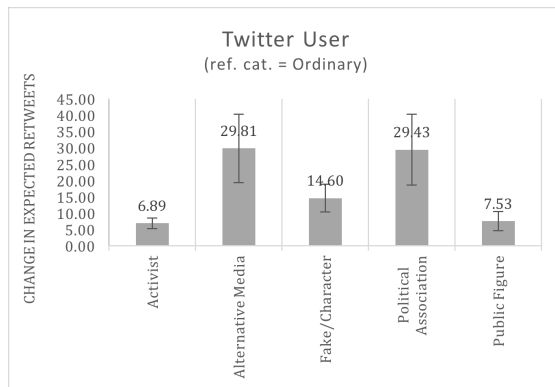
To operationalize the regressions, the most frequent attributes of tUGC were adopted so that results (positive or negative) are shown in reference to those standards:

- i. Twitter User: *Ordinary*
- ii. Attached Media: *Photo(s)*
- iii. Constructedness: *Unedited*
- iv. Media Standard: *Amateur*
- v. Obtrusiveness: *Witness*
- vi. Discursive Function: *Communication*⁷²
- vii. Political Stand: *For*
- viii. Channel: *Individual Channel*

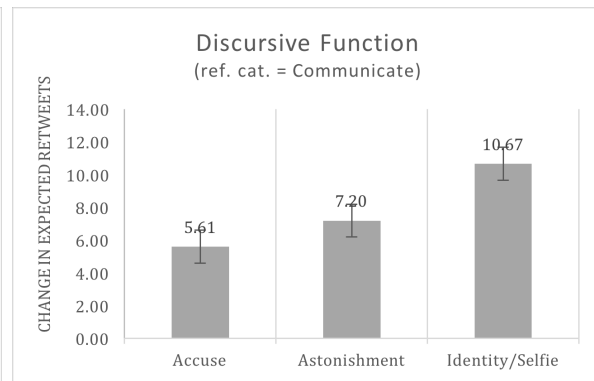
⁷² To allow a more detailed inquiry, the attribute was analysed in its disaggregated form, with the 5 variables: *Accuse*, *Astonishment*, *Communication*, *Identity-Selfie* and *Mobilize*.

ix. Exposure: Embedded

Initial results show an intense effect both from many of the Twitter Users (Graph 2, Step 1) and from all Discursive Functions but *Mobilize* (Graph 3, Step 2), as both sets of variables were analysed without the interference of the other in steps 1 (Model 1, Table 22) and 2 (Model 2, Table 22).



Graph 2: Predicted change in retweets as per Twitter User with respective Standard Errors (Ref. cat = Ordinary). Absent User types did not present significant variation respect to the reference category (Source: Author).



Graph 3: Predicted change in retweets as per Discursive Function with respective Standard Errors (Ref. cat = Communicate). Category *Mobilize* is absent because its change in reference to category *Communicate* was not significant (Source: Author).

When analysing all variables (Model 3, Table 22), the effect of *Accuse* on the retweets ceases to be significant. One possibility is that there is no predicted effect explained by solely assigning such *Discursive Function* to a tweet: it will only make a difference according to the user that publishes it. It has a similar distribution to the functions *Communicate* (reference category for the regressions) and *Mobilize* (that was not statistically significant as per the reference category as well).

As to the other attributes, *Constructedness* and *Channel* used for early diffusion had no significant impact in the expected amount of retweets. *Unclear* Political Standpoint, *Mediated Protest* Obtrusiveness and *Linked* media (as opposed to *Embedded*) had negative effects. While *Mediated Protest* is mainly composed by second screening (for example during Temer's speech on the 31st) and creative forms of indirect participation through selfies with political posters -both of which

seem to be forms of content that were less appealing to the audience that was formed around the hashtag #ForaTemer-, the lack of retweets for linked media was probably due to the technical difficulty that represent a content that redirects the user to another software, especially considering that Twitter is mostly a mobile application and launching a second application to consult the content could be highly disencouraging.

Table 22: Average marginal effects as per binomial regression with three models (Source: Author).

	Model 1: Primary		Model 2: Secondary		Model 3: All	
	dx/dy	P > z	dx/dy	P > z	dx/dy	P > z
Twitter User (ref. cat = Ordinary)						
Activist	6.89	0.000			6.43	0.000
Alternative Media	29.81	0.005			25.80	0.005
Fake/Character	14.60	0.001			14.52	0.001
Journalist	0.00	0.995			-0.28	0.704
Photographer	1.04	0.469			0.14	0.927
Political Association	29.43	0.007			26.40	0.007
Public Figure	7.53	0.010			5.80	0.032
Channel (ref. cat = Individual Channel)						
Network	-10.56	0.271			-9.01	0.318
Organizational Channel	-10.67	0.234			-8.89	0.288
Political Stand (ref. cat = For)						
Against			13.57	0.581	11.07	0.584
Neutral			-2.63	0.218	-2.51	0.214
Unclear			-8.85	0.007	-7.34	0.024
Obtrusiveness (ref. cat = Witness)						
Mediated Protest			-12.87	0.000	-11.36	0.000
Personal Experience			-1.17	0.445	-1.28	0.362
Constructedness (ref. cat = Unedited)						
Edited			-0.56	0.877	0.47	0.897
Quick Edit			-1.38	0.487	-2.41	0.167
Media Standards (ref. cat = Amateur)						
Professional			9.52	0.000	7.04	0.002
Discursive Function (ref. cat = Communicate)						
Accuse			5.61	0.014	3.82	0.074
Astonishment			7.20	0.030	8.29	0.011
Identity/Selfie			10.67	0.005	9.20	0.009
Mobilize			0.70	0.757	0.35	0.872
Attached Media (ref. cat = Photo)						
Animated GIF					-5.60	0.500
Live Stream					7.80	0.375
Location					2.97	0.823
Video					6.85	0.000
Exposure (ref. cat = Embedded)						
Linked					-13.26	0.000

Professional Media Standard, *Videos* and, as previously discussed, all Twitter Users but *Journalists* and *Photographers* are positive predictors of retweets, when compared to the tUGC standard used as the category of reference. *Identity/Selfie* appeared as a discursive function that led to more tweets when compared to reference category (*Communication*), but the data was biased by a few *Public Figures* that work as outliers. They count for 7% of the tweets, but 63% of the retweets, as per Table 23 below:

Table 23: Public Figures versus other users as creators of testimonial tweets with main Discursive Function *Identity/Selfie* (Source: Author).

Identity/Selfie	Original Testimonial Tweets	Total Testimonial Tweets	Average # of Retweets per Tweet
Public Figures (only)	8 (7%)	689 (63%)	85.1
Other Users	107 (93%)	400 (37%)	2.7
All Users	115	1,089	8.5

The global average for the 115 tweets coded with *Identity/Selfie* as Discursive Function was ten times lower (8.5 in average) than the 8 tweets by such Twitter User (85.1 Retweets in average). If we exclude *Public Figures*, that average descends to 2.7. In other words: the significance of Discursive Function *Identity/Selfie* is explained by the tendency of political actors (senators, social movement leaders) to behave as celebrities rather than as political actors –or somewhere in between- having published mainly self-promoting pictures in which they are the protagonist. Though most of them might contain secondary political elements, such as accusations or calls for action, the main element coded for the Discursive Function of such messages was *Identity-Selfie* and most of the messages contained the public figure in one way or another (marching, chanting, talking to the camera, posing with a colleague and so on). This could be researched further, as the discursive strategies of public figures might be of interest for the field.

4. tUGC beyond Twitter

4.1 Interplay with mainstream media

Though this research does not cover the offline media system, the present data points clearly to how mainstream media acted as a conversation trigger on Twitter, or in more technical terms, a *primer*. For each day, there was at least one key media event or issue that attracted users to engage in conversation around such issues through the creation and publication of his or her own content on Twitter.

On August 31, one event strikes out from the timeline as a very visible spike on general conversation around #ForaTemer, from 20:00 to 20:15 approximately: it was Michel Temer's first speech on the mainstream media system as president of the country. The spike made for about 1,700 more original tweets than the trend for that moment (see Graph 7).

On September 4, protesters responded to an interview that Michel Temer had given to Globo, major mainstream TV Channel in the country, where he stated that there were no more than 40, 50 or 100 protesters, as will be discussed in detail in next section on item 1.2 *Hashtags Analysis*. Looking further than in popular #protestode40pessoas (*#40peopleprotest*), from all the testimonial content produced during Day 2 in the coded dataset (N=780), about 7% (N=55) of the tweets had some mention to the unfortunate president's statement to mainstream media. I will analyse this issue with more detail on next sections, as we go through temporal data and hashtag analysis.

4.2 Political AND Aesthetical

Interviews reveal what could perhaps be an unexpected trace that accompanies the creation of testimonial content: there was a strong aesthetical preoccupation either with the creation of the media messages or the appreciation of aesthetical perceptions of the protest, in a mix of civic vigour and emotional engagement in times of crisis. Beatriz, for instance, revealed that she searched for "emotional moments", besides political content, in her efforts to create tUGC (Personal

Communication, November 13, 2017). The category *Astonishment* as the main Discursive Function many times reveals this trait either through text or imagery. Mídia NINJA's social media real-time political aesthetical didactics is another evidence of an explicit preoccupation with such image attributes.

Passei pela manifestação ❤️ COISA LINDA

#foratemer

🌐 Translate from Portuguese



7:30 PM - 4 Sep 2016

Figure 10: Emoticons, capital letters and other symbols indicate a strong emotional and aesthetic aspect of the protest: “I’ve been on the demonstration (heart) BEAUTIFUL THING” (Source: Twitter).

V.2 Descriptive Data Analysis

1. Aggregated Data

Next in analysing quantitatively the data is to explore its descriptive properties, to get a sense of its scale, its patterns (such as amount of tweets, followers or retweeting) as a series of photographs of the datasets. This strategy will help answer both RQ 2, that inquires on how tUGC patterns varied within different protest contexts, and RQ 3 that inquires on the overall role of tUGC within the whole dataset and, more broadly, to the events, by relating its creation and circulation to the general data, as follows.

1.1 tUGC Patterns per Event

In what follows I will go through variations in testimonial tweeting and tUGC creation patterns, linked to variations of the contexts of the two days studied on

this research, in a comparative perspective. As previously presented, Day 1 (August 31) refers to an unplanned protest, brought upon as a reaction to a political event that, though the result was perhaps to a certain degree predictable since voting projections indicated impeachment (only one Senator changed his vote⁷³), and took place a Wednesday, during working hours (original concentration was at 17:00). Day 2 (September 04), on the other hand, was a planned protest, during the day, on a Sunday, enhancing the possibility of participation of constituents and/or sympathizers through presence instead of mediated by Twitter or other media channels.

Table 24 below shows a few overall descriptive aspects of the datasets: number of tweets, original tweets and unique users within each dataset. It also displays some calculated average rates such as average number of retweets per original tweet, tweets per hour and average tweets per user.

Table 24: Overall data for the five datasets (Source: Author)

	DS 1	DS 2
	Day 1	Day 2
	(Aug/31/2016)	(Sep/04/2016)
	18:30:00-22:30:00	16:30:00-20:30:00
Total Tweets	63,147	29,089
Original Tweets	16,502	4,618
RT Original content	37,427	19,978
Average Retweets/Original Tweet	1.27	3.33
Unique Users	26,571	10,026
<i>Repeated Users</i>		
Average Tweets/Hour	15,787	7,272
Average Tweets/User	2.38	2.90

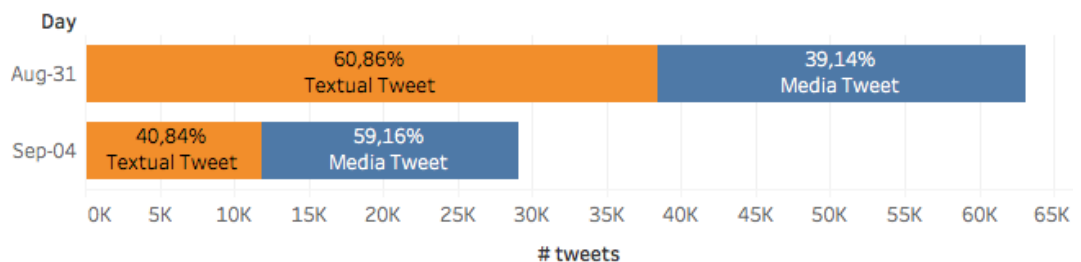
From a comparative perspective, the first thing that comes up is a big difference in the volume of tweets for the *improvised* protest (Day 1: 63,147 tweets) equivalent to more than twice the volume of tweets than the *planned* event

⁷³ <http://g1.globo.com/politica/processo-de-impeachment-de-dilma/noticia/2016/08/apos-defender-dilma-em-discurso-telmario-vota-favor-do-impeachment.html> retrieved June 2, 2018.

(Day 2: 29,089 tweets). On the other hand, there was also more than twice as much users, so the average number of tweets per user does not seem to explain the difference in the tweeting patterns during the period of the protest. Actually, there are less *average tweets per user* in Day 1 (2.38) than in Day 2 (2.90) and a lower diffusion rate on Day 1, when measured by the *average number of retweets per original tweet* (1.27 in Day 1 against 3.33 on Day 2). The number of tweets, then, seems to be explained by the much larger number of users engaging in the conversation around *ad hoc publics* (Bruns & Burgess, 2011) created through the adoption of #ForaTemer that day, more than by some special attribute or characteristic linked to the content itself or some very active group of users.

Looking further into the comparative data for both days, the proportion of media content relative to the total is considerably different⁷⁴ in both datasets: there was a much larger proportion of text-only tweets in the first day, with a 60/40 proportion against media tweets; while in the second day the very same proportion was reversed to 40/60 (see Graph 4). This means that, for Day 1, there was more commentary, more conversation; less evidence, less media posts.

Media Tweets x Textual Tweets



Graph 4: Media versus text-only tweets for Day 1 and Day 2 (Source: author).

Once we look closer at the data, disaggregated by testimonial tweets and users (Table 23), there was a much lower rate of testimonial tweets on Day 1 (0.7% of total tweets) than Day 2 (2.1%) in comparative datasets, as well as a higher rate of retweets of testimonial tweets on Day 1 (20.0 RT/Tweet in Average) than on Day

⁷⁴ Due to the large sample size, all differences were statistically significant.

2 (12.2 RT/Tweets in Average). These differences might be interpreted as if more people were participating through Twitter and contributing to the diffusion of testimonial content through retweeting on Day 1, such as those unable to engage through physical presence for various reasons. Looking into more detail, testimonial tweets coded as “mobilization” had much more retweeting than other *Discursive Functions*: while 25.5% of the created testimonial tweets were of this kind, they accounted for 43.3% of the retweets, pointing probably to the same difficulty of sympathizers to be present. Finally, though the proportion of *testimonial tweets* and *tUGC* are similar for Day 1 (*Total tUGC* account for 2.0% of the total tweets, including retweets, while *original tUGC* account for 1.9% of the total original tweets) they account for a much smaller proportion of tweets when compared to Day 2: 5.2% and 9.4%, respectively. In other words, not only a higher proportion of the total tweeting was in the form of tUGC on Day 2 (more than 2.5 times as much as on Day 1), but also the proportion of the original tweeting that was tUGC was almost 5 times higher than on Day 1, so much more tUGC was being produced, though proportionally less retweeted. **These evidences suggest that a planned event (Day 2) is more prone to being more thoroughly documented in the form of testimonial content by Twitter users.** On the other hand, a spontaneous event, on a weekday (Day 1), makes it more difficult for interested parties to attend (perhaps due to the higher participation costs such as displacement, working day, time of the demonstration and so on). That is a possible explanation to the higher rate of retweeting of testimonial content: it is the form that the absent find to engage with the protest. While these explanations should be more thoroughly scrutinized with further research, certainly there are differences on the patterns of creation and diffusion of tUGC seemingly as effect of the contextual differences between both events, partially addressing RQ2. Further on, I analyse such differences within one day (Day 2) across different stages of the protest.

Table 25: Overall data for the comparative datasets regarding testimonial tweets (Source: author).

		DS 1	DS 2
		Day 1	Day 2
		(Aug/31/2016)	(Sep/04/2016)
		18:30:00-22:30:00	30:00-20:30:00
Testimonial	Tweets (includes retweets)	9,532	8,151
	Original Testimonial Tweets	443	595
	% Testimonials (originals) in Dataset	0.70%	2.05%
	% of Testimonials in Original Content	2.68%	12.88%
	Average Retweets/Testimonial	19.95	12.23

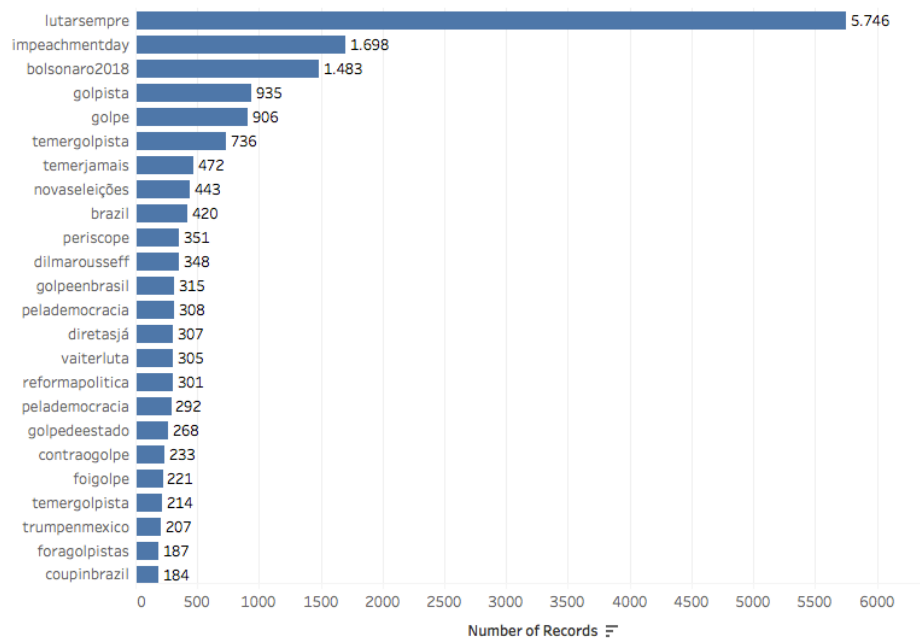
Another important aspect interpreted from the data is the recognition of the importance of testimonial content, expressed in the impressive average rate of retweeting: 15.3 (20.0 on Day 1 and 12.2 on Day 2, as displayed in Table 23). To provide a means of comparison, the overall retweet average for both days was 1.7 Retweets/Tweet within the datasets. It could reflect, though, more than plain interest on testimonial content, the well documented effectiveness of media content in terms of virality, being, in other words, more *sharable* (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013) or *shareworthy* (Trilling, Tolochko, Burscher, 2016). Isolating *non-testimonial media tweets* for the whole data (DS 5), to check that counter-hypothesis, cleared it out: though non-testimonial media tweets presented a high retweeting rate of 7.7 RT/tweet, much more than the overall retweeting average, *testimonial tweets* –which invariably contain media as explained previously– presented an average 16.1 RT/tweet (DS 5). This can be interpreted as that **testimonial tweets were perceived by a relevant part of the ad hoc community formed around #ForaTemer as a content worthy of being passed on through practices of sharing**, advancing on to answer RQ 3, that inquires on the overall role of testimonial tweets and tUGC within the whole datasets.

1.2 Hashtags Analysis

Hashtags are an interesting way to approach the general feeling of an event and to map issues being debated. While #ForaTemer was the common denominator to all of the tweets –and therefore is excluded from the analysis, for it adds no information- the combinations with other hashtags give a sense of the particular topics or issues that users felt they should emphasize, disseminate and so on.

By looking comparatively to the hashtags on both datasets, we can find and explore similitudes and differences and get a sense of some directions of the issues discussed within #ForaTemer on Twitter each day. Day 1 (Graph 5) was led by far by a mobilisational hashtag, a hashtag that held a *Rally* rethorical function (Daer, Hoffman & Goodman, 2014): *LutarSempre* (“fight always”, my translation). Following, second hashtag “impeachmentday” plays an indexical role, as to put a tag on the present, a reminder of what had just happened. Noticeably, the top ten hashtags are not propositional, they don’t mobilize for a specific purpose or issue. This result coincide with the literature that indicates the predominance of the *Ventilation* function of reactive street demonstrations (adapted from Casquete, 2006, by Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans and Van Dijk, 2009).

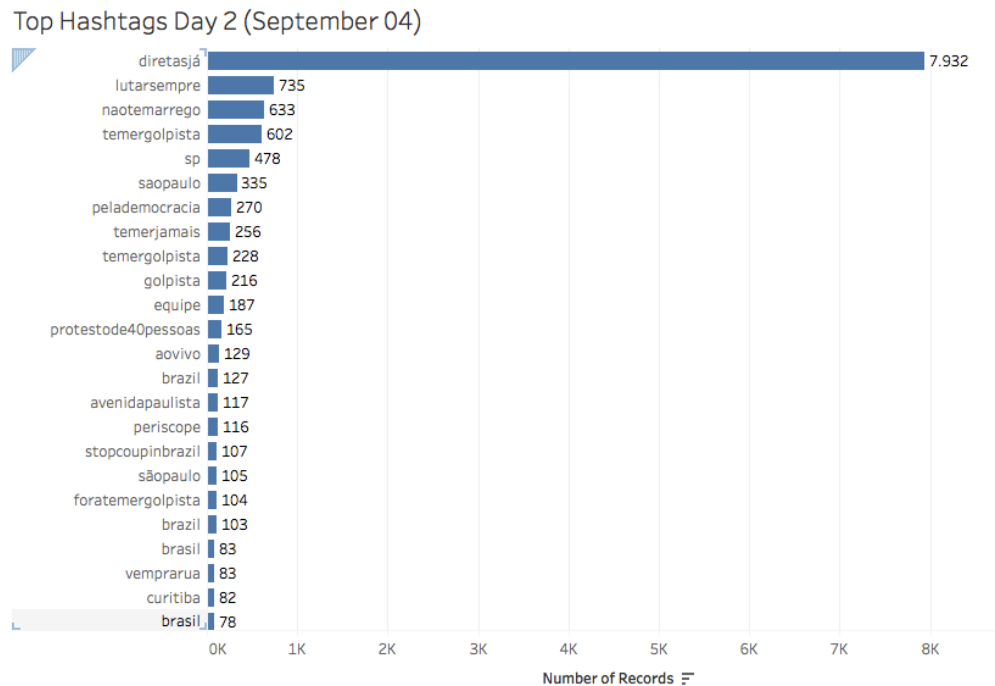
Top Hashtags Day 1 (August 31)



Graph 5: Most mentioned hashtags other than #ForaTemer in Day 1 (Source: Author).

An (important) exception was the 8th most used hashtag *novaseleicoes* (“new elections”, my translation) that calls for one of the discussed outcomes for the political crisis that seemed possible at the moment of the protests: new elections for president. The same idea is reinforced by 14th most used hashtag *diretasja* (“direct elections now”, my translation), a reference to the campaign for direct elections during the 1980’s, in the dusk of Brazil’s dictatorship (1964-1989). This idea would get momentum as days go by and is by far the most used hashtag during Day 2, nearly 10 times more than second most used hashtag (Graph 6), indicating that there was a relative consensus about the main agenda of the second protest analysed by this research. This resulted on a shift of the main function of the demonstration from *Ventilation* to *Persuasion*, following the categories proposed by Van Stekelenburg et al. (2009). This perception was reinforced by the interviews that pointed to the hope for the reversion of the impeachment and/or the occurrence of direct elections for a new president (Roberta, Personal

Communication, October 17, 2017; Hussein, Personal Communication, November 31, 2017).



Graph 6: Most mentioned hashtags other than #ForaTemer in Day 2 (Source: Author).

Furthermore in Day 2 (Graph 6), some of the same hashtags made the top ten again, such as “fight always” (*lutarsempre*), “coup-maker” (*golpista*), but one interesting new *ad-hoc publics* (Bruns & Burgess, 2011) was created as a reaction to Michel Temer’s interview the previous day, where he stated, in reference to the previous protests after his official nomination as president: “Those were small groups of predators, it was not a democratic manifestation (...) it’s about 40, 50, 100 people, no more than that” (Oswald, 2016). Judging by the data, the statement was felt like a defiance by his oppositors and generated plenty of messages around this specific issue. Many of the testimonial tweets referred to the supposedly 40 people, ironically, supported by a picture of thousands or tens of thousands of people. The relevance of this story is, as previously discussed, to point the interplay

between mainstream media -in this case O Globo and G1⁷⁵, both from the largest and most questioned media group in Brazil- and Twitter or, as previously noted, tUGC creation. It was like if the president, via media, provided guidelines for the creative processes of the ordinary users.

Another such example is that during Michel Temer's first speech as official president of the country, on Day 1. Temer stated that he would not admit being called a 'coup-maker' ("*golpista*"), hashtag that became extremely popular along with variations of it, such as 'Temer Coup-maker' ("*TemerGolpista*"), 'coup' ("*golpe*") and so on. Furthermore, tUGC is not immune to that event, as users created *mediated protest* tUGC dialoguing with the president's speech, such as taking pictures with gestures or intervening the pictures with texts, drawings, emoticons and so forth. In the next section we will explore some temporal issues, such as the pronounced peak in the tweets during that very speech, that happened during Day 1.

Additionally to the hashtag analysis, data on the Discursive Functions of both testimonial tweets and tUGC point to the same pattern: Day 2 presents a much higher creation rate of *Communicative* tweets, and less of the other categories, noticeably *Political Action* (see Table 24 and Table 25). It would seem that tweets that *accuse* and *mobilize* (which compose category of *Political Action*) gave way to the *communicative* messages referring, as *Ventilation* gives way to *Persuasion* in the form of, for example, the petitions for direct elections.

⁷⁵ Globo is the most important media conglomerate in Brazil and one of the most important in Latin America. G1 is its news portal, an exclusively Internet medium.

Table 26: Proportion of tUGC per discursive function per day

tUGC x Discursive Function per Day

Discursive Function..	Day	
	Aug-31	Sep-04
Communication	23.17%	41.01%
Political Action	53.65%	39.86%
Self-Expression	23.17%	19.12%

Table 27: Proportion of Testimonial Tweets per discursive function per day

Testimonial Tweets x
Discursive Function (Macro)
per Day

Discursive Function ..	Day	
	Aug-31	Sep-04
Communication	24.15%	39.63%
Political Action	57.11%	43.14%
Self-Expression	18.74%	17.22%

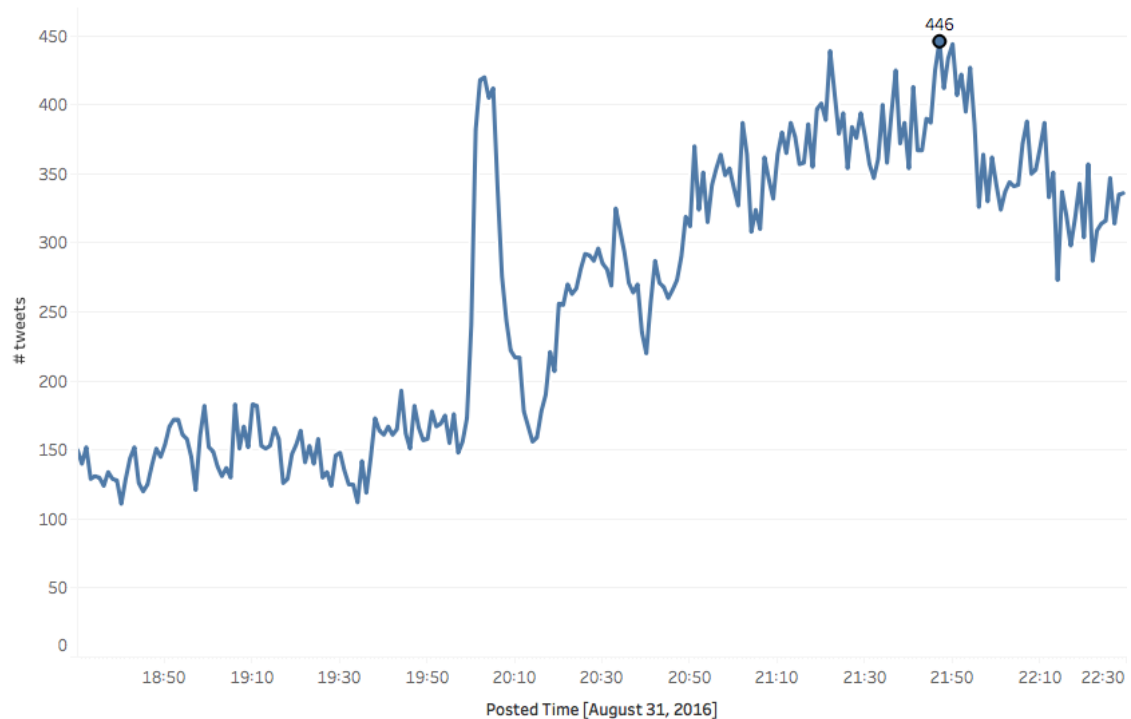
Again, data points to the difference between an improvised, immediate reaction to a political event (Day 1), which seems to have bared no concrete propositions, and a planned event (Day 2), that, after some public discussion, after absorbing the initial shock of the impeachment, held a clearer proposition visible as the most used hashtags, along with much less popular words of rally, accusations and others. Issues' saliency, in the form of the most popular hashtags, seem to relate to the discursive strategies adopted by ordinary and non-ordinary users when creating testimonial content.

2. Data Over Time

2.1 Total Tweets Over Time

Day 1: August 31 (18:30-22:30)

Timeline Day 1 (August 31)



Graph 7: Timeline of total tweets for Day 1 (Aug 31) (Source: Author)

The tweeting timeline for Day 1 has what would be a regular tendency to the growing discussion around the selected hashtag, if not by a very visible but short peak exactly at 20:00. This is due to Michel Temer's first speech as the official president of Brazil, a mainstream media event that triggered a whole new communicative sub-topic within the hashtag, especially for critics of the process. This phenomenon of *second-screening*⁷⁶ was also reflected on the tUGC creation in the form of *Mediated Protests*, in which people took pictures of the television and

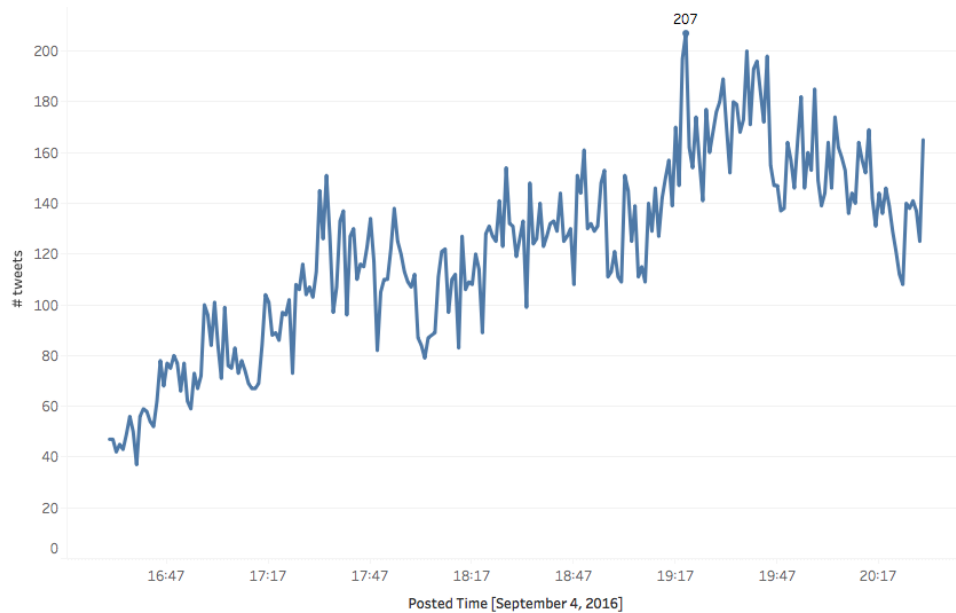
⁷⁶ Phenomenon of users interacting with two screens at a time, very common interplay between traditional one-way media and interactive digital channels: the former for top-bottom consumption and the latter for bottom-up content creation.

interacted with them, either by putting their own body (gestures, faces) or digitally editing captured images or videos. Figure 11 depicts a *Mediated Protest* interacting with #ForaTemer through a brief digital intervention of a picture of mediated reality (television) as a way of indirect participation on the protest. Text says (my translation): “Out you turd! O-U-T #coupmaker #Coup #foraTemer”.



Figure 11: Mediated Protest interacting with #ForaTemer through the digital intervention of a picture of Temer’s televised speech (Source: Twitter).

Day 2: September 04, 2016 (16:30-20:30)



Graph 8: Timeline of total tweets for Day 2 (Sep 04).

Day 2 had one clear peak of tweets at 19:20, related to a very emotional part of the march that is the crossing of a dark tunnel that connects one main avenue in São Paulo (Paulista Avenue) to another (Rebouças Avenue). The peak was very close to testimonial tweets peak, so it is an indication of a close correlation between both patterns (testimonial and total activity on Twitter) over time, as will be verified and discussed in depth in the following section *2.2 Normalized Analysis*. Besides, it is also explained by the sum of the organic growth in tweets as the demonstration grew, plus 34 retweets of a misleading testimonial report by a notorious Fake/Character user called “Dilma Bolada” (*Preoccupied Dilma* [Rousseff], in very colloquial terms, my translation), announcing that the governor of the state (Geraldo Alckmin) had cut off lights in the protest route to discourage demonstrators (Figure 12), a rumour that turned out to be false⁷⁷.

⁷⁷ There were several accounts that state the tunnel hadn’t had lights for a while before the protest, mainly replies to the tweets that made the accusation. Therefore, the fact must be unrelated to the protest itself.



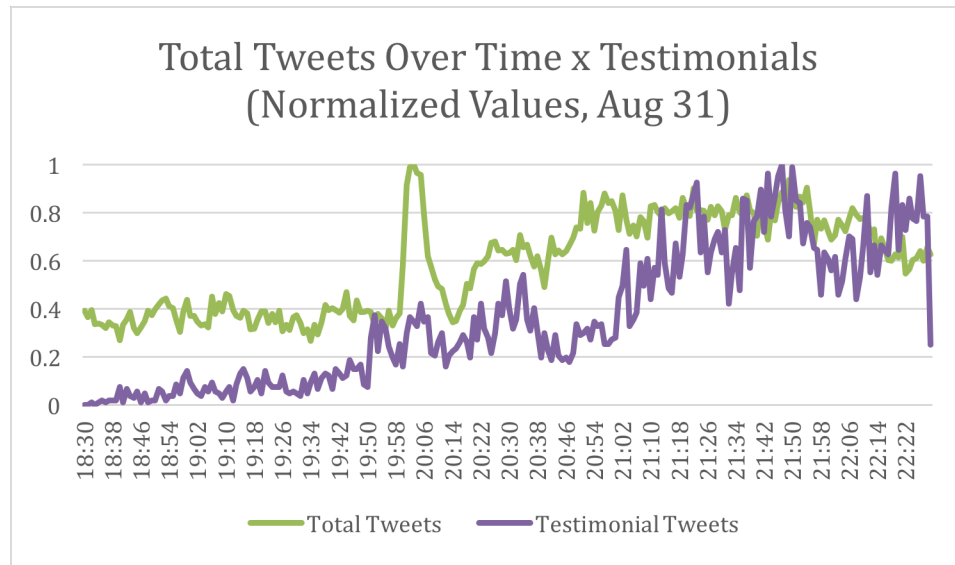
Figure 12: Tweet by popular “Fake” user *Dilma Bolada* that accuses state governor of sabotaging the demonstration by cutting off lights on the route. Text says “Alckmin sends order to turn off lights in the route of the protest #ForaTemer and folks turn their mobile phones on. #DirectEleccionsNow” (Source: Twitter, available at <https://twitter.com/dilmabr/statuses/772559736432685056> retrieved January 22, 2018).

Regarding the rest of the top tweets during peak minute for day 2, again alternative mediactivist group Mídia NINJA figures in 18% of the retweets (37), almost all of them retweets of their content, almost all of them with testimonial content, plus a few users that mention them to get their attention to something.

2.2 Normalized Analysis

One possible perspective over RQ3, regarding the role of testimonial tweets within the universe of data studied, is to understand if the creation of testimonial content followed the general trend of tweet creation. In order to assess that, the timelines

of tweet creation both testimonial (lower line) and total (upper line), were normalized.



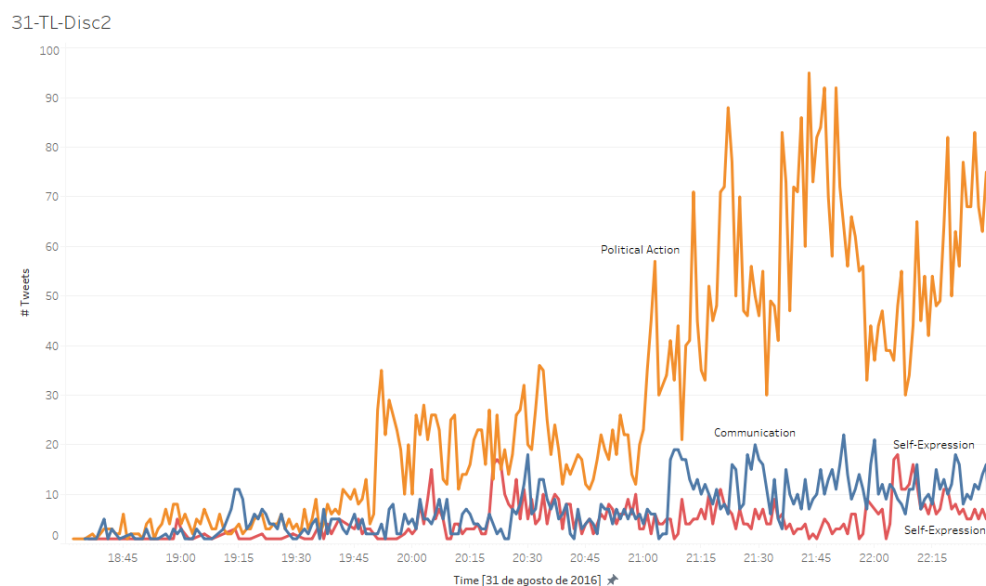
Graph 9: Normalized timeline for Day 1 (Source: Author)

The normalisation process allows a better observation of the correlation between both curves: *total tweets* versus *testimonials*. The total correlation in the first case was of 0.761, which may be considered relatively high⁷⁸. A closer look at Graph 9 leads to a noticeable difference around 20:40 and 21:00, where the correlation loses its strength. Looking at the facts around that time, it was exactly when the first reports of police repression in São Paulo appeared in the data. There were other accounts of repression in different moments (Florianópolis before, Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre afterwards) but, since São Paulo is the most populated city in the country and the financial heart of the country, any changes in its behaviour could have affected the general data.

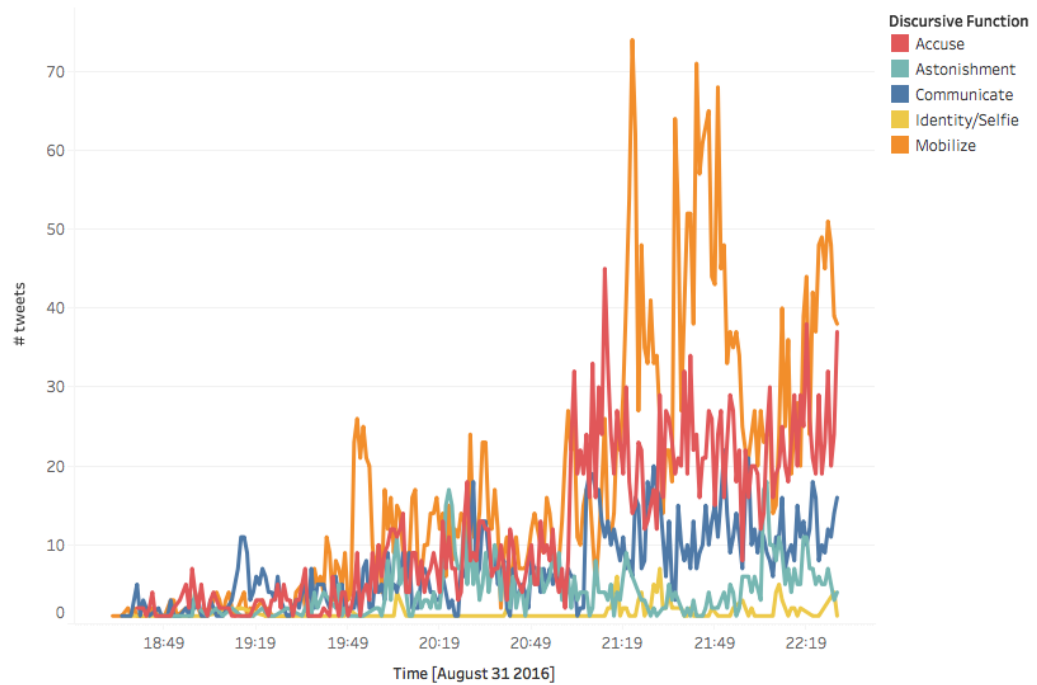
It seems to be after that lapse of time that most of the testimonial tweets started to populate the users' timelines. Graph 10 shows how the spike is related to

⁷⁸ Intensity of correlations follow Cohen's conventions to interpret effect size. Available at <http://www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical/bliwise/Tutorials/SCATTER/scatterplots/effect.htm>, retrieved January 18, 2018. Original source: Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

the creation of testimonial content whose main Discursive Function was coded as *Political Action*. This could indicate two things: either people had returned home and then were tweeting and/or the testimonial tweets were related to repressive action by the police. Looking in more detail within the Political Content (Graph 11), composed by either content related to *mobilization* or to *accusations*, we can see that the former prevailed, therefore pointing more to the spirit of preparation for the next act than actual accusations of repressive action or against public figures such as the president.

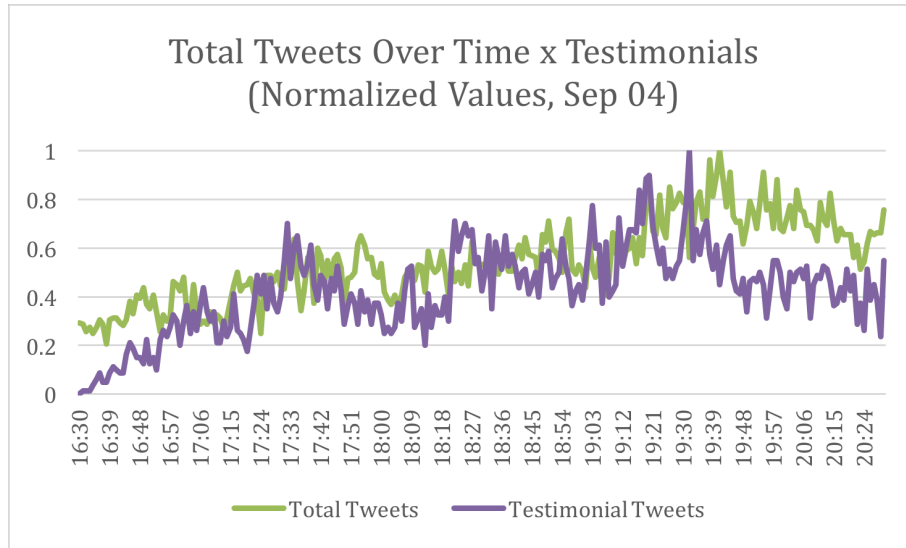


Graph 10: Timeline of the repercussion of the testimonial tweets for Day 1 (August 31) according to discursive function, grouped by three main categories: Political Action, Communication and Self-Expression (Source: Author).



Graph 11: Discursive Function (in greater detail) over time for Day 1 (August 31) (Source: Author).

For Day 2 (Graph 12), the correlation was less expressive (0,600) which can be considered between moderate and strong. If there was a moderate-to-strong correlation in both days, this could suggest that the creation of testimonial content and general tweeting patterns during the protests correlate relatively well: more tweets, more testimonials and vice-versa.



Graph 12: Normalized timeline for Day 2 (Source: Author).

The moderate-to-high correlation identified is explained not only by the sole influence of the testimonial content itself on the general conversation on the datasets, but it could indicate that what's happening on the streets mirrored in a way what was on Twitter –or vice-versa- within the pre-established conditions of the analysed datasets. Though this specific analysis should be explored further, it suggests that testimonial content could be good proxies to what's going on during a protest and the conversation that it generates. A more detailed overlook at Day 2 will be provided in next section *V.3 Longitudinal Analysis*.

V.3 Longitudinal Analysis⁷⁹

1. Overview

This is the analysis of the longer dataset from Day 2 (DS03), which covers from 16h30 to 23h30 of September 04, 2016, a total duration of 7 hours. The main goal here is to analyse the patterns and its variations within one protest. The variations of testimonial tweeting and tUGC patterns within the different stages of the present

⁷⁹ Usually longitudinal analysis is a term applied to panels and other methods that present series of data over longer periods of time: days, weeks, months, even years. I apply the term here in the understanding that in Twitter tempo, 7 hours of data be understood as longitudinal, considering they imply an universe of more than 50,000 units of analysis.

street demonstration, referring to RQ2, should become more observable with a longer dataset.

The illustrated timeline on Figure 13 tells the story of Day 2 through the lenses of testimonial content on Twitter and shows how stages of the protest were conformed during the period. The individual contents are explained as follows:

1. **16:30** – The first testimonial content of the dataset shows the gathering stage, when people get together prior to the march. The meeting point was MASP (São Paulo's Art Museum), iconic building and traditional social movement point of gathering and/or departure.
2. **18:03** - First accounts of marching, almost dark. People "walking", according to tweet's author. This was the first testimonial account, in the dataset, of people moving towards *Largo da Batata*, point of arrival where the final act would take place later.
3. **19:16** - Very popular tweet shows people with cellphones' lanterns on after blackout of tunnel's illumination. Students Union (UNE), amongst other users, (mis)accused the state's government of intentionally sabotaging the demonstration using that image.
4. **19:32** – Peak of testimonial tweets (80 total tweets). Major contributor MidiaNINJA, author of 42.5% of the testimonial content that was tweeted or retweeted at this minute. The depicted example was the most retweeted content at that precise minute (12 times).
5. **20:14** – Testimonial tweets account for at least half an hour (19:45-20:15) there were speeches on the final act. The original plan was to end the act at 20:30. This picture is focused on one of most important social movement leaders of the protest Guilherme Boulos, from MTST⁸⁰, now pre-candidate to the presidency of the country as of the time of the writing.

⁸⁰ MTST stands for *Movimento dos Trabalhadores sem Teto* (Roofless Workers Movement), important social organisation that fights for the habitational rights of roofless city workers, more or less the urban parallel with much more famous rural MST landless movement.

6. **21:09** – From 20:51 on, data displays various testimonial evidences of the use of tear gas on the subway (as depicted by the picture), on bars and other places where there was no violence or any other sign of riot going on.
7. **22:21-22:30** – Seven posts in nine minutes, with different lighting conditions, by the same user, are an example of a demonstrator having arrived home and then publishing her perspective of the protest engaging in conversation through #ForaTemer. That is what I have called *Mediated Protest*.

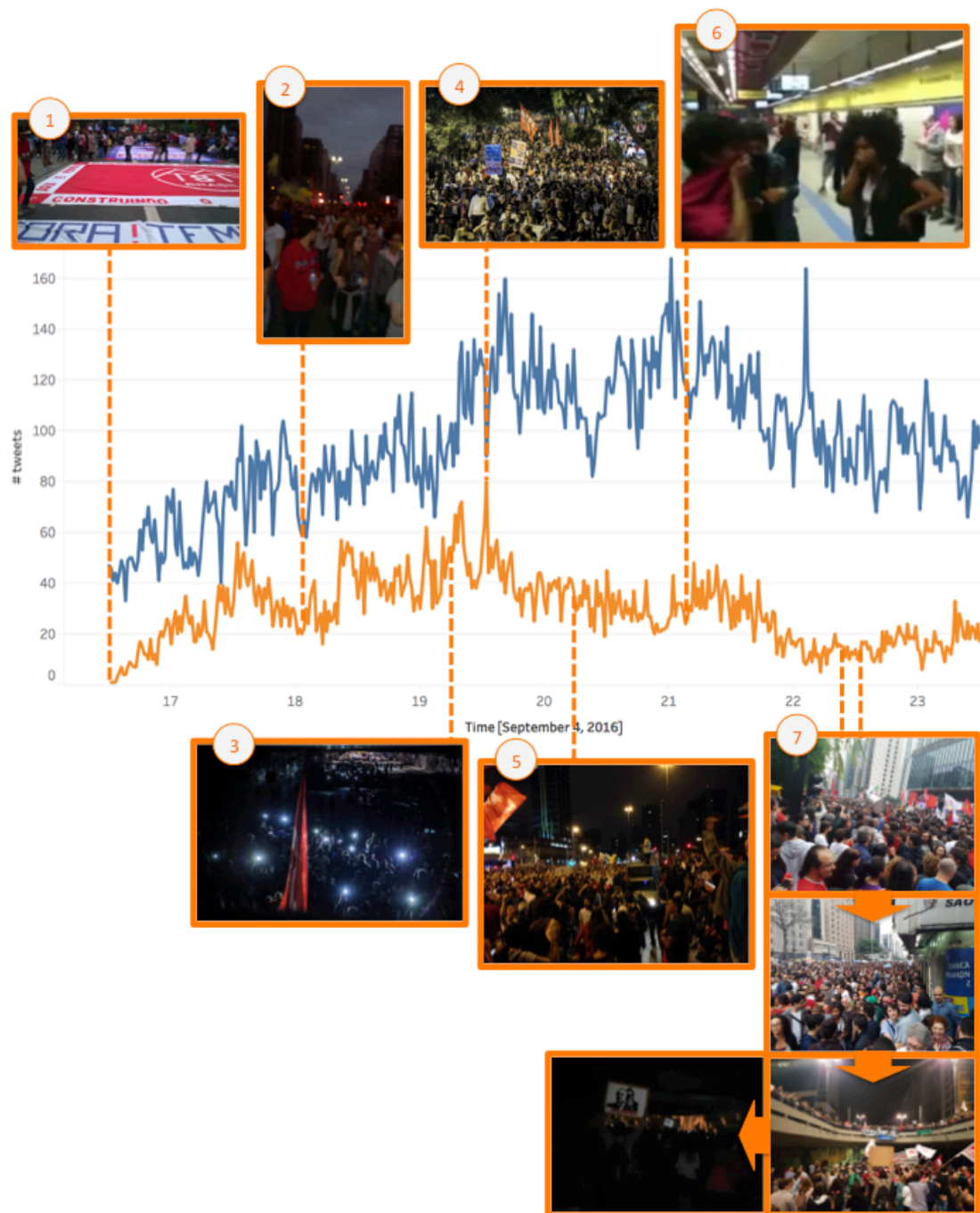


Figure 13: Illustrated Timeline for longitudinal analysis of Day 2. Pictures/screen captures inserted at the time of its publication on Twitter (Source: Author, images adapted from Twitter).

2. Stages

Tilly (1977) says that, though there are no “universal forms” for collective action, it “usually takes well-defined forms already familiar to the participants” (p. 5-1), referring to his famous concept of repertoire of collective action. At the same time, the forms street demonstrations take depend invariably on context (Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans and Van Dijk, 2009). Even for this study, there were differences in the stages of the demonstration across both events, since their context had variations as well. As stated previously, context implies such variations could result even in a different main function of a demonstration, as discussed on section 1.2 *Hashtags Analysis*: while Day 1 operated as *Ventilation*, Day 2 was focused on a specific demand, filled with hope for change, so the predominant function was to *Persuade*. This hope is evidenced in some of the expressions of aesthetical amazement on some texts that anchored audio-visual content of testimonial tweets during that protest: “*It was gorgeous!*”, “*I’m crying*”, or “*BEAUTIFUL THING*” are some examples, sometimes enriched with emoticons as hearts and flowers (see also Figure 14). The interviews also provided very emotional reports that pointed towards the general perception that the political coup was reversible at that moment.

🌸 ato #ForaTemer hoje em Copacabana
appreciation tweet 🌸

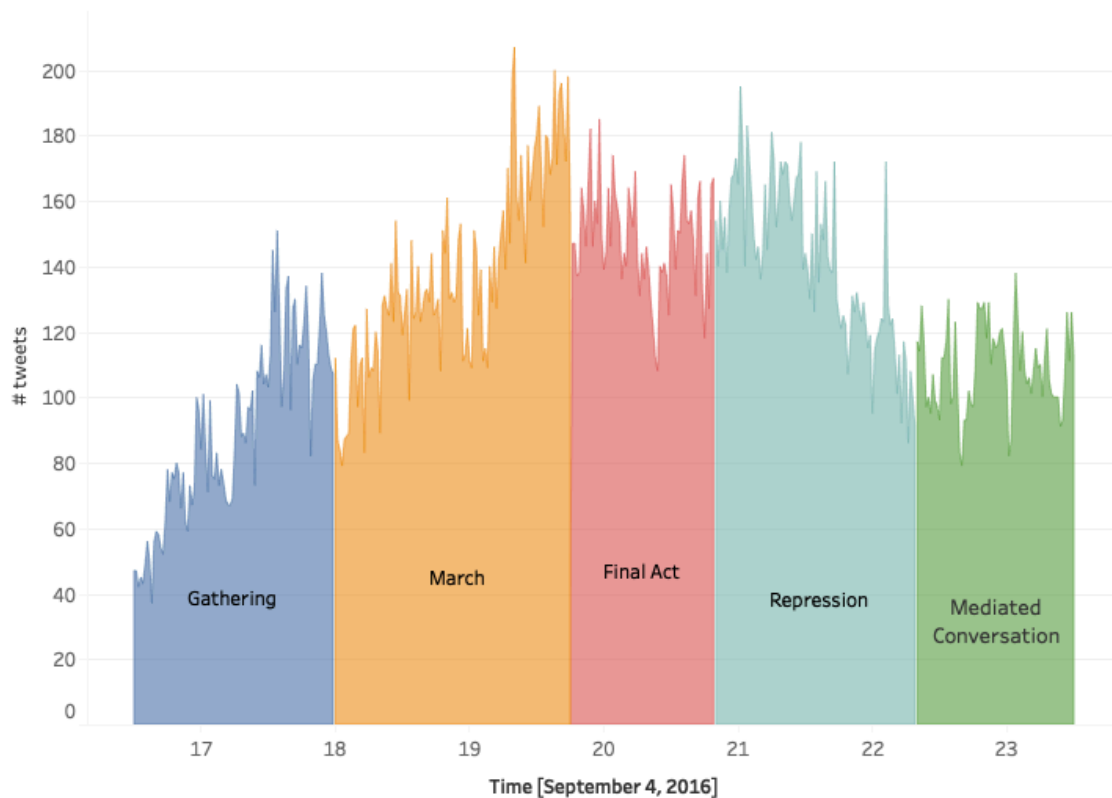


8:11 PM - 4 Sep 2016

Figure 14: "Appreciation Tweet" shows aesthetical astonishment with the protest in Rio (Source: Twitter, available at <https://twitter.com/broccandroll/status/772572842084954116/> retrieved in January 10, 2018).

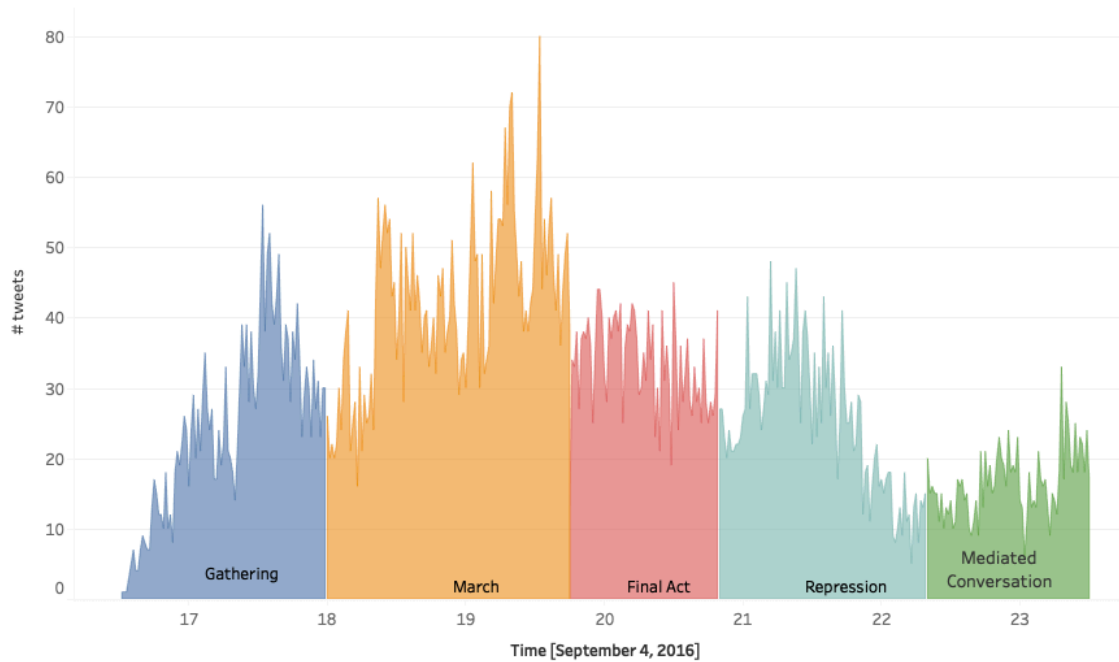
With no intention to generalize, I mapped the second protest in five stages that mirror solely the protest in the São Paulo, based on media reports, interviews and qualitative analysis of Twitter data, especially the testimonial tweets, with the objective to decipher how these different stages reflect different patterns of creation of testimonial content. They are: (i) *gathering*; (ii) *march*; (iii) *final act*; (iv) *repression*; and (v) *mediated conversation*⁸¹. Graph 13 shows the timeline for the total number of tweets published along the analysed period, as per the classification of stages proposed, while Graph 14 depicts the same for the testimonial tweets.

⁸¹ Dividing and classifying facilitates some analytical perspectives but it is important to consider the flaws. In this case, the last phase is distributed, since not everybody headed back home at the very end of the act, they dispersed in a continuum along the day. Of all our interviewees that took part on Day 2, for example, only David was present during the repression, after the act. So, *mediated conversation* is dispersed throughout the day. Nevertheless, each stage is characterized by the predominance of one activity, so it enlightens the present analysis.



Graph 13: Total tweets per stages of the protest over time for Day 2 extended (Source: Author).

One of the takeaways from a comparative look at Graph 13 and Graph 14 is that testimonial content is subject to situational stimuli such as a landscape, an event (within the event), an aesthetical climax, and so on. That was the case of the peak within the march and the high repercussion that it had from 19:15 to approximately 19:45, for was the period the group was passing through a tunnel that connects two very important avenues in São Paulo: *Avenida Rebouças* and *Avenida Paulista*. The echo of the chants inside the tunnel, the darkness versus the mobile phone lanterns illuminating the tunnel, the framing of the multitude from above, amid others are aesthetical and emotional elements at once that seem to have engaged both creators of content and audience. See picture 3 on Figure 13 for an example.

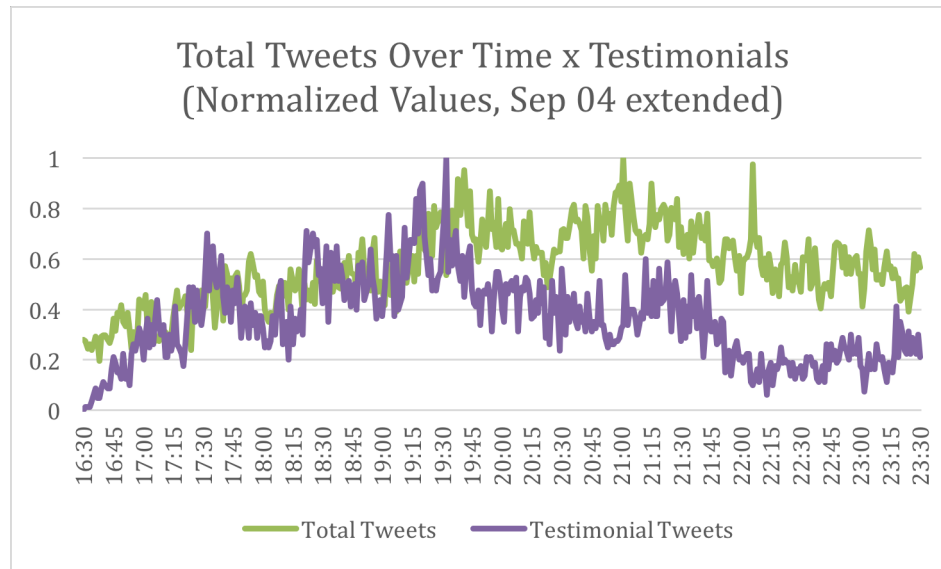


Graph 14: Testimonial tweets impact (i.e. including retweets) per stages of the protest over time for Day 2 extended (Source: Author).

Also evident on Graph 14 is the counter tendency provoked by the repression: the trend of creation of testimonial content seemed to have stably been going down when police brutality spiked it back for about half an hour –probably the time it took to disperse the demonstrators that were left. This period could overlap with people who got back home and published content in a delayed form, as described for the stage *Mediated Protest*. To sort out this kind of uncertainty, we will take a closer look to each stage in what follows.

Another form to approach the data are the normalized curves, as previously discussed. Looking at the extended timeline for the 7-hour period (Graph 15) it seems that, as time passes, the testimonial content produced *in situ* loses prominence and the correlation between the two curves is reduced, falling from 0.600 (four initial hours) to 0.316⁸² (extended period, 7 hours). Though we can still say there is a positive correlation, it is characterized as *weak* or *small* association.

⁸² See further explanation of this kind of analysis in section 2.2 *Normalized Analysis*.



Graph 15: Normalized timeline for Day 2 (extended) for the whole period (7 hours) (Source: Author)

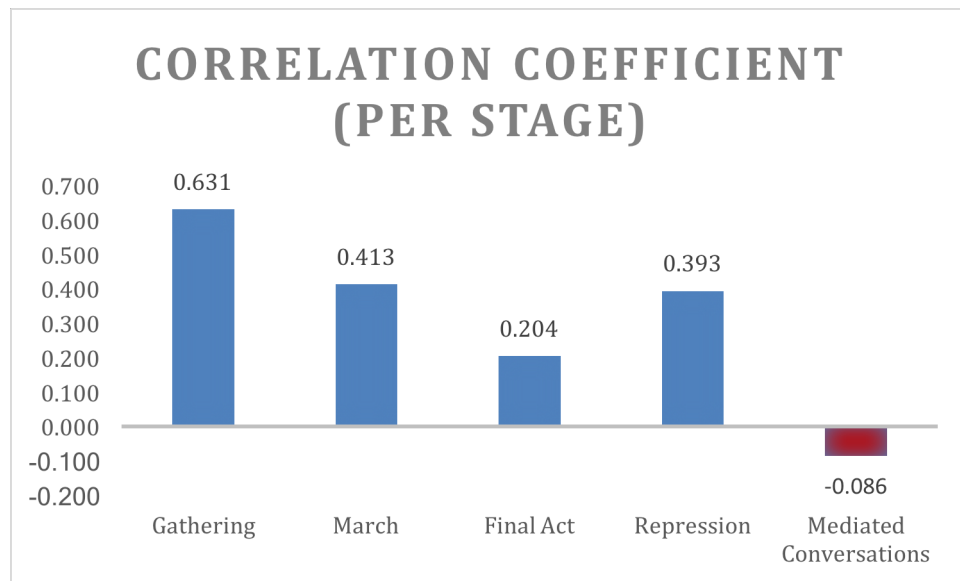
That could be explained by a variety of factors: (i) darkness, which happened around 18:00⁸³ approximately, reduces attendance; (ii) darkness also compromises the (successful) creation of tUGC since less light means more technical difficulty to document outdoors events such as a street protest; (iii) evening TV shows also capture the attention of the population, such as very popular TV Globo's "Fantástico" (from 21:00 on), one of the top ten broadcast open TV shows⁸⁴ in the country. This last factor seems to have been the main cause of a spike on Total Tweets at 22:06 (Graph 15), following Temer's appearance on the show responding to some sayings of the Pope regarding Brazil's current socio-political affairs of that moment. As the same graph displays, the soft drop on general conversation around #ForaTemer is not equivalent to the more visible drop of creation of testimonial content around the same topic via the same hashtag. But besides those external factors there is the fact that protest dynamics change with time and it would seem, judging by the above mentioned decrease in

⁸³ Estimated time according to live testimonial tweets and checked with *Time and Date* website, as retrieved on January 14, 2018.

⁸⁴ According to Kantar Ibope Media, as per ratings study in November 2016. Available at <https://www.kantaribopemedia.com/dados-de-audiencia-nas-15-pracas-regulares-com-base-no-ranking-consolidado-1710-a-2310/> retrieved at January 14, 2018.

correlation, that the late period would be the less correlated, bringing the average down (Graph 15).

Segmenting the correlation further by stage (Graph 16) there appear some important differences that help explain better the general curve variations in the creation of testimonial content.

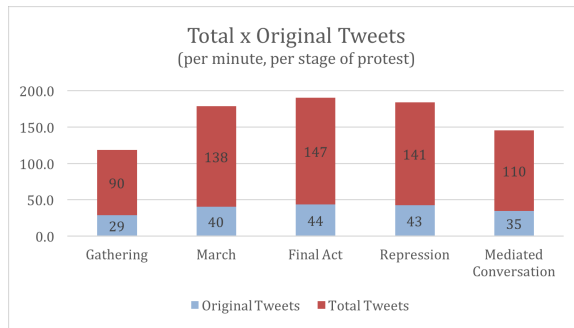


Graph 16: Correlation coefficient per stage of protest (Source: Author)

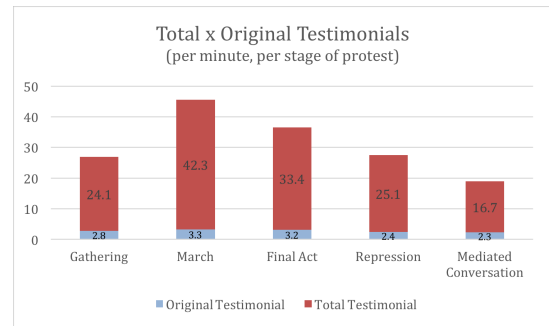
Curves correlation is higher in the beginning and it diminishes as time passes and stages of protest advance. This could be interpreted as if the agenda of the conversation was less related to the testimonial content being created the later the content was posted (below 0.3 means there is no linear relationship, as during stages *Final Act* and *Mediated Conversation*). That trend was broken, though, by the stage of *Repression*, where it seems that testimonial content of police brutality, as would be expected, attracted attention and its creation and publication correlates more closely with the trends in general conversation around #ForaTemer, generating a weak to moderate positive relationship (0.393). Then, at last stage, *Mediated Conversations* display a weakly negative indicator that translates into an absence of correlation between both curves during this last period. This could be interpreted as the importance, on Twitter, of the publication of live content instead

of afterwards, as will be corroborated in Graph 19, where the global impact (in terms of retweets) of testimonial content was measured and was much lower during *Mediated Conversation* than other stages, even though the creation of testimonial content was not expressively lower –it was even higher than previous stage.

Graph 17 shows the number of *original* and *total tweets* created per minute⁸⁵ for #ForaTemer along the analysed period, displayed by the stages identified previously. Activity grew through the *Final Act*, but there was a lot of activity also during the *Repression* period. There were external variables such as time of the day that might also have had an impact on the more general conversation.



Graph 17: Number of tweets (original x total) per minute per stage of protest (Source: Author).



Graph 18: Number of testimonial tweets (original x total) per minute per stage of protest (Source: Author).

Analysing only the testimonial tweets (Graph 18), it seems that the stage that had more acceptance of such kind of media was *March*, perhaps linked to the time of the day, to the aesthetic images of multitudes, or to the impulse to contradict biased information by media and the words of the president referring to the popularity of the protests (“40 people protests”). One way or another, the proportion of retweeting was much higher than the other stages (12.81 against second highest 10.45, during repression). This was unexpected since accounts of police brutality seemed, at first, more relevant, but perhaps it may have been an

⁸⁵ This was done to normalize activity over time since the duration of stages was not uniform.

effect of the different framing strategies during each stage: the march generated a much more positive, upbeat emotion while accounts of repression generated negative emotions, resembling more conflict frames, which, at least in the media news realm, are less shared not only on Twitter but also on Facebook (Valenzuela, Piña & Ramírez, 2017).

Next, I will present and analyse different patterns on tUGC creation for each of the stages identified for Day 2. All of the attributes were disaggregated by stage and analysed. The distinguishing features for each of such stage are presented as follows.

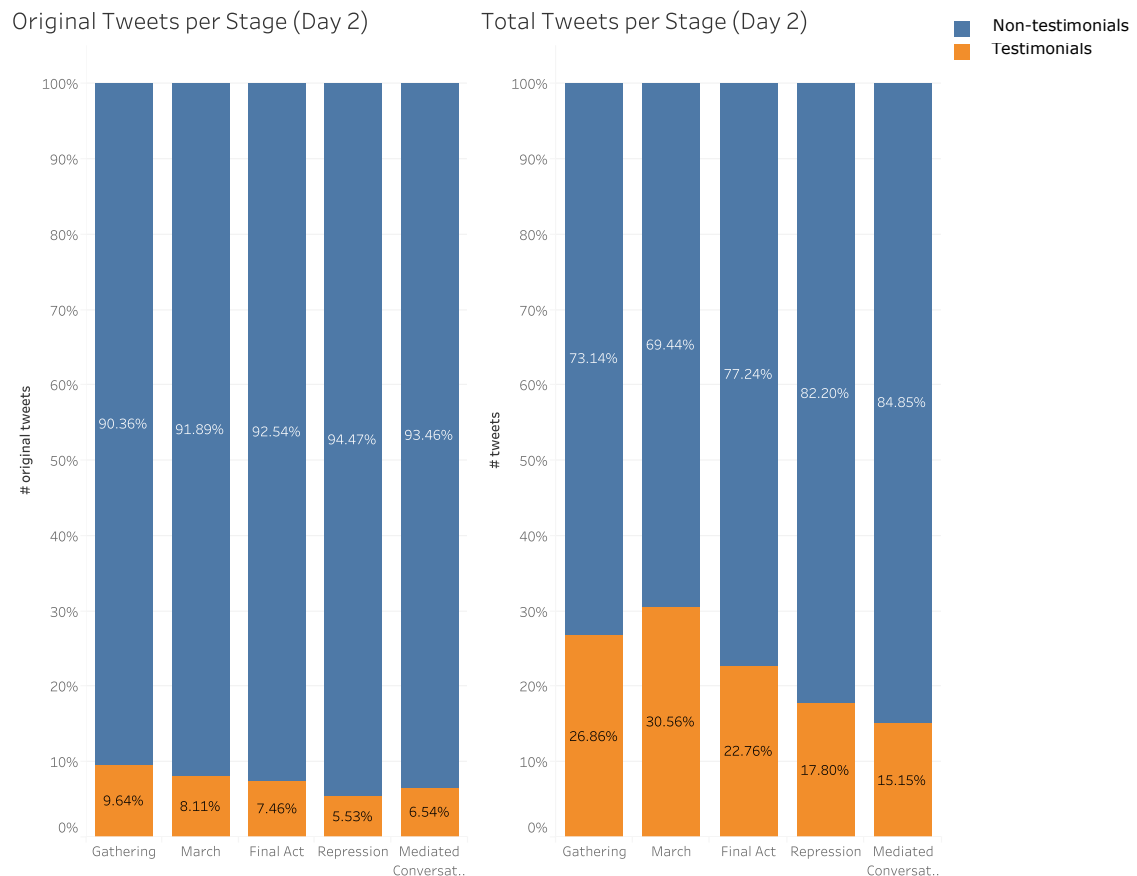
i. Gathering (16:30 – 18:00)

This period started at 16:30 and it lasted until the time when people started marching towards *Largo da Batata*. The first accounts that demonstrators started marching towards their destination appeared around 18:00 in the sources consulted.

One important difference in the patterns of creation of tUGC was the prominence of *Personal Experience* over *Witness* perspective: 57.3% of the tUGC were created with such perspective during this stage, contrasted with 42% of the general average and all the other stages that had a rate below 45% (during the *Final Act* the number goes as low as 34,8%).

ii. March (18:00 – 19:45)

This stage is characterized by the movement in its strict sense, as planned ahead: protesters walked approximately a 5 kilometres distance from *Avenida Paulista* to *Largo da Batata*. Though there are differences on time of arrival, due the massive character of the protest, the end of this period is associated with the first accounts of speeches that defined the beginning of the next stage, *Final Act*, around 19:45.



Graph 19: Originals (left) versus total (right) tweets, testimonials (lower stack) versus non-testimonials, per stage of protest (Source: Author).

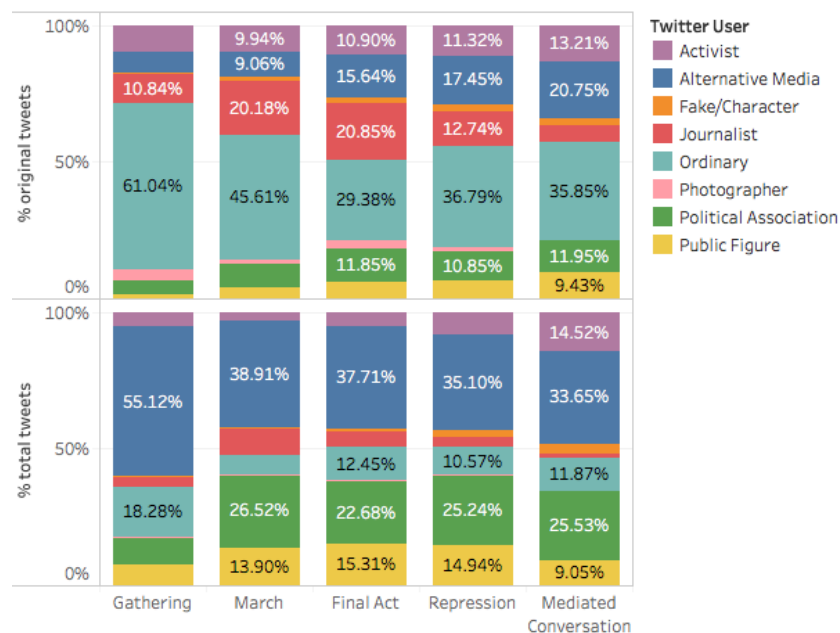
Graph 19 displays the differences in patterns of original creation of testimonial content versus other original contents (left side graphs) and the same difference in the participation of testimonial content in the whole of the data, which includes retweets (right side graph). Though all testimonial content had a good diffusion -the percentage of total circulation of tweets was more or less three times higher than non-testimonial content for all stages- second stage *March* had a notoriously higher participation in the total conversation around #ForaTemer during the period of time it embraces, jumping from 8.1% (originals) to 30.6% (total tweets), almost four times more percentage in the latter. Despite the higher absolute production of testimonials in first stage (*Gathering*), it seems that

audience engaged more with content that depicted the *March* than with other stages' content. I rely on the same explanation stated previously: contextual, aesthetical, emotional elements led to higher engagement with the testimonial content at this stage.

iii. Final Act (19:45 – 20:50)

The plan of the organizers was to have some speeches by public figures and to end the act by 20:30. As per the testimonial accounts on Twitter, it seems that the schedule worked more or less accurately but close to 21h there started the reports for police repression.

The *Final Act* was the stage where the participation of ordinary users in the creation of testimonial content seems to have been the least relevant in comparison with the other stages, accounting for less than 30% of the created testimonial content, while on the first stage (*Gathering*), for instance, it covered more than 60% (Graph 20). Not only there was less content being produced by this group of users (62 tweets against 156 in the stage of *March*), but also there seems to have been more interest in part of other Twitter Users. *Journalists*, *Alternative Media* and *Political Associations* summed, together, almost 50% of the created testimonial content and more than 70% of the total tweets circulated.



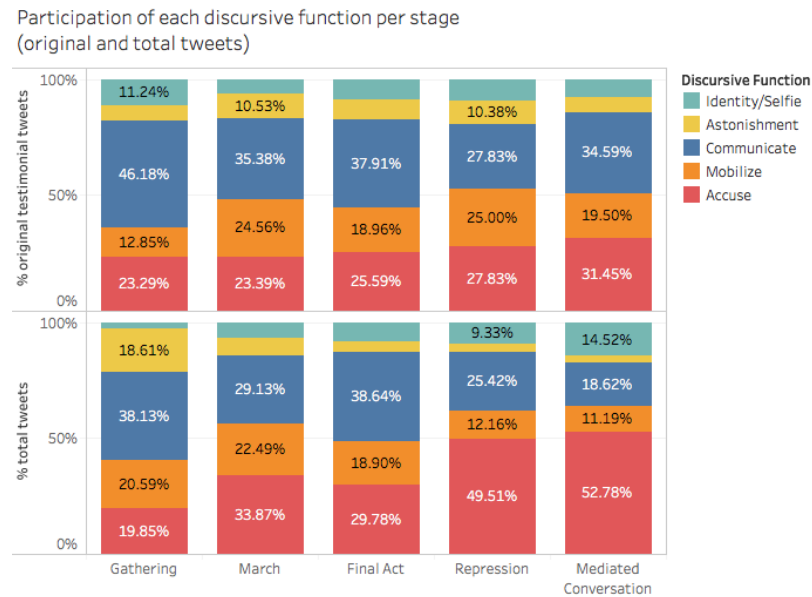
Graph 20: Distribution of original and total testimonial tweets per Twitter Users per stage (Source: Author)

iv. Repression (20:50 – 22:20)

Soon after the main act in Sao Paulo ended, there were accounts of police brutality on Twitter: tear gas inside the subway and on bars and restaurants, “moral effect”⁸⁶ sound bombs and others. The pattern of the discursive functions of testimonial tweets created under such circumstances followed such events since the amount of creation and especially of user engagement on *accusative* content arose during the repression stage (Graph 21). In other words, not only there was a subtle increase on the creation of testimonial tweets with a main discursive function *Accuse* (27.8% against an average of 26.3%), but, more noticeably, the audience responded more actively, retweeting in higher proportion (49.5%). Such tendency, though, is not mirrored in tUGC creation and circulation, for there is little variation on the creation and even a slight decrease on accusative tUGC (26.2% against an average of 28.0%) and not a significative increase of retweeting (29.5% of the retweets). It would seem that ordinary users have not been as capable of reacting to repression

⁸⁶ “Moral effect bombs” is the official euphemism used to describe such bombs in Brazil by authorities and media.

as to document and circulate it efficiently with testimonial content, as have other types of Twitter Users.



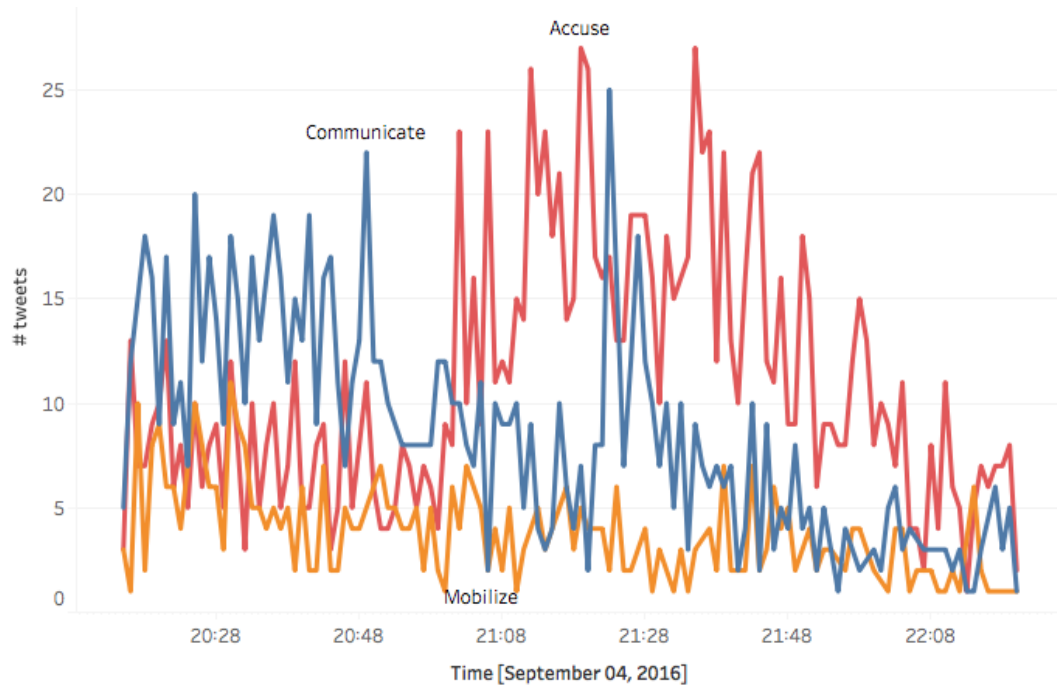
Graph 21: Distribution of original and total testimonial tweets per discursive function per stage of the protest. (Source: Author).

It is important to notice too that that there was a first peak of *accusative* testimonial tweets during the stage of the *March* (see Graph 21) that relates mainly to general defamatory statements regarding the political crisis, such as accusing the president or his associates or partisans of promoting a coup d'état, accusing politicians of corruption, accusing the president of being a liar and so on (see also discussions in sections *1.2 Hashtags Analysis* and *4.1 Interplay with mainstream media*).

Another effect on testimonial content creation was the rise of the proportion of videos circulating (35% against an overall average of 26% considering the whole day), possibly indicating such format was perceived as the best one to document this kind of event: videos capture movement, sound (screams, bombs), and get a better feeling of what was going on even from afar.

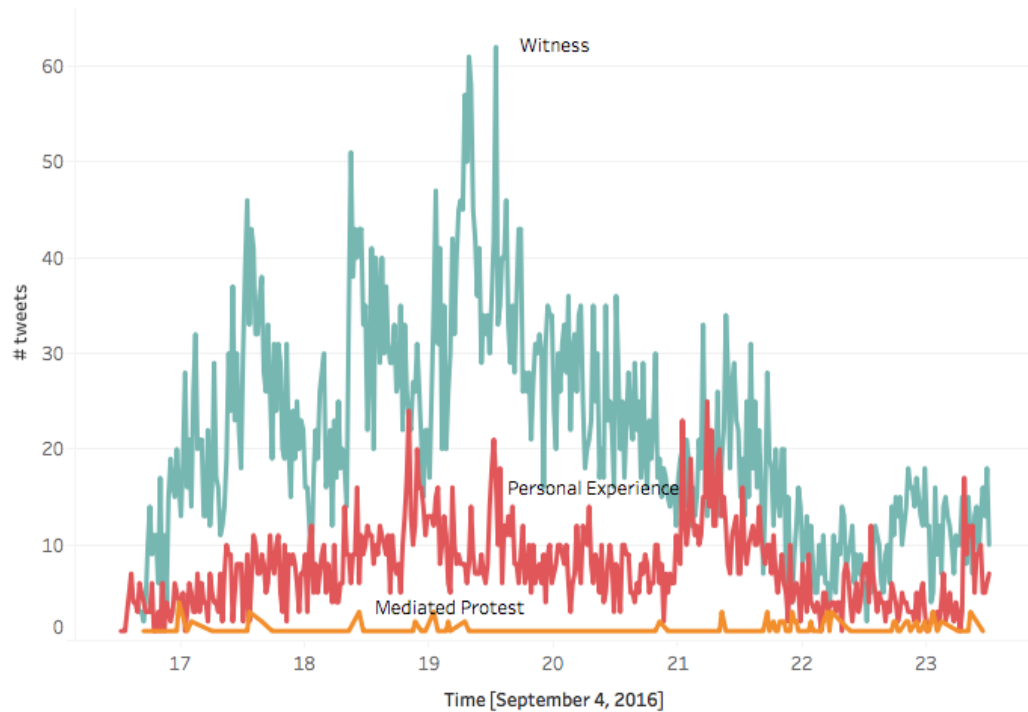
Graph 22 displays how testimonial tweets containing messages that *communicated* lost prominence to those that *accused*. That is probably because the

repression by the police triggered a more emotional response than the objective, distant, even cold report characterized by many broadcast media practices and emulated by various Twitter Users.



Graph 22: Zoom in the first part of the Repression stage per Discursive Function comparing only three functions: *Accuse*, *Communicate* and *Mobilize* (Source: Author).

Also, the stage of *Repression* was the only period during which the participation of tweets whose perspective was of *Personal Experience* in the whole data (including retweets) was (subtly) superior to the participation of the *Witness* perspective in the original tweets dataset (35.0% and 34.9% respectively). In other words, testimonial tweets with the *Personal Experience* framing perspective did not have a good general response by the audience in any stage, at least in terms of retweets, except during the period of *Repression*. This suggests that this kind of perspective possibly is most valued in situations of crisis, such as the police brutality in the case of the studied event. Graph 23 shows how the impact of such kind of content in the whole data was much enhanced between 21:00 and 22:00 approximately.



Graph 23: Timeline of total testimonial tweets per Obtrusiveness (Source: Author).

v. Mediated Conversation (22:20 – 23:30)

The previous analysis of the normalized curves suggests the importance of publishing quasi-live content in the context of a demonstration such as the present case study. As the protest lost salience on Twitter, the late publication of content created during the protest had less presence in the overall content published under hashtag #ForaTemer (see Graph 19 above). Still, though testimonial content was less present in the data and overall activity descended on this last stage (Graph 17 and Graph 18) the resonance of testimonial content was still relevant, as the retweeting rate for the testimonial content during this last stage was high (17.9, above the average of all tweets for the whole period, 14.6, and way above non-testimonial content at that same stage, of 2.9). That points to the fact that, though live publication seems to have reached more people and engaged more the users, the *mediated conversation* that is fed also by testimonial content was an important stage where delayed testimonial content was still welcome and generated reactions.

Finally, this is the only stage where *Unedited* testimonial content (78% of the original content) got a larger share of the retweeting (80% of all the retweets derived from testimonial content). Though it is a very subtle difference, it could be an indicator that such an attribute made this kind of content more attractive in the aftermath of the protest than during its course.

V.4 Social Appropriation Process

I understand the creation of testimonial content, as discussed previously, as a politically engaged form of social appropriation of technologies, therefore a mode of political participation. Though the quantitative analyses derived from Content and Metadata Analyses pointed out clues of user behaviour, the qualitative method was the main source of information for this section.

The in-depth interviews, as well as the structure of presentation of the following results, are in accordance with the social appropriation process framework (see *section 2.3 Interview Model* on the previous chapter), addressing Research Question #4:

RQ 4: How were the different processes that led to the creation and publication of testimonial tweets and tUGC in the context of Dilma Rousseff's impeachment protests? What are the users' motivations, modus operandi, fears and attitudes?

The levels are: (i) access; (ii) knowledge about and competences within; (iii) motivations and meaning behind it; (iv) creative uses and (v) collective adoption⁸⁷. There is a final section dedicated to the perceived personal impact and consequences of the creation of testimonial content and tUGC for the individuals, either in a professional or personal dimension, a section not contemplated by the

⁸⁷ As previously discussed, there is a sixth stage according to the model proposed by Proulx and colleagues (2007) but I do not see it fit to the current case, for it refers to public policies incidence, such as lobbying or consulting for public entities regarding ICT related policies or legislation.

Social Appropriation framework, but of interest to this research, contemplated in Research Question #5:

RQ 5: Have this communicative practice (testimonial tweets creation and publication during protest) had any tangible and/or perceived consequences in their lives?

1. Access

The interviews tend to confirm a general perception about Twitter use, at least in under-developed countries like Brazil: a communicational tool of the adult elites. Though we hardly can say that 10 people are representative of the Brazilian Twittersphere, all the interviewees have second degree or were in the process of getting it: advertising, sociology, law, literature, international relations and, of course, journalism, were the professions identified. Furthermore, all interviewees had access to mobile Internet connection, which in the case of Brazil, may be considered a socio-economic indicator⁸⁸. It is true that there were different levels of comfort, leading the youngest interviewee (literature student) to publish her material on Day 2 only when there was Wi-Fi available back home, since it was a video that would consume excessively her mobile Internet data plan (Luiza, Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017). Since most mobile Internet data plans are limited, it is important to point out that its constraints should regulate the intensity of activity of the user. Responding to such constraints, Marcelo, a *heavy-user* who published 6 videos and 5 photos on the same day (Day 2), mapped Wi-Fi hotspots *en route* (such as at MASP⁸⁹, the point of gathering).

Another possible source of difficulty of access in Brazil is the high levels of criminality, especially during massive gatherings of people. This reality led one

⁸⁸ According to research “TIC Domicílios” by Internet Management Committee in Brazil, (CETIC-NIC), 85% of Higher Class (Class “A”) population both computer and mobile Internet and only 11% just mobile, while 19% of lower classes (Classes “D/E”) have access to both devices and 76% have access to mobile-only.

⁸⁹ Traditional point of concentration for demonstrations, *Assis Chateaubriand Art Museum of São Paulo* (just MASP in its Portuguese acronym) is probably the most important state museum of the city and one of its postcards due to its placement and architecture by Lina Bo Bardi.

interviewee, for instance, to use an older phone to make photos and videos of Day 2 at a first moment –therefore with lower quality. Later, she decided it was not dangerous and started using her other phone, thus improving the quality of the content created (Roberta, Personal Communication, October 17, 2017). Another user who is very fond of photography, though participated in many of the protests and even maintains a whole Flickr album of pictures of the series of #ForaTemer protests, only took her good camera once to make pictures (Luiza, Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017).

A notable exception, to some extent unexpected due to its professional attribution, is Midia NINJA, alternative mediactivist channel sustained by a collective organisation called *Fora do Eixo* (“Out of the Axis”, my translation). The interviewee Dríade Aguiar, the organisation’s social media manager, had no formal education and perhaps even more important, opted out of the formal educational system: “We believe in open learning, in people with no technical background but opened to empirical training. In my case everything I know about politics and communication I’ve learned at Fora do Eixo” (Dríade, Personal Communication, September 22, 2017).

Twitter is seen by the interviewed users as a “real time” (Roberta, Personal Communication, October 17, 2017; Léo, Personal Communication, February 16, 2018) or “live” (David, Personal Communication, October 31, 2017) media, something that converts it into a live storytelling tool for this kind of event. The intense experience with the protests and with the political crisis in general, has had its impact on the interviewed users. Luiza (Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017) had a brief presence, motivated by the search for a more political environment –as opposed to Facebook. She perceived it as personal, less political- but had very little feedback and left about a week later. Beatriz (Personal Communication, November 13, 2017) felt she was “preaching for converts”, so she moved back to Facebook (she does not keep two social networks simultaneously). She was trying to reach more variety of opinions and enhance the dialogue, in an

attempt to “sensitize” people with her political views. Hussein (Personal Communication, November 31, 2017) did not even remember his Twitter handle, he used Facebook as a social network.

2. Cognitive and technical mastery

2.1 Level of Planning

The preparation of the equipment is a reflection of the level of spontaneity of the creation of testimonial content. Actually, *Level of Planning* it is the only tUGC attribute that was not possible to assess through quantitative methods, except for a few indirect cues: an amateur standard suggests immediacy, the timestamp can be checked with daylight or with other testimonial content within the same timeframe, and so on.

There were different levels of planning especially as a function of the Type of User (a journalist and a literature student are expected to be different in that sense), but with one lower common denominator: part of the ritual of attending to a protest was getting the mobile phone fully charged and usually also assuring there is enough disk space, regardless of to what measure the user anticipates any sort of documentation of the protest. From that point on, there were differences. Roberta, journalist, took two devices in order to preserve his personal device, while using an older one to document the event, due to fear of being robbed in the multitude. Marcelo, who works as a cultural journalist –though has no studies in journalism- included in his preparation a spare battery to charge the phone during the event, so that he could make more registries. Mídia NINJA used laptops on an adapted shopping cart to charge batteries and send content the their headquarters. Andrea, an ordinary user, though wasn’t planning to make images, said it is part of a digital culture and that it is “a thing of our time” (Andrea, Personal Communication, November 14, 2017).

2.2 Digital Skills

While all communication professionals had a clear understanding of social media and Twitter functionalities, ordinary users made a more layman use of the platform, exploiting its basic functionalities: tweeting, retweeting, following, liking. During the selection of users to be interviewed, there were two undeclared journalists (did not say so in their profile), which reinforces a perception of Twitter as a biased tool, that attracts niche users, such as journalists, politicians, opinion leaders and so on.

Though ordinary users had a perception that their content didn't reach much people because of their limited amount of followers, all interviewees, regardless of Twitter skills on the functionalities, made a conscious use of the hashtag as a strategy to join the larger conversation. The adoption of the hashtag was in no case a fortuity or a "sheep-shepherd" situation, all users wanted to "reach more people" (Claudia, Personal Communication, October 19, 2017) beyond their followee network and enhance the visibility of the hashtag. Many were familiar even with the *trending topics* dynamics on Twitter. Marcelo mentioned a sense of "community" formed around the hashtag and stated that #ForaTemer. To him, it was simultaneously a symbol of revolt with the political coup and an "aggregator" (Personal Communication, October 25, 2017), so the hashtag had at the same time a syntactic and a semantic function, respectively. David, who works as journalist for French media (off duty at the time of the protest, so in the role of ordinary citizen rather than a media professional), had a very clear picture of this multifunctionality of the hashtag enlisting three functions: (i) as a statement, (ii) as a visibility enhancer and (iii) as a bridge to the European audience (Personal Communication, October 31, 2017). Beatriz, sociologist, admitted having little digital skills, but the adoption of the hashtag was equally conscious: "to be found", she said (Personal Communication, November 13, 2017). The use of the hashtag as a source of information was the other face of the same phenomenon, since the interviewees admitted using it, for example, to follow other protests that they were not able to

participate: “It’s a research filter”, defined Andrea (Personal Communication, November 14, 2017). Léo followed the hashtag to “have access to views different than mine (...) I just go ahead and put #ForaTemer and I can see the many interpretations [of an issue] on this medium [Twitter]” (personal communication, February 16, 2018). Users played, therefore, a double role: as *informers* and as *informed*. All aided by #Foratemer.

In terms of audio-visual background, the levels varied a lot, so it does not seem that users deemed necessary such background to create their audio-visual content on a platform such as Twitter on an event such as a protest. As creators, they look for other values they perceive themselves when consuming the same kind of content such as proximity (friend, friend of friend as author), real time and lack of commercial interest or political bias.

3. Significant use of technology

3.1 Media Bias and Mediactivism

Luiza went to the Day 1 protest, and uploaded no pictures –her mother was the one with the camera. But what she lived left her enough scars to change that attitude: a few meters from her a sound bomb was launched and a piece of its metal residues left a 19 year-old girl blind of the left eye with the head covered in blood. Then, in the heat of the repression, Luiza got hurt trying to escape to safety. “I was really mad with all that had happened the 31st (...) I got hurt, they’ve hurt people close to me, then on the fourth [Day 2] I went thinking about it” (Luiza, Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017). Luiza is mentioning her tweet on September 4:



Figure 15: “I will shoot [a picture] and post any form of police repression on today’s protest”. Luiza is citing the military state police official Twitter handle (Source: Twitter, my translation).

Luiza's story may not be the general case, but is indeed a great motivational factor for people to be ready to document cases of police brutality during social protests in Brazil, changing what could be a spontaneous act of capturing the moment into a somewhat more planned approach to testimonial content, as stated by her tweet.

This personal/witnessing experience was, in this case, reinforced by the perception of a very biased media that tried to silence or criminalize the social movement and in particular the protests against Dilma. In Luiza's words, the "totally dishonest" traditional media "was part of the coup" and "without it, the coup might not had happened" (Luiza, Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017). She says that they clearly took sides and there they stood all along the process. This perception is shared by all the interviewees, no exceptions here. The difference lies in the way each one uses alternative sources and with what degree of confidence they treat it, such French journalist David's assessment of alternative media such as Mídia NINJA or Jornalistas Livres. He stated that this kind of independent content, as well as UGC in general, "should be consumed with extreme caution" (David, Personal Communication, October 31, 2017). He also said that Globo's coverage of the protests was "Unbelievable", as in a negative perception of an intentional 'invisibilisation' tactic by the largest media conglomerate in Brazil and in South America, as they were talking about "stuff like *Fashion Week*" instead of the massive protests he had attended to. Léo certainly agrees with him, for he said: "I don't give any credit to what TV says, especially Globo" (Personal Communication, February 16, 2018). We can observe how Hussein (Personal Communication, November 31, 2017) valued testimonial content precisely as a reaction to biased media and insisted that who had been on the protests "knew it was not what the media reported". He had also been testimony to police violence: "I knew that [tUGC] was true because I had lived it". "I don't trust media", he blatantly asserted. Additionally, Hussein told he had seen a radio newsperson exaggerating her report in many ways, as an example of biased coverage, when he, being present,

knew it was not the “chaotic situation” that she was describing on her coverage. In line with mainstream media distrust, then, emerge not only the visible face of “mediactivism” (Dríade, Personal Communication, September 22, 2017) that characterizes collective groups of alternative media such as Mídia NINJA and Jornalistas Livres, but also the “sort of activism [where] you are media yourself (...) helping connect people who are not there” (Andrea, Personal Communication, November 14, 2017). In a sense, personal and collective mediactivism may be understood as multifaceted reaction, having answered not only to media bias and police (perceived) unjustified brutality with demonstrators, but also functioning as a connective element, related to the idea of a networked ecosystem of friends and acquaintances, followers and followees on social media –which will be discussed in section 3.3 *Networks*.

3.2 Political Action

Hussein (Personal Communication, November 31, 2017) said he published images during the gathering stages on the Facebook pages that created the “event”, as a form of incentive for people that are sitting back home, expecting to encourage them to get up and join the protest. This very clear form of mobilisation was not a practice described by the others, but confronting the media was, as previously discussed, a generalized form of activism between the interviewees. Beatriz (Personal Communication, November 13, 2017) used social media (Twitter at the time, Facebook currently) to meticulously persuade acquaintances or even friends who had a different perception as hers, or at least, in her words, “sensitize”, as in raise their awareness.

On the other hand, though other forms of content are not as visibly politically motivated, the statements common to all interviews in relation to the behaviour of mainstream media and interviewees’ motivations behind the creation of testimonial content suggest that all Discursive Functions had a politically charged component:

- Astonishment: People amazed either with the beauty of the collective action or the cruelty of the antagonists –either repressive forces or symbolic violence, such as behaviours or statements by media or politics.
- Selfie-Identity: Following Polletta and Jasper (2001), though not all cultural materials express collective identities, collective identities are expressed in cultural materials (p. 285). One of such is the testimonial registry, be it in the form of a *selfie*, a swarmapp location post or a text indicating: “I was there”. All those forms of testimonial content linked to the author help construct a political *desirable self* (Polletta and Jasper, 2001), way beyond narcissistic interpretations of personal exhibitionism on social media.
- Communicate: This category includes tweets with a clear intent to disseminate information (diffusion), to document events or to narrate, usually emulating the journalistic discursive practices. Even when doing so, though, the interviews reveal that the objective-like, neutral-like content produced was considered a weapon against biased mainstream media, for the later either did not cover (invisibilizing the social movement) or framed inappropriately, for example emphasizing violence or downsizing the attendance.
- Accuse: The accusative testimonial content in general works as a response to the perceived antagonist (“villain”), such as the ‘liar president’, the ‘corrupt politicians’, the ‘repressive police force’, the ‘manipulative media’ and so forth. As per its very definition, this illocutionary act implies a moral judgement with a guilty party, so it is intrinsically political and highly polarized.
- Mobilize: This is more obviously associated with the social movement, since these are content that actually are inciting people to engage with the protest, such as Hussein’s posts on Facebook events page or Beatriz’s artisanal effort to engage in deep, high-quality political arguments via social media.

3.3 Networks

Networked logics seem to have worked in two ways for tUGC: it *connected the absent* and *built trust on the content*. The former means through tUGC users connected people that were unable to participate in the protest, as previously discussed. Marcelo, Andrea, David, Claudia and Beatriz gave similar accounts during the interviews that led to the idea of network, connecting those that are not in person, many times reciprocally as they themselves were connected through content produced by others. As Marcelo explained, he was out of the country for wave of protests in 2013 and he was very pleased to be able to follow closely thanks to tUGC, as if participating from distance. Due to that experience, he felt a sense of payback or, in his words, a “duty” to do the same for others (Personal Communication, October 25, 2017).

The second way networked logics worked was as a path to credibility: users trusted tUGC, not only due to aspects related to the amateur aesthetics, but also because of the direct connection with events, if not by personal experience, through the connection with the author of a tUGC, such as what happened with Claudia and Hussein. Léo formulated as follows: “if the person that took the picture and published on her own [social media] user, then I’m cool with it”, meaning the content under such procedure, is trustable, as opposed by TV content (personal conversation, February 16, 2018).

3.4 Political, not Partisan

Though all interviewees considered themselves to the left of the political spectrum, from centre-left (Léo, Marcelo) to a more radical left orientation (Luiza), the interviews corroborate data from previous studies of attendance to the demonstrations (Ortellado, Solano, Moretto, 2016) that pointed to a diversity of political orientations amid the demonstrators: “I’m not *petist*⁹⁰, more like PSOL⁹¹”

⁹⁰ Demonym for partisans of PT (someone from “pete” is a “petist”).

(Beatriz, Personal Communication, November 13, 2017); “I think both Lula⁹² and Aécio⁹³ should go to jail” (Marcelo, Personal Communication, October 25, 2017); Andrea voted for PT, would vote again, but clears out that she’s “not necessarily *petist* nor *anti-petist*” (Personal Communication, November 14, 2017). Claudia also stated that she became not only a *petist*, but a *dilmist*⁹⁴, as a result, of a political polarisation, in the context of the political crisis in Brazil for the last few years (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017). Mídia NINJA stands out again, for it seems to be more aligned with PT lately, as per media information and interview with David and Léo, but not necessarily at the time of the events here depicted.

4. Creative Use

Again, *Mídia NINJA* stood out for a very creative solution to a complicated problem: how to spread its wings all over the country to cover mainstream and marginal stories with citizen help and still maintain the aesthetic quality and the political commitment predicated by a mediactivist collective such as they are, and that defines and identifies them on social media? Dríade explained her “political-aesthetical didactics” which consists on a set of ad-hoc real-time orientations to eventual collaborators that send her content via social media, so that they are able to capture better content that follow Mídia NINJA’s aesthetical-political standards: “Don’t you have a frontal picture?” or instructions such as the inclusion of a monument that would serve as an index to identify the territory (city, square etc.); wider or narrower frame based on a previous picture sent thorough such channels;

⁹¹ “Partido Socialismo e Liberdade” (*Socialism and Freedom Party*) is a more radical leftist, socialist party in Brazil, emerged when, during Lula’s first mandate, in 2003, dissidents of PT voted against the orientation of the party and were expelled from it (For more information, refer to <http://www.psol50.org.br/>).

⁹² Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, former Brazilian president from Rousseff’s party PT for two consecutive terms, who now faces a plethora of legal accusations mainly of corruption.

⁹³ Reference to Rousseff’s opposite candidate who lost the election Aécio Neves, from PSDB, main opposition party to PT during its ruling period and for the past decades.

⁹⁴ In reference to Dilma Rousseff, using a made up demonym to do so.

holding up the cell phone horizontally instead of vertically and so on (Dríade, Personal Communication, September 22, 2017).

Circulation of content is also a part of the process where there are innovative uses of technology that deserve attention. Besides the two most obvious paths for a testimonial content considered relevant, that is to publish on individual/personal channels or share with media outlets for them to publish, there are nuances in between. Particularly in Brazil, WhatsApp plays a very important role in the personal communicative ecologies⁹⁵. Ordinary users –that have less audience on Twitter- shared their content and received content via WhatsApp, Facebook messenger or similar applications. The other path also works: Claudia encountered a worthy image authored by her friend Hussein on Facebook and as a Twitter user with a captive audience, she asked the author to publish the picture (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017). So even though she was not physically present and in the first protest, neither is she a news media outlet, she contributed to the dissemination of a tUGC by sharing publicly through a personal account the picture produced by her friend. These flows are difficult to map if not through interviews, for they happen in private messaging networks, but their existence is undeniable and it is very important to acknowledge it to understand the variability of the communicational chains that lead to the circulation of testimonial content.

5. Collective adoption

The whole group of ordinary users that created and published content documenting the protests studied for this research can be considered a loose, weak-tied *collective*, linked by a few factors: use of Twitter; adoption of

⁹⁵ Many countries in Latin America and other underdeveloped countries (like India) share the same phenomenon: since telecommunications maintained overpriced fares for SMS and calls for a longer period of time than regions like Europe or North America (generally speaking), the advent of mobile Internet took conversations to Over The Top (OTT) messaging applications that operate as data transfer over the installed Internet infrastructure, the most notorious of them being WhatsApp. In Brazil, there are more than 120 million users, around 10% of the Apps users of the world (Mazzeto, 2017).

#ForaTemer; critique of the mainstream media coverage; most of them lacking professional skills; usage of personal resources and channels to create an “alternative narrative” (Marcelo, Personal Communication, October 25, 2017). In the social appropriation approach, this may be interpreted as a manifest form of *collective intelligence*, corresponding to level (v) of Proulx and colleagues’ (2017) model. It is not the same as a completely conscious community of software developers around Linux, for, in the former, each individual user has less control and understanding of the overall ‘product’ or result of their efforts, which can be interpreted as a sort of alienation. Nevertheless, the commonalities amongst users, their motivations, their political-mediatic aspirations, point to a swarm-like perception of contributing with a grain of sand to the narrative of the event, contrasting with mainstream media which either presented biased coverage or no coverage at all. Even users that emulated the journalistic discourse of objectivity, with a *Neutral Political Stand* (Roberta, Personal Communication, October 17, 2017; Dríade, interview with author; David, Personal Communication, October 31, 2017), this supposed objectivity was a reaction to what they all agreed was an inadequate coverage of the protests by media: Marcelo (Personal Communication, October 25, 2017) stated that protests were “solemnly ignored by mainstream media”; David said that even international media were giving “too much space to the opposition⁹⁶” (Personal Communication, October 31, 2017); Roberta wanted to “echo” with alternative sources of information about the events that informed beyond the violent or highly graphic repressive episodes (Personal Communication, October 17, 2017); Claudia (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017) wanted to contradict mainstream media’s discourse that relied solely on dualities such as *violent-pacific* protest or *unpopular-massive* attendance; and so on.

Another phenomenon, adjacent to the concerns of this research, was the sophisticated forms that Mídia NINJA employed to manage their collaborators so

⁹⁶ In this context, opposition to the government of that moment, Dilma Rousseff’s.

that they could cover, on a small budget but with a committed team, as much as they did –in the studied events or others, as the general strike of April 28th, 2017 mentioned by Dríade during the interview, when they published 441 posts on social media (Personal Communication, September 22, 2017). She described three types of collaborators to Mídia NINJA during events and also on daily activities. Such activity is managed through 84 Telegram⁹⁷ groups divided by geography, topic, activity and others. The distinct groups of collaborators were described as:

- **“Livers”**: those who live at the *Fora do Eixo* housing facilities in different cities in Brazil. These are very committed collaborators that gather to plan ahead the coverage of an event, distribute assignments and so on. They also develop the agenda to be covered and participate in domestic duties in the houses.
- **Collaborators or Mediactivists**: people who frequently collaborate but do not live in the houses. They come and go, but may eventually participate on planning activities and have a strong alignment with the political-aesthetical principles of the collective.
- **Eventual or “Floaters”**: those that show up *ad hoc*, sending content on Facebook’s inbox for instance or offering some other kind of assistance, such as translations, subtitles etc. Mídia NINJA welcomes their content, though it is a process of trial and error with live instructions, defined by Dríade as “politic-aesthetic didactics” as previously described.

This last collaborator type is most important in the context of the present research, for it includes a user that decides to create testimonial content –with all the risks and costs that it may involve- and want to make it public. That movement can be read as a political act. But for the users that associate with Mídia NINJA, amongst others, the best way to make it visible is through an alternative media

⁹⁷ Chat application for mobile phones, similar to WhatsApp.

channel politically aligned with their political aspirations, which could amplify their content. If not by the early *Channel* through which this content is first circulated (in this case an *organisational channel* from an alternative media outlet with strong political inclinations), it would characterize a tUGC. Though news outlets have always relied on this kind of user-generated content to found, support or illustrate their stories, this option is a bit dissimilar from “more of the same” as discussed during the literature review. The new phenomenon seems to be a rise of social media users that vow neither for the institutional-like, “we are objective” media profile; nor that of an ordinary user. During the interview, Dríade even admitted she would identify Mídia NINJA more with a *Political Association* than with an *Alternative Media* (Personal Communication, September 26, 2017). This resonates with her discourse on mediactivism and media as being an agent of political transformation. Mídia NINJA seems to be very upfront and transparent with this inclination, though there are critiques, such as David (Personal Communication, October 31, 2017) who regrets the politicisation of what, in his opinion, had been a good source of information during 2013’s *Jornadas de Junho*⁹⁸.

This kind of agent, neither *media* nor *political association* in their more traditional senses, may be very relevant as it works both as a connector due to their large networks -of followers in the case of Twitter- and as an intensifier of the homophilic networks -for they are avowedly politicized. Alternative politicized media such as *Mídia NINJA* and *Jornalistas Livres*, fake or made-up politicized characters such as *Dilma Bolada* or *Muda Mais*, turned out to be extremely relevant in the Twitter ad hoc publics around #ForaTemer, not only in the testimonial content sub-datasets, but also in the whole of the data. They attract testimonial content that otherwise would probably turn out as tUGC or not turn out at all, for mainstream media were proven, at least as per the interviews and the literature

⁹⁸ It means “June Days” (my translation). It is the name of the protests that started out against the raise of public transportation and became a generalized discontent that took the streets especially during June and July 2013 (Judensnaider, Lima, Pomar & Ortellado, 2013).

consulted, to be very biased in favour of the impeachment and very critical of the protests.

6. Personal Impact

Interviewees seemed to share a general perception of the creation of testimonial content as a form of “civic duty” (Beatriz, Personal Communication, November 13, 2017) that brought them satisfaction. In that sense, it was clearly perceived as a form of political participation. There were no accounts of important negative effects such as conflicts with peers, relatives or at work. The audience’s reaction was perceived as positive and the act of creating testimonial content, as per their testimony, had no clear effect on the interviewees’ lives. The people that left Twitter did so due to other reasons already discussed, such as lack of feedback or the pursuit for another more outreaching platform.

The notorious dissatisfaction with the role mainstream media played during what Goldstein (2016) called a “perfect storm” -economic, political and social crisis that resulted in Rousseff’s impeachment- had an important impact on this particular communicative practice. Motivations departed from feelings of injustice and conviction of the right thing to do, such as when Claudia stated she’s “defending something I believe” (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017); when Roberta talked about the sensation of “job done” or “fulfilled duty” (Personal Communication, October 17, 2017); similarly to Marcelo, who mentioned that the creation of testimonial content felt “almost like my duty” (Personal Communication, October 25, 2017).

As to the effect, all interviewees concurred that, when not null, the effect was very limited, and things followed its course despite their effort. A bit more optimistic was French journalist David (Personal Communication, October 31, 2017) who reported that his accounts of the political crisis through social media, amid the political crisis in Brazil, in his condition of foreign journalist and specialist in Latin America politics, was enough at least to open the eyes of his “close circles”,

since he initially published on his personal social media accounts. Furthermore, he also intended (successfully, according to his perception) to challenge superficial international reports over the crises that were giving too much attention to the political opposition (those against Rousseff, pro-impeachment) during the crisis. According to him, such bias turned Rousseff's detractors' perspective into the predominant voice in international media those days –not only in Europe, as he mentions *New York Times* for example.

On a more local level, Hussein stated he now participates politically in local deliberation and Léo said that his social media activity led to the engagement on local debates, especially at his university –he lives in a small town (with approximately 60 thousand habitants) in Southern Brazil.

Predominantly, though, there were reports of frustration with the developments, since in concrete, the demonstrations did not revert the political crisis and not only the impeachment followed through, but demonstrations were not capable of pushing for an alternative course, such as direct elections, as proposed by Day 2's prevailing hashtag *#DiretasJa*.

Finally, the perception of 'preaching for the converted' appeared in Andrea's and Marcelo's metaphor of a "Bubble" or a "Big Bubble"⁹⁹ to describe their network of followers on Twitter, where, allegedly, networks of followers think alike. That perception is no different of what Hussein's defined as an "Internet bubble", where "who is against get out or quites down" (Personal Communication, November 31, 2017) in reference to political discussions on the digital social networks. In this particular case, the digital political activities were concentrated on Facebook. Such perception of homophily led users to even disengage from Twitter at all, such as Luiza and Beatriz, which can be interpreted as a concrete manifestation of the frustration with it as a tool for political deliberation and debate of ideas with dissimilar people.

⁹⁹ Probably both reference famous metaphor by Eli Pariser: "Filter Bubble".

Chapter VI: Conclusions

VI.1 Answering the Research Questions

This research demonstrates that Twitter, through the aggregated content around #ForaTemer, has served as a two-way –production and consumption- alternative channel of information, including tUGC, for educated politicized people of different ages that did not bear much (or any) trust on mainstream media during Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment process in Brazil. Creators of tUGC took their personal digital devices with different levels of planning but with a common goal: to provide an alternative narrative to the events that were underway. And vice-versa: people used tUGC as source of alternative information to bypass strongly perceived media bias related to the impeachment process and the whole political crisis in Brazil, from 2013 on.

In what follows, I’ll provide conclusive statements, organized by the research questions that motivated the present research. Finally, I will posit some paths to follow that could contribute to the fields touched upon by the concept of tUGC, with emphasis on the disciplines involved in this research.

RQ 1: What is tUGC?

tUGC was defined previously as **the product of a communicative practice of an ICT user, who as an ‘ordinary citizen’ being in a privileged time and place, witnesses an extraordinary event, appropriates socially and significantly digital communication technologies at hand to document (recording directly in a media device) and disseminate (publishing, sharing by own means) such event, with traces of spontaneity characteristic of an opportunistic testimony –as opposed to the planned registry.**

Reviewing the above definition in light of the results, statistical analysis and interviews confirm that journalists’ and professional photographers’ behaviour

regarding the production of tUGC during protest is equivalent to that of ordinary users as they assume a role of citizens, in spite of their professional media background. This behaviour is reaffirmed by some of the interviews: Claudia states she went as “normal citizen” motivated by personal and political interests, completely detached of her job as a media analyst (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017); David, French professional journalist, said that, even if impeded from documenting¹⁰⁰, he would have participated anyway, for he was primarily a “participant” rather than a “journalist” during the protest (Personal Communication, October 31, 2017).

The intrinsic relation between *creation* and *publication* of content, fundamental part of the above definition, is less straight forward, though, for there are many different workflows to the testimonial content between its creation and its publication. In fact, people may create the content first and later publish them (like Andrea, Beatriz and Luiza), publish them almost immediately (like Marcelo, Hussein, Roberta and Claudia) or do both (as David did). Furthermore, there are nuances in between such as Hussein publishing a photo on Facebook (which is restricted to Hussein’s networks), which was picked up by Claudia, who republished it her public user on Twitter. Beatriz also republished a video received from a friend, this time received via WhatsApp, giving her credit but not notice. This is all very fluid in a digital environment and makes it more difficult to establish rules to define the phenomenon. What sticks as something that matters is the nature of the channel where content is first publicized: individual/personal versus organisational, which is what resides in the crossroads of *testimonial* and *user* in tUGC definition. The *traces of spontaneity* were present in plenty of clues, from the quality of testimonial imagery to the self-reports on the interviews. Still, such spontaneity should be read within the dynamic and ever-changing realm of digital visual culture, where taking pictures or making videos to share them on social

¹⁰⁰ The scenario proposed during the interview was a bit abstract: absence of a mobile phone or any other camera.

media is just part of the daily life. Whether the user creates a testimonial out of the heat of the moment¹⁰¹ such as Beatriz and Andrea or was willingly searching for a specific political agenda (Claudia as a pro-Dilma; Luiza as a watchdog on the police's actions; Marcelo searching for the "untold stories" and so on), their main objective was to participate of the demonstration. **Politics precede communication.**

tUGC patterns differ from other testimonials in quite a few attributes, implying some specificities of tUGC as a phenomenon with its own characteristics. The most frequent pattern of attributes was: *Ordinary User* creating *Amateur Unedited Photo(s) For* (favourable) the protest, calling for *Political Action* on a first-person perspective (*Personal Experience*), published on an *Embedded* form on their *Individual* channels, which I called *Political-tUGC*. Following it as the most frequent tUGC pattern, there is *Journalistic-tUGC*, with attributes more connected to those of the journalistic field and *Expressive-tUGC*, with attributes centred on the crossroads of *amateurism* and *self-expression*. Nevertheless, not all of those standards are favourable to one of the possible objectives of creating the content, which is retweeting: content created with a more professional framing with a witness-like perspective have a better shot at being retweeted. Of those, *Expressive-tUGC* had the lowest retweet rates.

Ordinary users producing tUGC, in light of the ICT Social Appropriation approach, at least in the case studied, conform a loose-tied group with a few commonalities that, within a swarm logic, perform a task that can be interpreted as **collective intelligence** (Lévy, 2004; Sunstein, 2006, as cited by Dylko, 2011) or yet a **Digitally Networked Participation** (Theocharis, 2015). According to the latter, "the activation of personal networks is a core mobilizing act and can have a multiplying effect that transforms the scale and form of a certain political action

¹⁰¹ This would be like what the Spanish pedestrian that captured the agony after the terrorist attacks at "Las Ramblas" in Barcelona in 2017 called a "reflex action" to grab the phone and make a film (Levy, 2017).

through the process of digital communication” (Theocharis, 2015, p. 5). The result of such multiplying effect, in this case, is a landscape of tUGC spread through Twitter timelines and hashtag searches into which a variety of users are prone to stumble upon. Behind this fragmented landscape, that in this case does not seem to compete, in terms of visibility, with broadcasters such as alternative media or public figures, lies a conscious intent by ordinary users to provide an alternative collective narrative to the lived events, in confrontation with mainstream media. That comes as a reaction to what seems to be a convergent opinion: that mainstream media does not portrait fairly *protest*, *protesters* and *police action*. At the same time, tUGC could be interpreted as a communicative practice embedded into new forms of social movement organization, such as the idea of **Connective Action** (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). In the present case, the long-lasting hashtag #ForaTemer serves both as the connector for people that do not necessarily belong to each other’s networks, and as a trigger to their personal action frames (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). In that sense, the lack of institutional organisation, the flexibility of the protests’ frames (made visible, for example, through the co-occurring hashtags), the intensive use of ICT are all traces of connective action. On the other hand, the long-lasting nexus is but a hashtag. As time passes, the hashtag survives, but the personal and collective meanings associated with the hashtag may vary a lot, as present research proves: within less than a week, the protest main function varies from *Ventilation* to *Persuasion* (Van Stekelenburg et al., 2009). #ForaTemer, that began as a cry against the illegality of the political process that took him to office in first place, dissolves into a vague idea of opposition to anything Michel Temer may stand for. As time passes, other meanings morph, add or coexist around the hashtag, ranging from a protest against corruption to the critique of the government’s austerity policies, or perhaps just the converging point of leftist orientation, among others.

Furthermore, the present research shows a **two-sided credibility of tUGC**: *semiotic* and *networked*. The former is an effect of the amateur aesthetics

(Polydoro, 2016; Wahl-Jorgensen, Williams & Wardle, 2010), within the realm of the political economy of media: tUGC's traces of spontaneity authenticate the image and enhance its value as it posits an "answer to the growing scriptization of life and the world" (Polydoro, 2016, p. 159). Following Pasolini's famous quote: "subjectivity is (...) the maximum conceivable limit of all audio-visual techniques" (Pasolini, MacAfee & Owens, 1980, p. 63) in reference to its realistic potential, as opposed to aseptic, distant, professionally edited media content. More than one interviewee referred to this *first-hand-first-person* testimony, highlighting the credibility of content unattached to the media industry. The latter is a collateral effect of the networked trait of social media, as opposed to the mainstream media credibility founded on historical reputation. There seems to be a higher 'trackability' of tUGC on social media, perhaps due to the ease of expansion and maintenance of social networks, increasing the number of sustainable connections (weak ties) with little cost. Additionally, different digital social networks make visible, through their affordances the content's trail: "retweeted by", "friends shared" etc. Luiza explained her view of this phenomenon: "what happens a lot is that people I'm close to or people close to people I know has the experience of, I don't know, a friend of a friend being beaten by the police (...) It makes no sense to measure veracity of the video because I was seeing the video (...) someone I knew reasonably well" (Personal Communication, December, 11, 2017). Léo corroborated stating that if the author of the content is the same as the user that circulates it, he accepts its authenticity (Personal Communication, February 16, 2018).

RQ 2: How do the attributes of testimonials tweets and tUGC circulated on Twitter vary during the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment?

Context matters. Different timings, different durations, different modes of organisation, different stages of the protest lead not only to different characteristics on the creation of testimonial content and tUGC, but also on its

circulation, as observed by the metrics adopted in this study. These differences manifest in the form of different topic prominence –as measured by the hashtag adoption combined with Discursive Function adopted-, different tweeting and retweeting patterns, different tUGC patterns of attributes and also the proportion of users that create versus those who interact with the content created by others.

It is not absurd to suggest that the contingency has set the agenda, leading more people move their eyes and ears to Twitter to fetch information in the day that Rousseff's ousting takes place (Day 1), perhaps due to the climax of the crisis, than in Day 2. Additionally, the difference on both days' context had an impact on tUGC creation and diffusion patterns, as the *planned* event presented at the same time a much higher rate of creation of tUGC and a lower rate of retweeting. It could be due to a well-studied phenomenon in communication studies: crises trigger need for orientation (NFO) that not only that lead people to seek information, but make them more susceptible to the effects of agenda-setting (Weaver, 1980; Matthes, 2005). In this case, the event in question is associated with both *high uncertainty* and *high relevance*, leading to a higher Need For Orientation (Weaver, 1980) during Day 1. In such context, one possible and probable alternative source of information, especially for short-term contingency, is Twitter, perhaps justifying the higher retweeting rates and users on Day 1 on the ad hoc publics formed around #ForaTemer within the context of the protest.

On the same line, different stages of the protest also lead to different user behaviours both in their role as audience and as creators of testimonial content, as both creating and retweeting patterns vary considerably. Both respond quickly to contingency, reinforcing the velocity of information circulation on Twitter and rapidly putting real-time issues on the agenda.

Finally, the longitudinal analysis of Day 2 points to the *March* as the more attractive moment for the production of tUGC, suggesting the appeal of aesthetic and emotional components as triggers to its creation. From a communicational perspective, it seems to be the testimonial narrative climax of a street

demonstration, even more attractive to retweet than content related to the *Repression* stage, when there is such.

RQ 3: What is the overall role of testimonial tweets and tUGC on Twitter during the protests against Dilma Rousseff's impeachment?

The high frequency of tUGC amongst the general testimonial content points to its potential ubiquity on the hashtagged conversation. Such ubiquity stands as a theoretical possibility after the present analysis, for the quantitative impact of tUGC did not prove to be very high with the metrics adopted. Nevertheless, it might contribute to some measure to adjust the agenda, or at least the saliency of certain aspects when it comes to the preponderant narrative of the protest: *vandals* versus *pacific* protesters; *40* versus *100.000* protesters; *radicals* versus *families*. Claudia (Personal Communication, October 19, 2017) seems to be conscious of this potential, stating that her production of testimonial content is not only out of her political conviction but also a means to stimulate other people to do the same, suggesting a swarm-like behaviour as her aim. It is as if Claudia knew Tilly's (1977) conception of repertoire of collective action, according to which, a previously known tactic of contention "provides insight into 'contagion' and 'spontaneity' in collective action" (p. 5-25), facilitating its spread and popular adhesion. If today tUGC has 'traces of spontaneity', probably with time it might be part of the standard and therefore anticipated repertoire of collective action:

Raising the possibility that when a particular form of riot or demonstration spreads rapidly, what diffuses is not the model of the behavior itself, but the information -- correct or not -- that the costs and benefits associated with the action have suddenly changed (Tilly, 1977, p. 5-25).

This points to a potential 'long tail' (Anderson, 2004, 2008) effect: plenty of ordinary users' tweets –even with very little power of diffusion– may add up to a very visible mosaic of tUGC that migrate from the incompleteness of subjectivity (Pasolini et al., 1980) to a new kind of objectivity: a crowdsourced action-sequence

of images and videos, that forms “a fragmented and diffuse connective patchwork of first-hand testimonies from the events in question” (Mortensen, 2015b, p. 8). It is a mix between omnipresence and *ressonance*: when someone reiteratively stumbles upon content that portray a fragmented complimentary picture of the documented event, the convictions, validity, credibility of such content is built and/or strengthened tweet by tweet, photo by photo, video by video.

As Meunier and Condeza (2012) concluded after studying Chilean student movement in 2006, “the observed [students’ communicational] practices seem to populate, progressively, the discursive space up to the point of saturation” (par 34, my translation). Such sense of saturation of a certain kind of information could enhance the perceived obtrusiveness (Winter, 1981; Ju, 2014; McCombs, 2004; Zucker, 1978) for such information. In the case of a protest, the more pictures or videos circulating in a user’s screen, be those her digital social networks, chat groups or else, the more such user feels emotional proximity to the event (Pantti, 2013) and the lesser the influence of mainstream media on the person’s final assessment of the truth for he/she becomes more informed by other means (Ju, 2014; McCombs & Valenzuela, 2007; Zucker, 1978). Such a fragmented *bricolage*/montage may end up as a reversed Benthamian panoptic (Foucault, 2002) documenting, from the bottom-up, high impact events. On the long term, such phenomenon could even end up disciplining institutional action such as coercive powers, in a foucaultian sense, due to the perception of vigilance, rather than actual cameras recording. It would be valuable to study if the same happens with other platforms, as this study focuses mainly on Twitter. But, again, data for this case did not back such projections up, so the considerations as to the impact of tUGC as for its omnipresence stand mostly as a theoretical possibility.

As for the social movements, especially those in situations of disagreement with media coverage, the present research means that if they can mobilize their constituents, sympathizers and even by-passers to document the protests, hopefully around a pre-defined aggregator, it will get harder and harder not to tell

the ‘real’ story. tUGC might be a conscious tactic against selective framing, omission or straight up media manipulation. This would be something like *Image Events 2.0*, or what I would call *People Image Events*: the crowdsourcing of the process creating media objects with visual impact of a social protest to ordinary people and constituents of the movement, instead of making it attractive to the mainstream media.

It is important to notice, though, how mainstream media play a relevant role on conversations on the studied dataset. Conversations on Twitter are not only boosted by media through second screening (Temer’s speech), but mainstream media also put words in people’s mouths –or, in the present case, in peoples fingers and screens- as is the case with the “40 people protest” and “golpist” absorbed either in the form of hashtags, image creation or in regular wording. Also, alternative media played a remarkable role in every dimension of this analysis, probably due to the lack of trust in traditional media when it comes to social protest. Mídia NINJA in particular, a cooperative organisation that functions as what they call a “mediactivist”, has been recognized for their role in the coverage of *Jornadas de Junho* (Ortellado, 20 centavos) in 2013 (Savazoni & Copello, 2016) and became one of the most popular and important sources of information ‘from the ground’ during the protests, with a leaning to audio-visual content. Additionally, this research suggests that during the stage of *Repression*, on Day 2, ordinary people have not had the same capability of documenting and circulating testimonial content. Therefore, the role of collectives or organisations such as Mídia NINJA that have procedures, training and equipment to deal with this kind of situation is very important for the alternative documentation of use of institutional coercive forces, especially in contexts where there is an expectation of abuse of force.

It is straight forward that the ecosystem of digital network applications is interconnected. Interviews suggest that interplays between such apps are frequent and Twitter is recognized as more “political” for the users. In that sense, content and people convened to such platform and content was put to circulation on

Twitter even if it was not the first platform where it was published, for it was perceived as the place to politicize the discussion. From the present analysis, the general perspective is that while Twitter serves as real-time media to document and publicize events, WhatsApp may serve as tool for coordination and instantaneous information (including tUGC) sharing with close groups of friends, Instagram serves personal more intimate purposes (such as selfies) and Facebook is the preferred scenario for aftermath discussion and digestion, where people post longer content with afterthoughts (David, Personal Communication, October 31, 2017) engage in the intent to sensitize other views (Beatriz, Personal Communication, November 13, 2017). This is a subject that should be developed much further to confirm such perceptions, though.

As for the role of the attributes as predictors of retweeting, the analysed models indicate, for the two protests, that *Journalists* and *Photographers* do not have significant differences than *Ordinary* people while creating testimonial content. On the other hand, tUGC has a better chance to be retweeted if: it is a *video* than a *photo* or other form of testimonial media; if it has a *professional* standard rather than *amateur*; and it has a much lower perspective of being retweeted if in form of *mediated protest* or *linked* instead of *embedded*. Politically charged content predict as much retweeting as more neutral communicative tweets. Public figures, acting as political celebrities with their self-expression testimonial content¹⁰², boost such kind of self-referenced expressive content as they have more visibility on Twitter.

As for the differences between tUGC and other testimonial content on the datasets, the main difference seems to lie in the predominance of professional traits in the latter: professional media standards, witness perspective, more videos, more

¹⁰² Such content is subject to debate, furthermore, for it is content not produced by the author, but by their assistant(s), such as pictures of the politician marching, of the politician shaking hands and so forth. For this study, they were considered testimonial content, in a wider range of possibilities that also includes, for instance, what I called *mediated protest*, not linked to the territory (therefore “mediated”), but linked to the protest by the hashtag and its testimonial content.

edited content, more neutral content with a communicative discursive function. Most of such traits were not found to be significant predictors of retweeting, when compared with the most repeated tUGC pattern, but *video* format and *professional* media standards do so.

This research shows also how tUGC may be an important source to recapitulate what went on during a specific event, in absence of professional media –either by political, economic or logistical reasons. Reports accompanied by indexical content, as per the method developed for this research, help trace their link to both space and time. This is particularly interesting on Twitter for it is common for users to publish content in real or quasi-real time.

RQ 4: How were the different processes that led to the recording and publication of testimonial content by Twitter users in the context of Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment protests? What are their motivations, modus operandi, fears, and attitudes?

The research shows that the creation of tUGC –and even of testimonial tweets in general- follow a politically charged attitude, reflection of a process of significant appropriation of ICT. Though there were different modes of expression, mapped with the *Discursive Functions*, all of them seem to contribute to a political agenda as assessed per the interviews. Even journalists asserted that their intent was political, despite the objective dress-up with journalist jargon and form. The interviews confirmed that tUGC creation and circulation, in the context of the protests, though might belong to a quintessential part of a “digital culture” routine, was far from being solely a “reflex action” (Levy, 2017): people have put technology to the service of a political cause; the cause being what interviewees perceived transversely as a politically biased coverage of the media.

Patterns point to a distinction between professional organisations and amateur creators in its double sense: production and consumption. That is, this research indicates that not only non-professionals produce slightly different content –more amateur-like- but also the users (when in the role of an audience)

are more prone to retweeting professionally produced content published by (alternative) media professionals. At the same time, there is what seems to be the new journalistic practice by Mídia NINJA: the incorporation of UGC produced by voluntary users, while at the same time retaining the “political-aesthetical standard” through real-time coaching via social media channels (Dríade, Personal Communication, September 22, 2017). Though this practice divert from this research focus, it definitely deserves more attention in the future for it could represent an innovation to be adopted by more traditional media in its practice of incorporating real-time testimonial citizen media in its coverage of extraordinary events.

As for the consumption of tUGC, interviews point to two main uses: one to live by distance (Costa, interview with author) and another to have elements to corroborate the lived facts. The former coincides with Peters’ (2001) definition of “Live Transmission” which means distant in space but presence in time (p. 721). The latter points to the previously described phenomenon of a continuous distributed narrative of the event, with post-event discussions, permeated with comments of those who were not present during protests. In such context, testimonial content also served as an instrument to support or corroborate arguments in online ongoing discussions such as those that happened in other platforms such as Facebook. With such objective, for instance, David reported with more detail on Facebook on the aftermath of the protests. This function of tUGC as indexical evidence appropriated for political argumentation may not be new, but its credibility built on proximity and saturation of images that repeat one and another time a depicted event or circumstance, are a new phenomenon. tUGC “dilate the points of view” by “building an effect of truth more potent than the enunciations of conventional journalism, especially when the mode of circulation escapes the filtering and intervening (editing, mounting) practices of media corporations” (Polydoro, 2016, p. 23), practices that this research operationalized as *amateur unedited* content, two of the coded attributes. Andrea is clear on her appreciation of

tUGC credibility: “this [tUGC] is much more the truth than any other narrative” (Personal Communication, November 14, 2017). Her being a regular citizen, she says, “legitimizes” the content she creates, for it is not related to mainstream media corporate interests.

Interviews reveal differentiation between professional and individual *personas* are not consensual for media professionals during political events. Journalists have showed different levels of distinction between both dimensions of their lives: David considered Twitter as a professional tool and even as part of his portfolio; Claudia separated completely both dimensions; Prescott mixes political and technological (her *metier*) content on the go, maintaining a prudent journalistic-like language; Even Marcelo -who is not a journalist with a diploma but defines himself as a “contentist” and works for media companies- mixes his cultural channel with his personal comments about his favourite soccer team and beer tasting. On the other hand, Marcelo said that citizen and journalist were inseparably together during the protests. The level of planning also varies between different users, though there is a minimum that, as discussed, is more related to digital culture than with the protest.

One form of tUGC could be more disputable: what I’ve called *mediated protest*. In the debate to whether it is just slacktivism (Morozov, 2001) or if it is to be considered a legitimate form of political participation, I follow Dencik and Leistert (2015) in the understanding that self-publicity is more than just narcissistic self-expression:

“it is the very publicity of participation rather than the sense of belonging that has become the defining feature of the collective action, serving as a proxy for identity and any collective ‘we’. In such circumstances, protest starts and ends with the individual and its mediated self-expression” (p. 5)

tUGC dynamics still respond more to the opportunity of the creation of the content than to a planned action by some group. At least in the case studied. Nevertheless, it is possible to plan, just like marketers do, actions to capture the

attention of such regular users, by stimulating the dissemination of tUGC individually through their phones. Such action would compromise the spontaneity of the act, but not its communicative potential. As previously stated, it could become a tactic in the repertoire of contention, for social movements' organisations or networks, which explores this particular trait of contemporary protest, just like Greenpeace's *image events*, but 2.0, with the hope that within the myriad of ordinary user imagery, some become viral and gives them some 'free' visibility. That would not follow traditional mobilization strategies by traditional 'brick and mortar' organisations, but more of a "connective action" (Bennett & Segerberg) or a "choreography of assembly" logics (Gerbaudo, 2012).

RQ 5: Have this communicative practice (testimonial tweets during protest) had any tangible and/or perceived consequences in their lives?

Testimonial content was clearly recognized as important by the ad hoc community formed around the main hashtag of the protests against the impeachment, judging not only by the proportion of retweets as a proxy for its diffusion, comparing to other types of content, but also per the interviews. In that same line, testimonial content and tUGC are perceived as very valuable content by the users, especially in face of media's historical dubitative role as information brokers during situations of social crisis in Brazil. It would not be exaggerated to assume that would be equally truthful for other countries with similar co-opted or captured media systems (Guerrero, Márquez-Ramírez, 2004) as well as for countries with even less plural systems where social protest is distorted or silenced in similar or even harsher ways than in contemporary Brazil.

Though interviewed users stated that they had no major perceived consequences in their lives, both *positively* (as to no problem), and *negatively* (as to no inference in political outcomes), a high number of linked content¹⁰³ screened

¹⁰³ Could be media or links. This was not analysed in depth due to the inability to access the content.

automatically was unavailable after less than a year, either because it had been erased, the account had been erased or the access was not public anymore. That could be a reaction to such type of consequences in a context of political polarisation (Goldstein, 2016) or for the banning of robots, but for obvious reasons it is very difficult to contact users in such condition. The two interviewed users that had left Twitter (Beatriz and Luiza) did not leave due to conflictive situations, as I had assumed previously to the interview, but due to the perception of innocuousness of their political activity on the platform.

VI.2 Limitations of this Research

It is important to notice the possible shortcomings for, as any social science research, there are options that allow the observer to study the object that at the same time amplify and create limits to the power of representation that result of those options. As Latour (2004) states: “The production of information allows, then, to solve in a practical way, through operations of selection, extraction, reduction, the contradiction between the presence in a place and the absence in such place” (p. 4). Studied from the absence, using data and interviews as sources of empirical findings, the present research has limitations that should be recognized.

1. Content Analysis

Many of the analysis developed in the present research rely on the content analysis, which is an operationalisation of attributes supposedly identifiable empirically in the data. This means I had to make decisions as to make the criteria clear to classify content, such as: consider #LutarSempre (Always Fight) as *mobilize* regarding *Discursive Function* and #golpista (Author of a Coup d’état, or “coupist”) as *accuse* for the same attribute; include *journalists* and *photographers* as *ordinary* Twitter Users in the analysis; and other similar dilemmas. Though such decisions were informed by theory and empirical data, they are subject to interpretation and possibly error, as happened with an interviewee coded as an ordinary user, that

though had no diploma, worked all his life as a cultural journalist, so he was familiar with journalistic practices. Also, Mídia NINJA, which was coded as *Alternative Media*, opted for *Political Association* when self-classifying in face of the limited options of the code. Furthermore, the codebook can probably be improved in further research, since two categories (*Political Stand* and *Media Standard*) had Krippendorff's Alpha values lower than 0.5, which is considered moderate to fair agreement (Viera & Garret, 2005). Nevertheless the values were considered good enough and the coders trusted enough to rely on high percentage of agreement (McHugh, 2012). Finally, there are amending circumstances (see Appendix B – Reliability Tests) and those categories were not in the core of the analysis so I consider due process to validate the coding process was successfully carried out, meaning that the method sustains its validity.

2. Metrics and Platforms

There are many quantitative metrics developed or appropriated in this research to serve as proxies to concepts, such as *Reach*, *Two-step Reach* or *Efficiency*. It should be pinpointed that, as proxies, neither the data nor the method applied are exact. It is not possible, for instance, to identify possible overlaps between followers of the followers, the main metrics used on the 'long tail' analysis. This research indicates possibilities and, in the future, other research may deepen the findings with complimentary methods and cases. The followers of followers of Mídia NINJA, for example, have a much greater chance of being followers themselves of Mídia NINJA, not only due to homophilic networks but also thanks to the alternative media outlet's larger network of followers. The same happens with other alternative media in the dataset such as *Jornalistas Livres*, and the same should happen in between both their networks, for not only they share the political standpoint but also partly share origin in *Fora do Eixo* collective (*Jornalistas Livres* was formed by many other collectives). On the other hand, ordinary users' followers –much lesser

in average- should have a lower chance to be the same as other ordinary users' followers.

It is due noting, also, that the metrics used for most of the quantitative analysis –statistical analysis excluded- are aggregated and many of the assumptions consider averages. The performance of an individual tweet, for example, in terms of retweeting, involves many other variables, such as time of the publication, keywords used, URLs, mentions and so on. Additionally, the fact that all of them contained the hashtag #ForaTemer indicates that possibly –if not necessarily- other people from outside users' networks –therefore unaccounted with the *two-step reach* metric- had access to the tweet. Such perspective was confirmed by interviewees that distinctively identified people from outside their networks interacting with them (Beatriz, Roberta and Andrea stated that during the interviews) and all the others that indicated the intent to reach a wider audience with the adoption of the hashtag. Therefore, the relationship between number of followers and reach for hashtagged content is unclear, for it moves beyond the realm of the user's followers to a shared topical population (Rafail, 2017). In other words, the content jumps from the *meso* (followers) to the *macro level* (hashtagged ad hoc community) of communication on Twitter (Bruns & Moe, 2014) extrapolating the exclusive streams of followers, making it much more difficult to draw precise estimations. For the example described, either visualizing with Social Network Analysis techniques or other method that allow quantifying such overlap would be contributions to the present findings. Also, though the comparative datasets (DS01 and DS02) have the same duration, they do not refer to the same weekday nor the same timespan. This could add complexity to the comparative analyses, which therefore should benefit from further verification.

On the other hand, the present research deals with relatively homogeneous datasets in formal terms: all tweets have hashtags; all tweets have media content with testimonial characteristics; and all share a short timelapse contemplating two days with a similar event within less than a week's distance; above all, every unit of

analysis share the same metadata fields. That can be interpreted as if the above inferences made with the current data are more solid when compared with research on the 'big data' paradigm would deliver in normal circumstances when a wide variety of data sources with varying contexts are eventually mingled.

At last, the analyses presented on previous chapter have Twitter as practically its whole universe, though the external links of the content were followed to their external host, such as Facebook, Instagram or YouTube, to name a few of the other UGC platforms included with this procedure. It is never too much to remind that all the interpretations regarding quantitative role of tUGC are within this realm, with the implied limitations –such as the obvious low rate of overall penetration of Twitter in the country's population. Nevertheless, other researchers have discussed the impact of Twitter in other media, such as intermedia agenda setting in the context of disasters, another kind of extraordinary event (Valenzuela, Puente & Flores, 2017). Such line of study is most useful to make further interpretations. It would be interesting to apply some of the theoretical development, as well as methodological, to other platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp and others, so to test the validity of the findings in other digital social media platforms or entire digital media environments as well as the influence of what tUGC on Twitter on other platforms. Prior to that, not much can be said regarding the impact of tUGC in the whole media environment, for the present research does not go much beyond Twitter. In that sense, this research definitely does not cover offline media and offline communicational practices, besides some insights originated from the interviews and media reporting consulted mainly to contextualise the case and check the stages of the protest. Both dimensions of offline communication are of extreme relevance to any assessment of the extent to which tUGC has an impact on citizen's perceptions, valuation and attitudes regarding the protest and/or the issues brought by it.

3. Data Noise

It is very important to notice the growing pollution on social network sites such as Twitter and Facebook that have been to a great extent hijacked by armies of bots and cyborgs (Gragnani, 2017). That may very well skew data and the perception of the general population that is relying on these platforms to be informed on developing events. Such is the case with hashtag #Bolsonaro2018 in the present research, created by what seems to be a fake user and promoted by bots that pick up trending hashtags; such is the case with fake Russian users in Trump's election; such is the case of the very well documented case of government sponsored social movements 'hashtag sabotage' in Mexico (Pilatosky, 2017; Treré, 2015) to name a few. This remains a great risk not only for the *general public*, as previously stated, but also to *social movement* organisations and organizers, *researchers* -as analysis may get compromised- and, last but not least, the very *platforms*, for it may jeopardize their reliability on the long run. During this research, another example of such phenomenon, user @laeciolt had plenty of tweets on the data sample, almost all of them with URLs that seemed to be images, but the user did not exist anymore at the time of the analysis. I intended to interview him to check if his leaving Twitter was related to political activity, just to realize *he was it*: a bot.

Additionally, it is important to point out that there are challenges to the "fake news" phenomenon, many times also related to the bot issue, deepened by the lack of digital skills of non-expert population when it comes to separate wheat from chaff. During Brazilian political crises it seems that tUGC's importance as source of information is highlighted not only due to historical and widely discussed right-wing conservative bias against PT (Kucinsky, 1998) and favourable to the impeachment process, but also leftist, *petist* (for PT) biases. Such concern was alerted not only by professional journalists interviewed (David, Personal Communication, October 31, 2017) but also non-media-professionals (Beatriz, Personal Communication, November 13, 2017; Hussein, Personal Communication, November 31, 2017). Testimonial content creation itself is not exempt of such

problem, as previously discussed. There was an accusative false rumour, illustrated with a real picture (originally authored by Mídia NINJA) by student union and retweeted by a fake (much followed) character (“Dilma Bolada”), which ended up being highly disseminated and accounted for an important contribution to the peak minute on Day 2.

4. Interviews’ Limitations

The *Social Appropriation* section followed primarily the results of the interviews carried out in the course of this research. The resulting analyses are limited, then, by the research parameters and strategies, in particular the starting point which is a database mainly composed by the sympathizers of the protest. Also, the corpus is constituted by the tweets around the hashtag *ForaTemer*, which imply some technical affinity with Twitter practices –though as discussed, even users with very little Twitter experience also turned into adopters, perceiving the massive use of the hashtag, at least in the present case. Finally, the interviews were posthumous to the events, between 12-18 months after them, which interferes moderately with capacity to recuperate details and facts due to memory limitations¹⁰⁴.

VI.3 Political Protests and Beyond

Regarding the adoption of tUGC as a tool for social movements, this research has explicit limits. It delivers insights over what happens on Twitter, but as previous studies detected and this one reaffirms, the population that inhabit such tool, at least as observed by the interviews, seems to be composed by a digital elite of educated cosmopolitan citizens. In that sense, other social media could be studied, especially Facebook, which, though has a less politically-oriented adoption and a growing amount of barriers for researchers to study it as privacy scandals surface (Bruns, 2018a), it has a much broader penetration –at least at the time of this research. Complementarily, though empirical data does not address the issue, the

¹⁰⁴ To support a better recall of facts, when necessary, during the interview the user was prompted with the content by the interviewer (myself), who had the material prepared in advance.

perception of an echo chamber is not only materialized in the recurring image of the bubble by the interviewees, but by the uniformity of the interviewees: an educated elite with good access and fluid skills in digital media –with a few nuances.

Nevertheless, considering the indirect impact of what happens on Twitter and other social media, as fluid information ecologies that have mutual impact on each other, such as intermedia agenda setting, there is a need to address such interactions. Twitter is known to be an opinion-leader platform, so its Agenda Setting, Priming and other effects should not be disregarded even as sceptics criticize its levels of penetration. Additionally, the flows of tUGC across different platforms are notorious, either manually (passing forward and sharing from one platform to another) or automatically (ITTT¹⁰⁵, for instance). Studies that follow the content, such as tweets' dissemination careers (Bruns & Hanusch, 2017) would be most welcome to enlighten these interactions, even better if they consider as content disseminate through other platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook, in the specific Brazilian case. One interesting perspective here would be to deepen the research on how alternative media such as Mídia NINJA has been incorporating ordinary citizen media in their channels, how is the decision process of the authors to send them the content and so on. Additionally, the role of alternative media on testimonial tweeting during situations of conflict seems to be remarkably relevant, probably because they are more prepared to document content during such situations than ordinary users. That would be worthy exploring further.

Assess how much impact have the testimonial content that depicts what really happened on the streets is a worthy objective too. It is certainly a complicated one, though, for it involves many variables. Some of them are not easy to control, such as context, traditional media reports, alternative media reports,

¹⁰⁵ If This Then That (ITTT: <https://ifttt.com/>) is a platform that allows to trigger automatic behaviours across digital platforms, on conditions designed by the user, such as automatic posting on Twitter of pictures published on Instagram.

other social media not present in the analysis, interpersonal communication, traditional mobilisation tactics and so on. Testimonial analysis on long-term longitudinal social protest data could be a path to move forward on this.

Though this research addresses the phenomenon in the context of political participation, tUGC is not exclusively political, neither intrinsically connected to street demonstrations. tUGC will hopefully be studied in other areas, such as criminal, disaster risk management, sports, tourism and so on, as a particular kind of content that has different roles and impact on the various disciplines. Just as media bias was the main trigger for tUGC creation during the present case study, other factors may arise in different contexts: fandom in celebrity, sports or entertainment events; criminal and social justice in the case of criminal events; animal or human rights in cases of infringement of any of both; civil altruism and sense of duty in case of natural disasters; and so on. As other studies are performed, there should emerge a macro pattern composed, for instance, by contextual elements (such as ICT and Internet penetration); a (or multiple) trigger factor; and a macro system into which it is inserted (such as Political System, Media Industry, Emergency Systems and so on). Those variables may be predictors of different patterns of tUGC creation and circulation and could condition the role it may play in the whole conversation. Such research should lead to a multilevel theorisation of tUGC, not only applied to political context of street demonstrations, but also incorporating other contexts as previously mentioned.

The pattern analyses suggested some embryonic types of tUGC: *Political*, *Journalistic* and *Expressive*. This categorisation could benefit from other approaches such as cluster analysis via Social Network Analysis and further research on the patterns, both from a quantitative and qualitative perspectives. This procedure could also be applied to other fields, generating other distinctive patterns that may reveal cross-disciplinary patterns or specificities of the disciplines. Either way would be valuable for the scholarship.

These are just a few suggestions and ideas that emerged as the research evolved, but they are not exhausting. A new concept is like a silhouette that gradually becomes distinguishable, until someone points it and, perhaps, name it. With time, the concept, if valid, gains details, until it becomes part of the vocabulary in the field. If not, it fades or morphs into something more meaningful. My aspiration is for tUGC to be further informed by colleagues from different disciplines turning from the silhouette here delineated into a vivid sign to represent the phenomenon of testimonial User-Generated Content.

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Appendix A – Codebook for Content Analysis

Codebook for Content Analysis of Testimonial Tweets

INTRODUCTION

This is a guide to allow any person, other than the researcher himself, to code the messages of the Twitter dataset selected for this research, allowing for the research to establish inter-coder reliability. A good reliability is necessary to ensure the replicability of the coding process of the PhD research developed in order to achieve a degree in Communications Science at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile during the period 2014-2018.

The unit of analysis is the message contained within the tweet. This means:

- Embedded media (image, photo, video, live stream etc.) uploaded by the user **is part of the message**;
- **Retweets** of any kind of messages, including testimonial messages **are not** testimonial tweets and should be discarded;
- A testimonial content, in the context of this project, should only be coded as *testimonial* **if the content is produced and published by the author**;
- If the tweet displays testimonial content published or publicized clearly by other people than the author, the tweet should not be coded as testimonial - this criterion applies to any kind of *attached media* (videos, photos, live stream, links to other platforms etc.);
- On the other hand, **content linked from other platforms**, distributed complementarily in Twitter (such as automatic or manual republication of Facebook or Instagram posts), **should be considered testimonials**, whenever authored by the same user;
- When twitter user is some sort of collectivity (social organisation, alternative or mainstream media, political party etc.) **if the media publicized is not attributed to third parties, it is assumed that the collectivity detains authorship**;
- The **Twitter account** is considered part of the analysis of some categories for it provides context to understand some of the variables analysed (for example type of user). Coders should review its content whenever the instructions on this codebook indicate so;

- **In case of uncertainty it is advised to look further to other content around the media text**, such as links in the biography of the user (leading to Instagram profile, to Facebook profile, a blog etc.), the text describing the user and other metadata that can be assessed through observation.
 - Example of a complicated verification process:
 1. Access this tweet:
<http://twitter.com/AislanAvila/statuses/772519488315092992>
 2. Right-click on the picture and select “Search Google for Image”
 3. Check the link to website Brasil 24/7 and verify both the tweet’s and the text timestamps, and you should conclude that the website posted the picture before the Twitter user, so it is deducted that the user is not the author, but he probably copied the picture from the web

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) You will need to be connected to the Internet, for the visualisation is on Twitter platform.
- 2) Open the tweet in an updated Google Chrome web browser, to ensure inter-coder visualisation consistency
 - a. If it’s a video, watch the whole video
 - b. If it’s an external content (Facebook, Instagram etc), try to open. If it’s not possible to access it (image doesn’t exist, protected account or other), discard marking as “unavailable” in the *Testimonial* category field.
 - c. If it’s a link to a media outlet, it is not testimonial, no matter what the content of the link shows. It will be considered “mediated testimonial” only if the tweet has media text elements of the original outlet, such as screenshots of a TV show or a picture taken from the original source. That is interpreted as User-Generated Content, with the difference that the source is mediated reality instead of reality itself.
- 3) Determine if the tweet is or isn’t testimonial, per the instructions. For those coded as *testimonial* tweet, code the other categories and proceed to next tweet. The coder may also opt to code all the tweets as testimonial/not testimonial and then proceed to part II of the coding. I recommend this last option, for coder will have better familiarity with dataset. After having more familiarity with the codebook, coder may proceed to coding all at once, it could be more efficient. The former scheme is how this codebook is presented.

IF NOT TESTIMONIAL: leave the field blank and proceed to next tweet.

IF TESTIMONIAL:

- 4) Mark first category as “Testimonial”
- 5) As previously explained, coder may keep coding all tweets as testimonials or not; or may proceed to part II to code completely the current tweet.
- 6) Select the most accurate option for each category. Follow the instructions carefully and check the examples
- 7) The categories should be exclusive, there is **JUST ONE OPTION** for each category for each tweet. Coder should pursue the best option even if the tweet seems to fit more than one possibility.

PART I: Testimonial / Not Testimonial

This first stage’s purpose is to sort out the tweets that play a testimonial role. In this research, we will be considering only those that contain media (audio, photo, video, livestream). Textual testimonials will be disregarded for theoretical and empirical motivations. The received dataset should not have plain text tweets due to prior automatic selection process.

In order to classify a tweet as *testimonial*, it must comply with both the following standards:

1) Does the media text refer to the events analysed in a testimonial manner?



If the media text itself is not clear enough (most of the times it should be), here are some tips:

- a. *Coding should be in chronological order, so that the first published content has a better possibility of being original and further repetitions will be detected by the coder.*
- b. *Search for clues of authenticity: time (night or day), space (street signs, monuments, other spatial references), other similar images in the dataset etc.*
- c. *If the image appears tweeted by different users (as original posts and not retweets) or if the quality seems too good to an ordinary user’s media text, use google image uploader to check if there are older versions, as previously detailed. There’s a good chance that it is a media text that was published by some media outlet and it’s picked up by twitter users.*
- d. *If the image has very good quality, double-check its origin. As previously stated, many times it is not taken; it’s uploaded by a user that probably isn’t even on the streets.*

- e. Sometimes context information help: read user bio, check his recent timeline or the timeline of the time of the event if necessary to understand his media text's context.

2) Has the media text been clearly produced by the same authors publishing it?

Examples:

YES, Testimonial	NOT Testimonial
<p>Paulista #ForaTemer</p>  <p><i>Picture depicts clearly a real street protest from the pedestrian's perspective. The amateur-likeness of the image reinforces the possibility that it is authentically from a protester.</i></p>	 <p><i>Not testimonial, for it refers to another publisher (Mídia Ninja in this case). It is not content production and distribution, it is just a push on the distribution through sharing. Notice that it is a facebook post that was shared on Twitter.</i></p>




<p>  sabrina @kdbeleza </p> <p> Follow </p> <p> #foratemer #florianópolis </p>  <p> <i>Picture from a participant's perspective. Message shows an intent to narrate the event, reinforced by the hashtags with location that give a sense of where and when.</i> </p>	<p>  MVM_News @MVM_News </p> <p> Follow </p> <p> Via @MidiaNINJA > Com muita força e vibração, manifestantes seguem pelas ruas do Rio de Janeiro. #ForaTemer </p> <p> <small>Translate from Portuguese</small> </p>  <p> <i>User mentions the source, so it is clear that the picture was not taken by him/herself.</i> </p>
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Only if the media text refers to the event in a testimonial manner **AND** seems to have been produced by the same author that publishes it, then it should be coded as a testimonial and coder should proceed to part II.

PART II: Testimonial categories

1. Exposure

Choose the kind of attachment connecting the media created to the Tweet message. It can have the form of an *embed* (such as natively uploaded twitter photos) or a *link* (such as Instagram or Facebook automatic posts), as the examples below show. Choose from one of those two options.

Example of <u>linked</u> media:	Example of <u>embedded</u> media:
<div>  <div> <div>Jackson Faustino</div> <div>@jfnasci</div> <div>Follow</div> </div> </div> <p>A crise começa agora! Em 64 tinha a Globo, mas não tinha internet... #foratemer fb.me/1YfykJC5K</p> <p>In this case, the coder should open the link and check if it is or not a testimonial content. Since it links a different platform, it is not possible to assess its nature without visualizing it. In case it is protected, user doesn't exist, content doesn't exist or other signs that indicate it will not be possible to access the content, mark as "unavailable".</p>	<div>  <div> <div>Felipe Betim</div> <div>@FelipeBetim</div> <div>Follow</div> </div> </div> <p>Começou. Polícia reprimiu forte. Bala de borracha esbarrou na minha perna. Muita bomba e fumaça no #ForaTemer em SP.</p> <p>Translate from Portuguese</p> 

2. Attached media

Choose the type of testimonial media attached to the Tweet. It can have many forms, but the following are the most frequent. If you find any other form, please choose *Other*:

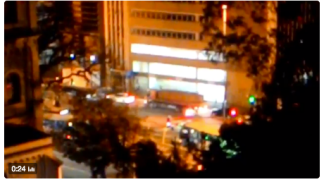


1. Video: Twitter native or external audio-visual material embedded (inserted and visualized on Twitter platform) or linked by the message (visualized in another page such as YouTube or Facebook)
2. Photo(s): photographic material. It could be unedited or edited with different levels of intervention, so long as it doesn't characterize a *Meme*, option 5.
3. Live Stream: video transmitted live (on periscope or other platforms, publicized on Twitter)
4. Location: publications that point to a place as an attachment or a link
5. Other: such as but not restricted to *Meme, Animated GIF, Audio* etc.

3. Discursive Function

Category that results from the interpretation of the main goal or discursive function supposedly intended by the author, to the extent it can be detected by the interpretation of the tweet (tweet and attached media). When linked, content should be followed to the original source (ex: Facebook link, Instagram, YouTube or others).

Please choose **only the best** answer:


Function	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
1. Accusation	<p>Moral judgement of injustice and/or sentiment of indignation with clear identification of an aggressor or persecutor</p> <p><i>In both examples, the Police is the accused party in the tweet's text</i></p> <p><i>This third example depicts an accusation against the political procedure, stating it was a coup d'état. Some hashtags such as #golpista, #FoiGolpeSim, #GolpistasFascistasNãoPassarão are examples of accusative verbalisation found on the sample</i></p>	 <p>Em Ribeirão Preto (SP), a polícia militar agride mulher que se manifestava contra o golpe #ForaTemer</p>  <p>Só pra lembrar que.... #ForaTemer</p> 
2. Mobilization	Emphasis on the invitation to join, on a specific message to go to the streets or to revolt/protest.	<p>Usage of hashtags, Emoticons or words calling for strength, resistance or action. </p> <p>closed hand, “Vamos”, #TodoMundoNasRuas, #SeEmpurraroTemerCai</p>
3. Communication	Main function is to communicate; pursues objectivity, may be an emulation of journalistic discourse (even if not by a professional communicator); There may be references to space or time attributes (“This is now at Av. Paulista”) or verbal gerund form (“ando/endo/indo” in	Examples of <u>diffusion</u> below

	<p>Portuguese). Tweets with plain texts #ForaTemer should be coded in this category.</p> <p>Also could have as its main function the diffusion as part of the communication process of connecting the information to others, such as when user calls followers to retweet or by “poking” some specific user to draw his/her attention with the resource of the @mention (see example)</p> <p><i>In the example to the right, a user documents events and warns a journalist by @mentioning him. The example above shows the intent to inform people: “Watch out, protesters!”</i></p> <p><i>Picture and text emulate journalistic discourse with informative character</i></p>	<div> <p>#Brazil #sãopaulo #ForaTemer manifestantes, Praça roosevelt está cheia de carros da polícia!cuidado!</p> <p>Translate from Portuguese</p>  <p>02:14</p> <p>Armored vehicles from Israel parked near the anti-Temer protests in #SãoPaulo. P/v @zeantonilima #ForaTemer #ACAB</p>  </div> <p>Examples of <u>narration</u> below:</p> <p>“Manifestação passa pela Praça Roosevelt...”; “agora na...” “Florianópolis”, “acompanhando”, “andando”, “marchando”, “protestando”</p> <div> <p>Jornalistas Livres @J_LIVRES Following</p> <p>Avenida Paulista agora em ato #ForaTemer</p> <p>Translate from Portuguese</p>  <p>4:44 PM - 4 Sep 2016</p> </div>
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<p>4. Astonishment</p>	<p>The emphasis on the media text is the exacerbated emotion that the user feels. User is overwhelmed either by nice (“wonderful, beautiful”) or terrible (“this can’t be happening”; “How’s this even possible?”)</p> <p><i>This tweet shows both the display of emotional wording and emoticons that indicate that the user is probably more centred on expressing his/her emotions</i></p>	<p>Use of predominantly emotional choice of words that describe feelings (“maravilhosa”, “tá lindo”), or emoticons such as hearts, kisses, hugs etc.</p> <p>Tá lindo ❤️ #ForaTemer #ForaTemerGolpista</p>  <p>A manifestação de hoje foi foda! #ForaTemer</p> 
<p>5. Identity/Selfie</p>	<p>Selfies or media texts whose main purpose is to define identity, such as political inclination or party sympathy or affiliation or simply to attach his/her presence in the event with one’s personality</p> <p><i>Very personal comment in the context of the protest</i></p> <p><i>This picture is classified as identity/selfie because the person can be identified. If it were to be a sign and the person is not visible, it should be interpreted as opinion/statement, for the protagonist is the sign, not the person with the sign.</i></p> <p><i>“As mina de luta, na luta”: the text could be indicative of the main function of the message, supporting or complementing the image, in this case.</i></p>	<p>Quero dizer que a melhor namorada do mundo é minha #FORATEMER #NÃO RECONHEÇO GOVERNO GOLPISTA</p>   



4. Political Stand


Political stand is an attribute of the Tweet media text; it shouldn't consider elements of context such as biography of the user. Please choose **only the best** answer:

Pol. Stand	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
1. For	Clearly supportive of the protest or participant of the protest, besides the evident #ForaTemer (which is present in all of the tweets)	Wording against main characters of Rousseff's impeachment ("contra o Michel Temer e o Cunha") or defining the impeachment as criminal event (wording such as "golpe", "corruptos", "ditadura", "ilegítimo"). Usage of hashtags that express the same as above mentioned: #DitaduraTemer, #PelaDemocracia, #TemerJamais etc.
2. Neutral	Discourse, imagery, all media text elements pursue a certain neutrality. This is after considering that all data contain #ForaTemer, an indicator of probably being favorable with the protest. Regardless, this item identifies that the rest of the media text points to a certain neutrality. The adoption of #ForaTemer in this case, should be that of joining the conversation, more than as a political statement. <i>The absence of other cues indicate possible neutrality (within the subset of messages that contain #ForaTemer which is already a political statement), such as when there is no text but #ForaTemer and a picture from a detached point of view, such as from above (see first example). It is interpreted as a typical journalistic perspective, with a little distance and attempting to describe well the event at hand, therefore possibly pursuing a sense of neutrality.</i>	Examples could be the emulation of journalistic speech and framing techniques by professionals or other kinds of users. #foratemer  1:58 AM - 1 Sep 2016 from Avenida Senador Salgado Filho Eduardo Kimpara @ekimpara Follow Av Paulista cheia, gritando #ForaTemer cc @j_livres Translate from Portuguese  5:07 PM - 4 Sep 2016
3. Against	It is unexpected to find testimonial content against the protest tagged with #ForaTemer. There are critics that joined the conversation, but their content is usually argumentative, purely textual, many times just responses to pro-protest posts, or with meme-like imagery. No unfavorable tweets were found so far containing testimonial media.	No examples so far.
4. Unclear	It is not possible to assess the political position of the media text, texting or media are ambiguous or could somehow lead to different interpretations or the political stand behind the message.	No examples so far

5. Constructedness



Brief interpretation of how much the media text is intervened by the author/publisher. Please choose **only the best** answer:


Constructedness	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
1. Unedited	<p>Media text with no clear signs of editing after the capture process.</p> <p><i>This picture depicts a scene that could be post-edited to clarify and it is slightly out of focus, both signs of an unedited picture</i></p>	 <p>https://twitter.com/AnaFerr97200381/statuses/771177469147611136</p>
2. Quick Edit	<p>Media text displays signs of brief edits between capture and publication on the tweet</p> <p><i>This tweet shows the insertion of a heart figure and some text on the second picture, small quick interventions.</i></p> <p><i>This second image published on Instagram has clearly been post-edited with one of the APP's filters</i></p>	<p>Simple text insertions, Memes, introductions to videos and simple editing techniques, Instagram filters or regular B&W filters.</p> <p>#LutarSempre #ForaTemer tava lindo pra caralho (vai continuar, vai ser maior)</p> <p><small>Translated from Portuguese</small></p> 

3. Edited	<p>Major editing has taken place. In terms of this research it indicates that the velocity was not the main premise, so probably the testimonial value is lesser than other unedited content.</p> <p><i>This picture has most probably gone through some light correction, not as clearly, and could be confused with a quick edit. Though, considering how difficult is to get that quality of picture at night, that it has the watermark of the photographer and the timestamp versus the time indicated in the text (23:53 x 22:45) point that there is a one hour difference between taking the picture and publishing, it has probably gone through software editing, not merely an automatic social network or smartphone filter; therefore I've considered a whole edit.</i></p>	<p>It could take the form of colour correction, Photoshop editing, collages, post-production (effects, sound editing, narration).</p>  <p>https://twitter.com/femmelibe/rte/statuses/771179058537242624</p>
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6. Media Standards


Category that indicates semiotic properties of the text related to media standards (framing, discourse, camera movements etc.). Please choose **only the best** answer:

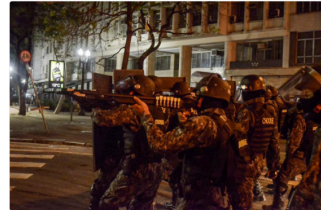


Standard	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
Amateur	<p>The media text depicts an amateur-like composition, narrative, framing and/or others.</p> <p><i>This picture has no composition or framing intention other than to document the presence, has no narrative, it is clearly an amateur-like photograph.</i></p>	<p>Casual texting, grained or stirred pictures, moving camera (video) are a few signs of amateurism.</p> 
Professional	<p>Media text shows professional aesthetics of the media text including composition, narration, framing and/or others.</p> <p><i>In both examples depicted, though the users define themselves as belonging to other areas (drama and literature, respectively), the quality, post-processing and framing of the picture could be those of a professional.</i></p>	

	<p><i>User declares "Photographer on spare time" and the aesthetics of the picture resembles the professional standards</i></p>	  <p>https://twitter.com/femmeliberte/statuses/771179058537242624</p>
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7. Obtrusiveness

Classifies the level of closeness that can be inferred from the media text of the user with the depicted scene (is he a protagonist, a bystander or a distant participant, using media to engage?). Please choose **only the best** answer:

Obtrusiveness	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
1. Personal Experience	<p>The person has lived through or is living through what is being narrated.</p> <p><i>This example displays a picture taken on a first person perspective, clearly testifying the presence of the author of the image embedded IN the protest.</i></p> <p><i>Another example is the following video (open the link below) in which the filmmaker himself suffers the consequences of a police bomb nearby:</i></p> <p>https://twitter.com/MudaMais/statuses/771174542139994112</p>	<p>Examples could be selfies or images from the perspective of the participant</p>  <p>http://twitter.com/Ericks4ntos/statuses/771167625766330368</p>

	<p><i>This other example is more tricky: though the picture is taken from above (showing a little distance that could indicate a witness perspective), the text is written in first person “we will disturb your sleep”, giving a sense of belonging/participating actively instead of merely narrating, so this should be understood as Personal Experience</i></p>	<p>Tirou o nosso voto, agora tiramos o seu sossego! #ForaTemer <small>Translate from Portuguese</small></p>  <p>https://twitter.com/_gabybinds/statuses/771195806363758592</p>
2. Witness	<p>The intended message seems to be somewhere close, but not where the author stands. Testimony guards a certain distance, so it is not recognized as pointing to the experience of the user but to someone else's. Author of the content is not amongst the protagonist of it.</p> <p><i>This image shows perfectly the limits of this category: though it is a picture on the author's level, it addresses what is happening somewhere else; in this case, police-officers pointing their gun at people somewhere to the author's left side. Here the importance of navigating through the whole message: tweet text, links, imagery/video and in some cases, user biography and other links.</i></p> <p><i>User takes a picture from above, and viewpoint contrary to that of a participant; this should be considered witness.</i></p> <p><i>Here the user takes a typical witness standpoint that frames the whole activity probably with the intent to grasp a better view to tell the story, emulating the journalistic perspective to some degree.</i></p>	<p>Fala q isso foi pra dispersar??? Mirando na gt??? Q porra q é essa? #FORATEMER <small>Translate from Portuguese</small></p>  <p>https://twitter.com/icfr/statuses/771190574560874496</p> <p>#foratemer</p>  <p>1:58 AM - 1 Sep 2016 from Avenida Senador Salgado Filho</p>  <p>https://twitter.com/MidiaNINJA/statuses/771192539592298496</p>
3. Mediated Protest	<p>Testimony through mediated imagery, as when the user “lives” the experience of protest</p>	<p>Comments on TV programs or on the news; pictures of</p>



	<p>through testimonial mediated content</p> <p><i>Apparently this people are in the movies or a theatre, definitely not on the streets, but they participate taking a selfie and publishing with the hashtag #ForaTemer. In this case, the mediated protest refers to protesting through the media</i></p> <p><i>People in what seems to be a classroom sending their message across to the protest</i></p> <p><i>Notice Rede Globo's sign on the lower right corner of the picture: it is a picture of a TV image. That means user is being a testimony but in a mediated form; still he creates a mediated testimony that transposes the information to another platform (Twitter in this case) augmenting its exposition, so it remains a testimonial creative act.</i></p>	<p>messages of support in other contexts (from home, from work etc.)</p>  <p>https://twitter.com/_BiancaAs/statuses/771183645654515712 #foratemer</p>  <p>https://twitter.com/NatneryNery/statuses/771183329001418752 #ForaTemer SP</p>  <p>5:32 PM - 4 Sep 2016 https://twitter.com/raphaelplay/statuses/772532742391209986</p>
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8. Twitter User




Classifies the user according to his/her main role on Twitter, as analysed by the metadata, especially bio description, but also other available data (Twitter timeline, bio picture, links, information in other linked social media profiles etc.) in case of


need to clarify or verify. Specific instructions: read user biography, follow bio links (personal or professional website, Facebook, Instagram or other social network profiles) and links to the links (Facebook profile, blogs etc).

Please choose **only the best** answer:

User	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
1. Activist	<p>An activist is a user that explicitly defines himself politically, either on the profile, on the analysed tweet or in the historical timeline of tweets.</p> <p><i>User https://twitter.com/nisnoopy had adopted a symbol that combines a closed upright fist with the female gender icon, that could be interpreted as fight or black power (closed fist) with feminism.</i></p>	<p>Words that imply political activism such as “luchador/a”; “ativista”, “comunista”; words that imply political affiliation or party identification such as “petista”; visual elements such as photo or emoticons that imply activism</p> 
2. Alternative Media	<p>Media outlets that are not linked to big media groups and are not affiliated to any political party, the most outstanding example being “Midia Ninja”, notorious for its coverage on the social protests since 2013.</p> <p><i>This user has a “brand name” that could be interpreted as media but not many other elements to support that it is a stable outlet, indicating it should be an alternative one. This specific case seems to be a medium born in the heat of the political crisis in Brazil, and its name “Agency Democratize” indicates a viewpoint that there is a relationship between political system (democratic) and media.</i></p>	


<p>3. Fake/ Character</p>	<p>Not a real person or organisation. Could be made up characters (ex: Dilma Bolada) or simply fake profiles of famous or non-existing people, which may or may not have political intent. Bots should be included in this group.</p> <p><i>This profile has no attachment to a real person or organisation; it is merely a communication means.</i></p>	 <p>Buchada de Bode @Buchada_de_Bode</p> <p>#Lula2018 Pela Democracia e pela Paz!... Contra o golpe!!!! Nazi/Fascistas serão todos devidamente bloqueados. Jesus ama vocês, eu não! Block</p> <p>https://twitter.com/Buchada_de_Bode</p>
<p>4. Journalist</p>	<p>User that describes him/herself as a journalist or his/her activities as communication/journalism.</p> <p><i>The example shows a post by an user that has a Facebook channel categorized as “communication” and besides holds a blog and uses journalistic jargons in his video and blog posts.</i></p> <p><i>Link from bio of user https://twitter.com/diretodaredacao leads to a Medium.com channel in which user defines himself as a journalist. Also, twitter handle indicates the same profession (@diretodaredacao)</i></p>	 <p>https://twitter.com/JimmyNigh/status/771167870331949057</p> <p>Danilo Motta O terror da concorrência jornalista@motta@gmail.com</p>
<p>5. Ordinary</p>	<p>An ordinary user is one that doesn't appear to have a defined role in the activities that take place around a protest. He is a citizen that is not an activist. Bio description, picture etc. are not related mainly with political aspects.</p> <p><i>Many users don't display any text or display poetic self-defining texts such as the one depicted here.</i></p>	 <p>Luchi Ledesma @LuciaMLedesma</p> <p>Todo lo que leen acá es resultado de la imaginación de mi holograma que sueña en Internet.</p> <p>https://twitter.com/LuciaMLedesma</p>

<p>6. Photographer</p>	<p>User that describes him/herself as a photographer or shows signs of being a photographer (ex: user photo with a camera).</p> <p><i>This user defines herself as “photographer in spare time” which could be associated as a hobby. Still, we should consider her as photographer for her skills of photography are expected to be superior, so it is interesting to analyse apart.</i></p>	 <p>ELAINE CAMPOS @femmeliberte Fotógrafa nas horas vagas!</p> <p>http://twitter.com/femmeliberte/statuses/771184405175898113</p>
<p>7. Political Association / Interest Group</p>	<p>Includes political parties, associations, networks and interest groups around political issues, ideologies and others.</p> <p><i>This example shows a Twitter User created around the political interests and struggles of the working class, it supposedly speaks on their behalf.</i></p> <p><i>This user is an official user from a regional section of political party Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT)</i></p>	 <p>soalutagarante @soalutagarante Página feita para divulgar os ganhos históricos dos trabalhadores e mostrar as conquistas que estão sendo ameaçadas. Trabalhador: só a luta te garante!</p> <p>https://twitter.com/soalutagarante</p>  <p>PTSUL @ptsul PTSul - Bancada Estadual do PT na AL/RS</p> <p>https://twitter.com/ptsul</p>

8. Public Figure	<p>Statements of public figures such as celebrities, politicians etc.</p> <p><i>Eduardo Suplicy is a traditional politician from Sao Paulo; he tweets from his own official (verified) account.</i></p>	 <p>Tá rolando um sonoro #ForaTemer na Paulista ocupada contra o governo ilegítimo! #Equipe</p> <p>https://twitter.com/esuplicy/statuses/772525932670291969</p>
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9. Early Diffusion Channel

This category refers to the kind of channel the media text was first published. Twitter many times is connected to channels and platforms such as YouTube or Instagram; this differentiates categories *Early Diffusion Channel* from *Twitter User*. When that is not the case, there should be correspondence between both categories, such as Alternative Media in both or if the tweet is by an ordinary Twitter User embedded in Twitter (such as a photo), it means necessarily that the channel is a Personal Channel. OBS: Fake/character user may be instrumentalized in some of the forms below, it will depend on the habits of use of the account. The recommendation is to look for tips in the biography and in the regular timeline to make an informed decision.

Channel	Description of the contents	Examples from sample
Individual Channel	Channel is attributed to an individual person, independently of being a more or less notorious or other attributes. Names that sound real, pictures of a person, data related to geographical locations or profession and other information linked to a real life person should be indicators of a Personal Channel; an exception is when it is a fake or made up character, that provides context, but fake context. In case of uncertainty, coder should check the timeline to watch the pattern: personal information, opinion, personal events should indicate a Personal Channel	 <p>Layanne Veloso @LayanneVeloso Joined June 2016</p> <p>https://twitter.com/Layanne</p>

	<p><i>The first example doesn't provide much personal information but shows apparently the same person in two pictures.</i></p> <p><i>The second example shows a person that includes its location, its occupation (journalism student and musician) and even its birthday.</i></p>	<p>Veloso</p>  <p>Elder Lima @euelderlima</p> <p>14/04 Jornalista em Formação Músico Fortaleza - Ce 🌞</p> <p>📍 Jôquei Clube, Fortaleza</p> <p>📅 Joined April 2009</p> <p>🕒 Born on April 14</p> <p>https://twitter.com/euelderlima</p>
Network	<p>Groups of interest, communities of practice or other informal networked groups represented by the Twitter user.</p> <p><i>The depicted user is a group formed around the political crisis plus a geographic location: New York.</i></p>	 <p>Defend Democracy @BrazilDemocracy</p> <p>We support initiatives that defend the rule of law and democracy in Brazil, uniting the Brazilian community and supporters to our cause in New York.</p> <p>📍 New York, NY</p> <p>🌐 facebook.com/defenddemocrac...</p> <p>📅 Joined March 2016</p> <p>https://twitter.com/BrazilDemocracy</p>
Organizational Channel	<p>Channel belongs to some form of organisation AND it is not a media outlet linked to the organisation.</p>	<p>TV Vermelho is a media outlet linked to Pcdob political party, therefore should be coded as <i>alternative media</i> in this category. Instead @Pcdob Oficial is the official channel for the organisation, therefore should be coded as <i>organizational channel</i>.</p>

Complicated Cases and some examples of criteria

1. <https://twitter.com/joomikhail/status/772518408525053952>: Looks like a selfie identitary post but user is different than protagonist of the picture. It should be assumed that the user is taking the picture, so it would present more emphasis on the emotional side due to the mix of humor and expressiveness shown on the text of the tweet (“Lindo demais”), so it should be coded as astonishment, that represents a exacerbated expression of emotion.
2. <http://twitter.com/ajazzhouse/statuses/772518371078316037>: Text doesn’t seem to add much to help interpret a discursive function but as the user mentions three other users we’ll interpret it as diffusion, therefore, communicative discourse.
3. <https://twitter.com/Guevara29Israel/statuses/772519442433572864>: NOT TESTIMONIAL. Looks like an edited testimonial, but the events take place in Sao Paulo and imagery is provided by a collaborator other than the Facebook and Twitter user, who is in Curitiba, Paraná. In order to be considered a testimonial content it should be produced and published by the same user.
4. <https://twitter.com/StalloneFermino/statuses/772519375219941377>: Though this tweet looks testimonial at first glance, the picture is too professional and it was taken by night, while the tweet is approximately at 4:30pm, therefore daylight in the whole country. A quick search with Google images shows publications from news outlets over the previous days, therefore it is conclusively an uploaded picture. Even if user was to be the author, the picture would be testimonial to a different event, therefore it is not a testimonial tweet.

Appendix B – Reliability Tests

The question of reliability in Content Analysis such as the present task may be defined as “agreement amongst coders about categorizing content” (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005, p. 123). So a certain degree of reliability, for content analysis, is a necessary attribute to ensure the replicability of the method applied. Still, this is always a challenge when the research is dealing with not so established concepts, or more complicated in the case of the delimitation of a new central concept as is the case of the present research. More complicated yet because many of the developed categories subject to coding are more of a *latent* nature, instead of *manifest* (Riffe et al., p. 125), which means that observation must be accompanied by interpretation, making it more difficult to achieve higher rates of inter-coder reliability. Latent content meanings imply some challenges: they may change in time, may have different meanings in different contexts (such as different groups); they may rely on cultural interpretations (such as national background) or previous knowledge of the content (such as previous political events, in the present case). This last one is very important in our case since the research deals with political User-Generated Content and such kind of content may be subject to language exercises, not obvious for an outsider, like irony and metalanguage, among others.

Besides, tUGC, just like UGC in the work of Wardle, Dubberley & Brown (2014), is a non-declared typology; in other words, nobody declares: “I am publishing a tUGC”. They just do it, for it is a communicative practice, effect of the appropriation of technology at hand in junction with user’s needs and/or motivations. In terms of the operationalisation that aims to create a codebook to guide Content Analysis (to be described in the following section and detailed in Appendix 1), this means it has a lot of *latent* attributes besides the *manifest* ones (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005), introducing some complexity to the process.

Also, intrinsic to the challenge of classifying *eyewitness media* (Mortensen, 2015) are some of the characteristics of such media outputs, such as the following:

[T]he communicative routes and actors behind the information tend to be hard to retrace. Some of these traits are especially important to bear in mind when it comes to the role played by eyewitness images in conflictual media events. Media institutional ambiguity constitutes a basic premise for understanding the way in which images produced by non-professionals enter the professional realm of the mainstream news media and transform the practices of journalism. Subjectivity and decontextualization are decisive for how eyewitness images act as sources in both journalism and criminal investigation. (p. 541)

On one hand, *Institutional ambiguity* implies difficulties in determining the level of professionalism of citizen media, such as the pro-am profile described by Leadbeater and Miller (2004), the lack of context (either from the media text itself as from the user that first publishes it) leads to ambiguity in the interpretation of basic elements such as source, event depicted, authorship. Through developing rigorous criteria to attempt to sort that out, content analysis reliability resulted in reasonable levels of agreement in the coding process. Riffe et al. (2015) indicate that "the lower coefficient would be appropriate for research that is breaking new ground with concepts that are rich in analytical value", supported by Krippendorff's (2004, mentioned by Riffe et al. 2005) affirmation that variables with levels of *Krippendorff's Alpha* as low as .667 "could be acceptable for drawing tentative conclusions" (p.151).

In face of such difficulties, to ensure a good level of reliability and consequently the reproducibility of this research, three different coders, all Communications Sciences PhD students, including the author, participated in the process. The coders were selected according to the following criteria:

1. Advanced knowledge of Portuguese: this is the language of all but a few of the tweets analysed.

2. Brazilian political context: this is important to interpret the meaning of the statements, in order to code, for instance, *discursive function* or *Political Stand*. There is a lot of irony, for instance, against an interview of the president stating there were only about 40 people protesting (see Figure B1).
3. Communication field: to understand categories such as *Media Standards* and *Obtrusiveness*, the coder must have prior knowledge of professional communication concepts such as framing, viewpoint etc.



Figure B1: Ironic tweet accusing the president of lying about the dimension of the protests. It says "40 people, right, Temer?" (Source: Twitter, Available on <https://twitter.com/MidiaNINJA/statuses/772555328445616128> accessed on September 23, 2017).

The first pair of coders worked on a sufficient sample of *testimonial/not-testimonial* content and ran a pilot with the other categories for a sample of *testimonial* content. The code was adjusted according to the results and the third coder was asked to code all categories but the first (*testimonial/not-testimonial*, already coded by the first team). He was provided with a different randomized sample of tweets from one of the datasets.

The samples for both processes followed the proposition by Riffe and colleagues (2005), and the specific numbers of the research were interpolated, for the expected number of (i) total media tweets, that is, after the data computer-assisted screening (3.941) and (ii) for the total expected number of testimonial tweets (1.230):

Table B1: Estimation of units of analysis that must be coded in an intercoder reliability test for Content Analysis (Source: Adapted from Riffe et al., 2005)

Amount of units of analysis to intercoder reliability tests (Riffe et al, 2005)		
10.000	141	
5.000	139	
3.941	135	Original Media Tweets
1.230	126	tUGC
1.000	125	
500	111	
250	91	

The results calculated using the ReCal2 software (Freelon, 2010) indicated an average 0.70 using Krippendorff's α and 87,1% using percentage agreement (see Table B2 below for reliability estimates and descriptives of each variable). The process is detailed as follows:

i. Testimonial/Not Testimonial

Being the binary category *Testimonial or not testimonial* the most important variable for the research, for it screens the subsample that will be coded with the other categories, it was subjected to both an *intercoder reliability test* that resulted in 8,6% of divergence and to an *intracoder reliability test* for N=2425 tweets, that brought up 52 Testimonial Tweets with 100% compliance between both sets.

ii. Attributes

The other attributes that define tUGC were subject to reliability tests with a random sample of content pre-screened as testimonial by the author. Two colleagues were put to the task, as previously described, and the results were the following:

Table B2: Reliability test results. (Source: Author)

Attribute	Level of agreement (%)	Krippendorff's Alpha	Scott's Pi
Attached Media	95.42%	0.8345	0.8339
Exposure	98.47%	0.9651	0.965
Discursive Function	81.75%	0.7226	0.7215
Political Stand	70.63%	0.3842	0.3817
Constructedness	84.92%	0.6333	0.6318
Obtrusiveness	79.37%	0.624	0.6218
Media Standards	85.71%	0.4672	0.4651
Twitter User	76.19%	0.5595	0.5577
Early Channel	95.24%	0.7744	0.7735
AVERAGE	85.30%	0.66	0.66

Table B3: Results of the intercoder reliability tests in terms of percentage of agreement (Source: Author)

Category	% of Intercoder agreement
Attached Media	96.3%
Exposure	98.1%
Discursive Function	80.4%
Political Stand	67.3%
Constructedness	84.1%
Obtrusiveness	69.2%
Media Standards	83.2%
Twitter User	74.8%
Early Channel	91.6%

The attribute *Media Standard*, on having a high percentage of agreement (87%) and a low Scott's Pi value (0.47), could indicate high levels of coincidence and is considered by some authors a moderate agreement (Viera & Garrett, 2005, p. 362) even considering the attenuating circumstances of the present research, mentioned previously. This happens because it is a dichotomous variable with a much higher percentage to one of the values (in an approximate proportion of 1 to 8 in the present case), which makes it more prone to agreement by chance. The

attribute *Political Stand* has even lower Scott's Pi value (0.38), which is considered by Viera and Garret (2005) a "fair agreement" and it presents a slightly lower level of agreement. Other authors, though, work with lower values of Scott's Pi or Krippendorff's alpha, arguing that "it is a well-known issue that Krippendorff's alpha measures tend to be relatively low when assessing inter-coder agreement of binary classification tasks with unbalanced class distributions" (Bruscher et al., 2014, p. 197). Furthermore, following McHugh, "if raters are well trained and little guessing is likely to exist, the researcher may safely rely on percent agreement to determine interrater reliability" (McHugh, 2012, p. 282). Considering that the other coders were colleague PhD students, who should be reliable as to sustain that they do not guess, as McHugh states, both because they understand and appreciate the importance of their contribution and because they were not motivated by financial rewards. Nevertheless, while both attributes were maintained, I recognize the possibility of improving its operationalisation for future researches.

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Appendix C – Informed Consent Model (Portuguese)



PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE CHILE

DOCUMENTO DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA ENTREVISTAS INDIVIDUAIS

Você está convidada(o) a participar no estudo **Del testimonio al testimonial: La producción y difusión de Contenido Generado por Usuario de carácter testimonial (CGUt) para la convocatoria de protesta** a cargo do pesquisador Marcelo Luis Barbosa dos Santos, da Pontificia Universidad Católica do Chile.

O objetivo desta carta é te ajudar a tomar a decisão de participar desta pesquisa científica.

Qual o objetivo desta pesquisa?

O objetivo desta pesquisa é entender os diferentes usos que distintas pessoas/usuários fazem das tecnologias de comunicação no contexto de um protesto, usando como estudo de caso o uso de Twitter durante episódios de protesto em torno à votação do Senado que levou ao impeachment de Dilma Rousseff no dia 31 de agosto de 2016 no Brasil.

Em que consiste sua participação?

Uma entrevista de aproximadamente 45-60 minutos com o investigador, para responder perguntas sobre a forma como se usou Twitter durante os protestos dos dias 31/08/2016 e 04/09/2016. Também podem ser pertinentes para a investigação hábitos de uso das tecnologias, afinidades, militância ou posicionamento político.

O que significa para você esta participação?

Ao participar nesta investigação, você será mencionada(o) no trabalho acadêmico conducente a tese de doutoramento, possivelmente em artigos acadêmicos a serem publicados em revistas do campo e possivelmente em artigos na imprensa e um livro que concluiria a investigação e deveria ser distribuído de forma regular nas livrarias, possivelmente do Chile e Brasil.

Sua voz será gravada em mídia digital e partes da entrevista poderiam ser transcritas nos formatos previamente apontados.

Embora assumimos que a informação tratada neste contexto não é de caráter sensível e que o conteúdo estudado é informação distribuída em uma plataforma pública como

Twitter, seu nome pode ser mantido de forma confidencial, bastando para isso declarar no início da entrevista sua opção. Elementos de contexto, não obstante, são importantes para realizar relações entre o perfil do usuário e os modos de uso da tecnologia.

A informação desta entrevista é um aporte ao campo, complementando informação sobre os diferentes hábitos de uso de Twitter em situação de protesto social. Não obstante, não se prevê nenhum benefício pessoal para os entrevistados.

Você poderá receber os resultados das análises realizadas se assim desejar. O investigador se compromete a entregar um relatório em caso que você manifeste tal desejo.

O que acontece com a informação que você entrega?

A informação será registrada em formato digital. Adicionalmente se tomarão notas. Seu nome será utilizado conforme mencionado anteriormente, segundo sua opção.

As transcrições dos áudios e as notas serão digitalizadas e guardadas no computador pessoal do investigador e em um resguardo na “nuvem” (Google Drive). Não será compartilhado com outras pessoas.

Caso você não queira aparecer com seu nome real tanto nas publicações como nos relatórios internos, se adotará um pseudônimo. Não obstante é importante estar consciente que por vezes é possível identificar a pessoa detrás do pseudônimo a partir das informações usadas nas publicações.

A informação gerada nesta entrevista será usada exclusivamente para: (1) esta pesquisa, com finalidade profissional, e (2) possivelmente para um livro no final do processo de doutoramento. Os resultados serão difundidos em congressos acadêmicos e outras atividades de difusão em que participe o investigador, além de revistas científicas do campo.

Em caso de necessidade de usar a informação para novas pesquisas, o investigador solicitará novamente um consentimento para o uso dos dados.

A informação será mantida por até 15 anos e então será eliminada.

Estou obrigada(o) a participar? Posso me arrepender depois?

A participação neste estudo é VOLUNTÁRIA. Ainda se aceita participar, você tem o direito a retirar-se em qualquer momento sem nenhum tipo de repercussão para a sua pessoa.

Você pode negar consentir a gravação da entrevista de forma parcial ou completa. Em qualquer momento pode solicitar que o pesquisador responda qualquer dúvida ou inquietação sobre o estudo e pedir mais informações sobre as implicações de sua participação.

Quem pode ser contactado para saber mais sobre este estudo ou se tenho dúvidas a posteriori?

Ante qualquer dúvida, pode contatar Marcelo Santos, telefone +56 9 683.59.684 ou por email: mlsantos@uc.cl.

Qualquer dúvida que tenha ou preocupação relacionada a seus direitos como participante desta investigação, pode também entrar em contato com o Comitê Ético Científico em Ciências Sociais e Humanidades da Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile no seguinte email: eticadeinvestigacion@uc.cl

ASSINATURA DO CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Pesquisador Responsável: Contato Marcelo Luis Barbosa dos Santos, telefone: +59 9 68359684 , e-mail: mlsantos@uc.cl

- Li e discuti a importância da pesquisa com o responsável. Tive a oportunidade de fazer perguntas sobre o propósito e os procedimentos em relação ao estudo.
- Entendi que o propósito do estudo não é evangelizador e sim de geração de conhecimento sobre o uso e a apropriação de tecnologias em contexto de protesto social.
- Minha participação neste estudo é voluntária. Posso me negar a participar ou renunciar tal participação a qualquer momento sem necessidade de dar qualquer justificativa.
- Em caso de que no transcurso do estudo, seja disponibilizada uma nova informação significativa relacionada à minha vontade de continuar participando, o pesquisador se compromete a me comunicar tal informação.
- Estou informada(o) que o projeto poderá publicar informações que me identifiquem pessoalmente derivadas do processo de pesquisa.
- Se em algum momento eu tiver alguma pergunta relacionada com a condução da pesquisa, minha participação ou meus direitos posso entrar em contato tanto com o pesquisador como com o Comitê Ético Científico em Ciências Sociais, Artes e Humanidades da Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile através dos meios supracitados.
- Recibo uma cópia do presente consentimento informado.
- Minha assinatura significa que estou de acordo em participar neste estudo.

Assinatura da/o Participante

Data

Nome da/o Participante

Assinatura do Pesquisador

Data

(Assinaturas em duplicado: uma cópia para o participante e uma para o pesquisador)

Appendix D – Other Tables and Graphs

Table D1: Descriptive statistics of testimonial tweets per attribute (Source: Author)

	Original	% originals	Total	Retweets	% Retweets	Retweet Rate
Grand Total	1,223	100.0%	21,513	20,290	100.0%	16.6
Twitter User						
Activist	127	10.4%	1135	1,008	5.0%	7.9
Alternative Media	85	7.0%	8416	8,331	41.1%	98.0
Fake/Character	26	2.1%	2002	1,976	9.7%	76.0
Journalist	145	11.9%	879	734	3.6%	5.1
Ordinary	708	57.9%	2391	1,683	8.3%	2.4
Photographer	38	3.1%	111	73	0.4%	1.9
Political Association	67	5.5%	4819	4,752	23.4%	70.9
Public Figure	27	2.2%	1760	1,733	8.5%	64.2
Attached Media						
Animated GIF	2	0.2%	204	202	1.0%	101.0
Live Stream	9	0.7%	350	341	1.7%	37.9
Location	5	0.4%	5	0	0.0%	0.0
Photo(s)	961	78.6%	14,647	13,686	67.5%	14.2
Video	246	20.1%	6,307	6,061	29.9%	24.6
Constructedness						
Edited	50	4.1%	2,405	2,355	11.6%	47.1
Quick Edit	176	14.4%	4,983	4,807	23.7%	27.3
Unedited	997	81.5%	14,125	13,128	64.7%	13.2
Media Standards						
Amateur	1,046	85.5%	13,014	11,968	59.0%	11.4
Professional	177	14.5%	8,499	8,322	41.0%	47.0
Exposure						
Embedded	1,154	94.4%	21,173	20,019	98.7%	17.3
Linked	69	5.6%	340	271	1.3%	3.9

	Original	% originals	Total	Retweets	% Retweets	Retweet Rate
Grand Total	1,223	100.0%	21,513	20,290	100.0%	16.6
Obtrusiveness						
Mediated Protest	229	18.7%	551	322	1.6%	1.4
Personal Experience	449	36.7%	5,205	4,756	23.4%	10.6
Witness	545	44.6%	15757	15,212	75.0%	27.9
Discursive Function						
Accuse	338	27.6%	7017	6,679	32.9%	19.8
Mobilize	269	22.0%	6286	6,017	29.7%	22.4
Identity/Selfie	115	9.4%	1089	974	4.8%	8.5
Astonishment	109	8.9%	1764	1,655	8.2%	15.2
Communicate	392	32.1%	5357	4,965	24.5%	12.7
Discursive Function (Macro)						
Communication	392	32.1%	5,357	4,965	24.5%	12.7
Political Action	607	49.6%	13,303	12,696	62.6%	20.9
Self-Expression	224	18.3%	2,853	2,629	13.0%	11.7
Political Stand						
Against	3	0.2%	9	6	0.0%	2.0
For	852	69.7%	16,394	15,542	76.6%	18.2
Neutral	345	28.2%	5,000	4,655	22.9%	13.5
Unclear	23	1.9%	110	87	0.4%	3.8
Channel (Early Diffusion)						
Individual Channel	1,062	86.8%	8,217	7,155	35.3%	6.7
Network	45	3.7%	4,007	3,962	19.5%	88.0
Organizational Channel	116	9.5%	9,289	9,173	45.2%	79.1

Table D2: Descriptive statistics of tUGC per attribute (Source: Author)

	% Original originals		Total	Retweets	% Retweets	Retweet Rate
Grand Total	886	100.0%	3,352	2,466	100.0%	2.8
Twitter User						
Journalist	144	16.3%	877	733	29.7%	5.1
Ordinary	704	79.5%	2364	1,660	67.3%	2.4
Photographer	38	4.3%	111	73	3.0%	1.9
Attached Media						
Animated GIF	1	0.1%	2	1	0.0%	1.0
Live Stream	3	0.3%	17	14	0.6%	4.7
Location	5	0.6%	5	0	0.0%	0.0
Photo(s)	712	80.4%	2,467	1,755	71.2%	2.5
Video	165	18.6%	861	696	28.2%	4.2
Constructedness						
Edited	27	3.0%	111	84	3.4%	3.1
Quick Edit	113	12.8%	351	238	9.7%	2.1
Unedited	746	84.2%	2,890	2,144	86.9%	2.9
Media Standards						
Amateur	791	89.3%	2,932	2,141	86.8%	2.7
Professional	95	10.7%	420	325	13.2%	3.4
Exposure						
Embedded	829	93.6%	3,269	2,440	98.9%	2.9
Linked	57	6.4%	83	26	1.1%	0.5

	% Original originals		Total	Retweets	% Retweets	Retweet Rate
Grand Total	886	100.0%	3,352	2,466	100.0%	2.8
Obtrusiveness						
Mediated Protest	192	21.7%	368	176	7.1%	0.9
Personal Experience	344	38.8%	1,305	961	39.0%	2.8
Witness	350	39.5%	1,679	1,329	53.9%	3.8
Discursive Function						
Accuse	247	27.9%	883	636	25.8%	2.6
Astonishment	90	10.2%	407	317	12.9%	3.5
Communicate	284	32.1%	1,121	837	33.9%	2.9
Identity/Selfie	98	11.1%	215	117	4.7%	1.2
Mobilize	167	18.8%	726	559	22.7%	3.3
Discursive Function (Macro)						
Communication	284	32.1%	1,121	837	33.9%	2.9
Political Action	414	46.7%	1,609	1,195	48.5%	2.9
Self-Expression	188	21.2%	622	434	17.6%	2.3
Political Stand						
Against	2	0.2%	8	6	0.2%	3.0
For	609	68.7%	2,326	1,717	69.6%	2.8
Neutral	256	28.9%	970	714	29.0%	2.8
Unclear	19	2.1%	48	29	1.2%	1.5
Channel (Early Diffusion)						
Individual Channel	886	100.0%	3,352	2,466	100.0%	2.8

Table D3: Retweet performance per each attribute of testimonial content.

	Original	% originals	Total	Retweets	% Retweets	Retweet Rate
Grand Total	1.223	100,0%	21.513	20.290	100,0%	16,6
Twitter User						
Activist	127	10,4%	1135	1.008	5,0%	7,9
Alternative Media	85	7,0%	8416	8.331	41,1%	98,0
Fake/Character	26	2,1%	2002	1.976	9,7%	76,0
Journalist	145	11,9%	879	734	3,6%	5,1
Ordinary	708	57,9%	2391	1.683	8,3%	2,4
Photographer	38	3,1%	111	73	0,4%	1,9
Political Association	67	5,5%	4819	4.752	23,4%	70,9
Public Figure	27	2,2%	1760	1.733	8,5%	64,2
Attached Media						
Animated GIF	2	0,2%	204	202	1,0%	101,0
Live Stream	9	0,7%	350	341	1,7%	37,9
Location	5	0,4%	5	0	0,0%	0,0
Photo(s)	961	78,6%	14.647	13.686	67,5%	14,2
Video	246	20,1%	6.307	6.061	29,9%	24,6
Constructedness						
Edited	50	4,1%	2.405	2.355	11,6%	47,1
Quick Edit	176	14,4%	4.983	4.807	23,7%	27,3
Unedited	997	81,5%	14.125	13.128	64,7%	13,2
Media Standards						
Amateur	1.046	85,5%	13.014	11.968	59,0%	11,4
Professional	177	14,5%	8.499	8.322	41,0%	47,0
Obtrusiveness						
Mediated Protest	229	18,7%	551	322	1,6%	1,4
Personal Experience	449	36,7%	5.205	4.756	23,4%	10,6
Witness	545	44,6%	15757	15.212	75,0%	27,9
Discursive Function						
Accuse	338	27,6%	7017	6.679	32,9%	19,8
Mobilize	269	22,0%	6286	6.017	29,7%	22,4
Identity/Selfie	115	9,4%	1089	974	4,8%	8,5
Astonishment	109	8,9%	1764	1.655	8,2%	15,2
Communicate	392	32,1%	5357	4.965	24,5%	12,7
Discursive Function (Macro)						
Communication	392	32,1%	5.357	4.965	24,5%	12,7
Political Action	607	49,6%	13.303	12.696	62,6%	20,9
Self-Expression	224	18,3%	2.853	2.629	13,0%	11,7
Political Stand						
Against	3	0,2%	9	6	0,0%	2,0
For	852	69,7%	16.394	15.542	76,6%	18,2
Neutral	345	28,2%	5.000	4.655	22,9%	13,5
Unclear	23	1,9%	110	87	0,4%	3,8
Channel (Early Diffusion)						
Individual Channel	1.062	86,8%	8.217	7.155	35,3%	6,7
Network	45	3,7%	4.007	3.962	19,5%	88,0
Organizational Channel	116	9,5%	9.289	9.173	45,2%	79,1
Exposure						
Embedded	1.154	94,4%	21.173	20.019	98,7%	17,3
Linked	69	5,6%	340	271	1,3%	3,9

Table D4: Binomial regression with Incidence Rate Ratio (IRR) for the different attributes to predict retweeting testimonial content (Source: Author).

	IRR	Std Err.	P> z
Number of Followers	1.70	0.048	0.000
Statuses Count	0.81	0.023	0.000
Twitter User (ref. cat. = Ordinary)			
Activist	1.88	0.191	0.000
Alternative Media	4.51	1.730	0.000
Fake/Character	2.98	0.623	0.000
Journalist	0.96	0.098	0.706
Photographer	1.02	0.203	0.926
Political Association	4.59	1.792	0.000
Public Figure	1.79	0.381	0.006
Political Stand (ref. cat. = For)			
Against	1.56	1.026	0.497
Neutral	0.87	0.098	0.224
Unclear	0.63	0.159	0.065
Obtrusiveness (ref. cat. = Personal Experience)			
Mediated Protest	0.46	0.047	0.000
Witness	1.07	0.078	0.368
Attached Media (ref. cat. = Photo(s))			
Animated GIF	0.68	0.477	0.579
Live Stream	1.45	0.513	0.292
Location	1.17	0.768	0.809
Video	1.40	0.112	0.000
Constructedness (ref. cat. = Unedited)			
Edited	1.02	0.186	0.896
Quick Edit	0.88	0.085	0.177
Media Standards (ref. cat. = Amateur)			
Professional	1.43	0.146	0.001
Discursive Function (ref. cat. = Communicate)			
Accuse	1.22	0.141	0.079
Astonishment	1.49	0.215	0.006
Identity/Selfie	1.54	0.228	0.004

Mobilize	1.02	0.128	0.873
Discursive Function Macro (ref. cat. = Communicate)			
Political Action	1.00	(omitted)	
Self-Expression	1.00	(omitted)	
Channel - Early Diffusion (ref cat. = Individual Channel)			
Network	0.65	0.261	0.282
Organizational Channel	0.65	0.234	0.234
Exposure (ref. cat. = Embedded)			
Linked	0.32	0.056	0.000
_cons	0.67	0.137	0.050

Table D5: Average marginal effects for each variable within the testimonial content attributes (Source: Author)

Delta-method			
	dy/dx	Std. Err.	P>z
Number of Followers	10.06	1.03	0.000
Statuses Count	-3.92	0.65	0.000
Twitter User (ref. cat. = Ordinary)			
Activist	6.43	1.62	0.000
Alternative Media	25.80	9.18	0.005
Fake/Character	14.52	4.45	0.001
Journalist	-0.28	0.73	0.704
Photographer	0.14	1.49	0.927
Political Association	26.40	9.74	0.007
Public Figure	5.80	2.71	0.032
Political Stand (ref. cat. = For)			
Against	11.07	20.25	0.584
Neutral	-2.51	2.02	0.214
Unclear	-7.34	3.25	0.024
Obtrusiveness (ref. cat. = Personal Experience)			

Mediated Protest	-10.08	1.39	0.000
Witness	1.28	1.41	0.362

Attached Media (ref. cat. = Photo(s))

Animated GIF	-5.60	8.31	0.500
Live Stream	7.80	8.79	0.375
Location	2.97	13.29	0.823
Video	6.85	1.86	0.000

Constructedness (ref. cat. = Unedited)

Edited	0.47	3.64	0.897
Quick Edit	-2.41	1.75	0.167

Media Standards (ref. cat. = Amateur)

Professional	7.04	2.24	0.002
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Discursive Function (ref. cat. = Communicate)

Accuse	.	(not	
Astonishment	.	(not	
Identity/Selfie	.	(not	
Mobilize	.	(not	

Discursive Function Macro (ref. cat. = Communicate)

Political Action	.	(not	
Self-Expression	.	(not	

Channel - Early Diffusion (ref cat. = Individual Channel)

Network	-9.01	9.02	0.318
Organizational Channel	-8.89	8.38	0.288

Exposure (ref. cat. = Embedded)

Linked	-13.26	1.48	0.000
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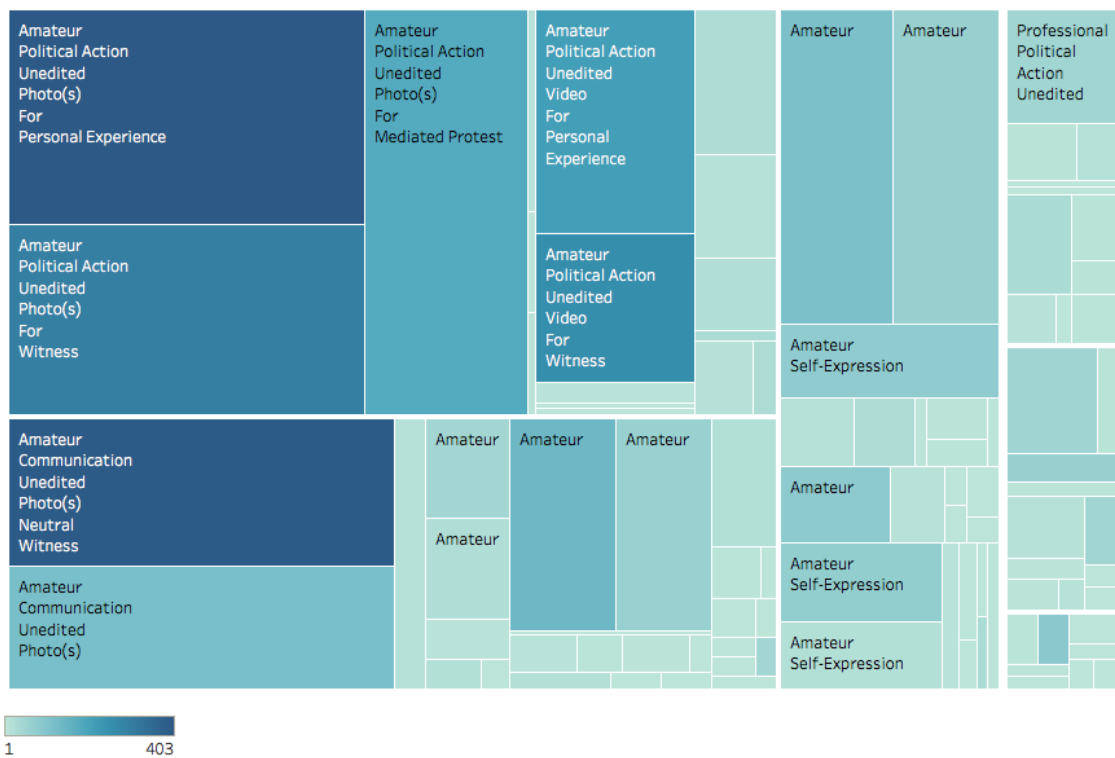
Table D6: Combined simultaneous attributes for tUGCs (Source: Author).

Media Standards	Discursive Function (Macro)	Constructiveness	Attached Media	Political Stand	Obtrusiveness	Total	Original	RT	RT / Tweet		
Amateur	Communication	Edited	Animated GIF	Neutral	Witness	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0		
		Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For	Witness	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0		
				Neutral	Mediated Protest	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
					Personal Experience	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0		
					Witness	18.0	10.0	8.0	0.8		
				Unclear	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
			Video	For	Personal Experience	43.0	1.0	42.0	42.0		
				Neutral	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
				Witness	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0			
		Unedited	Live Stream	Neutral	Personal Experience	16.0	2.0	14.0	7.0		
					Witness	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
			Location	Neutral	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
			Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	7.0	4.0	3.0	0.8		
					Personal Experience	43.0	10.0	33.0	3.3		
					Witness	21.0	10.0	11.0	1.1		
				Neutral	Mediated Protest	15.0	10.0	5.0	0.5		
					Personal Experience	117.0	56.0	61.0	1.1		
			Witness		398.0	68.0	330.0	4.9			
			Unclear	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
				Witness	18.0	2.0	16.0	8.0			
				Video	For	Personal Experience	6.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	
		Witness	3.0			2.0	1.0	0.5			
		Neutral	Mediated Protest		2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0			
			Personal Experience		59.0	24.0	35.0	1.5			
		Witness	137.0		27.0	110.0	4.1				
			Unclear		Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0		
			Witness	4.0	3.0	1.0	0.3				
		Political Action	Political Action	Edited	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	10.0	5.0	5.0	1.0
							Witness	26.0	2.0	24.0	12.0
				Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	19.0	7.0	12.0	1.7
	Personal Experience						11.0	10.0	1.0	0.1	
	Witness						25.0	14.0	11.0	0.8	
	Unedited			Neutral	Personal Experience	29.0	1.0	28.0	28.0		
				Location	For	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	
				Photo(s)	Against	Mediated Protest	8.0	2.0	6.0	3.0	
					For	Mediated Protest	179.0	78.0	101.0	1.3	
						Personal Experience	403.0	90.0	313.0	3.5	
						Witness	298.0	80.0	218.0	2.7	
					Neutral	Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	
				Unclear	Witness	4.0	1.0	3.0	3.0		
	Video	For	Mediated Protest	6.0	4.0	2.0	0.5				
			Personal Experience	211.0	42.0	169.0	4.0				
			Witness	256.0	28.0	228.0	8.1				
Unclear		Mediated Protest	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0					

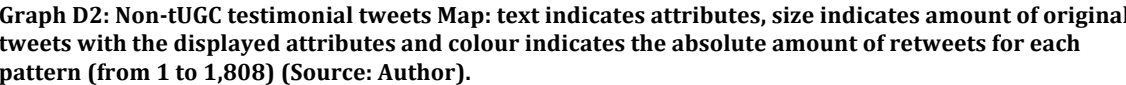
	Self-Expression	Edited	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0			
		Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	18.0	13.0	5.0	0.4			
					Personal Experience	70.0	15.0	55.0	3.7			
					Witness	6.0	3.0	3.0	1.0			
				Neutral	Mediated Protest	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0			
					Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
			Video	For	Mediated Protest	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
					Personal Experience	29.0	1.0	28.0	28.0			
				Neutral	Personal Experience	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0			
					Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
				Unedited	Location	For	Personal Experience	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	
		Neutral	Personal Experience			1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
		Photo(s)	For		Mediated Protest	62.0	40.0	22.0	0.6			
					Personal Experience	112.0	42.0	70.0	1.7			
					Witness	75.0	19.0	56.0	2.9			
			Neutral		Mediated Protest	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
					Personal Experience	25.0	5.0	20.0	4.0			
					Witness	13.0	6.0	7.0	1.2			
		Unclear	Mediated Protest		3.0	2.0	1.0	0.5				
			Personal Experience		4.0	3.0	1.0	0.3				
			Witness		1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0				
			Video		For	Personal Experience	80.0	10.0	70.0	7.0		
		Witness				9.0	5.0	4.0	0.8			
		Neutral			Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
					Witness	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
		Professional	Communication		Edited	Photo(s)	For	Witness	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
				Neutral			Personal Experience	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	
				Witness			48.0	3.0	45.0	15.0		
				Quick Edit		Photo(s)	For	Witness	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0
							Neutral	Personal Experience	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0
							Witness	11.0	6.0	5.0	0.8	
				Unclear	Witness	8.0	1.0	7.0	7.0			
					Unedited	Photo(s)	For	Witness	62.0	4.0	58.0	14.5
							Neutral	Personal Experience	5.0	3.0	2.0	0.7
				Witness			49.0	12.0	37.0	3.1		
				Video		Neutral	Witness	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.5	
	Political Action					Edited	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	5.0	4.0	1.0
		Witness						5.0	2.0	3.0	1.5	
		Video		For	Mediated Protest		3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0		
		Quick Edit		Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	9.0	3.0	6.0	2.0		
					Personal Experience	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
					Witness	29.0	8.0	21.0	2.6			
		Unedited		Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0		
					Personal Experience	15.0	3.0	12.0	4.0			
					Witness	47.0	16.0	31.0	1.9			
				Unclear	Witness	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
					Video	For	Mediated Protest	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	
					Self-Expression	Edited	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	2.0	1.0	1.0
Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For		Personal Experience		1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0			
		Witness	2.0	1.0		1.0	1.0					
Unedited	Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	4.0		1.0	3.0	3.0				
		Personal Experience	3.0	2.0		1.0	0.5					
		Witness	86.0	2.0		84.0	42.0					
	Video	Neutral	Personal Experience	1.0		1.0	0.0	0.0				
						3,352.0	886.0	2,466.0	2.8			
						Total	Total	Avg	Avg			

Table D7: Combined simultaneous attributes for non tUGCs (Source: Author).

Media Standards	Discursive Function (Macro)	Construct edness	Attached Media	Political Stand	Obtrusiveness	Total Tweets	Original Tweets	RT	RT / Tweet		
Amateur	Communication	Edited	Video	Neutral	Witness	2	1	1	1		
		Quick Edit	Photo(s)	Neutral	Personal Experience	9	1	8	8		
				Witness	11	1	10	10			
			Video	For	Personal Experience	7	1	6	6		
				Witness	176	1	175	175			
		Unedited	Live Stream	For	Witness	26	1	25	25		
				Neutral	Witness	96	1	95	95		
			Photo(s)	For	Personal Experience	20	1	19	19		
					Witness	394	4	390	98		
				Neutral	Personal Experience	294	8	286	36		
					Witness	186	6	180	30		
			Unclear	Witness	60	2	58	29			
				Video	For	Personal Experience	123	2	121	61	
			Neutral		Personal Experience	65	3	62	21		
			Witness		251	8	243	30			
			Unclear		Witness	1	1	0	0		
	Political Action		Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For	Witness	47	2	45	23	
		Video		For	Witness	258	2	256	128		
		Unedited	Live Stream	For	Personal Experience	156	2	154	77		
				Witness	53	1	52	52			
			Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	16	3	13	4		
					Personal Experience	230	6	224	37		
				Witness	1,589	22	1,567	71			
					Neutral	Witness	191	1	190	190	
			Video	For	Personal Experience	220	4	216	54		
					Witness	1,596	12	1,584	132		
		Neutral		Personal Experience	351	2	349	175			
				Witness	131	1	130	130			
		Self-Expression	Unedited	Photo(s)	For	Witness	146	6	140	23	
				Video	For	Personal Experience	74	1	73	73	
		Professional	Communication	Edited	Photo(s)	Neutral	Witness	592	3	589	196
				Quick Edit	Photo(s)	For	Witness	78	1	77	77
Neutral	Personal Experience					33	1	32	32		
Witness	782				5	777	155				
	Unedited				Photo(s)	Neutral	Personal Experience	31	1	30	30
Witness				448		6	442	74			
Political Action	Edited		Animated G	For	Witness	202	1	201	201		
			Photo(s)	For	Witness	1,265	7	1,258	180		
	Quick Edit		Photo(s)	For	Mediated Protest	9	1	8	8		
					Personal Experience	67	1	66	66		
			Witness	1,808	12	1,796	150				
				Video	For	Witness	86	2	84	42	
	Unedited		Photo(s)		For	Personal Experience	15	1	14	14	
				Witness		159	3	156	52		
			Video	For	Witness	4	1	3	3		
				Self-Expression	Edited	Photo(s)	For	Witness	136	1	135
Unedited	Photo(s)	For	Personal Experience		364	1	363	363			
			Witness	409	1	408	408				
						13,267	156	13,111	84		
						Total	Total	Mean	Mean		



Graph D1: tUGC Pattern Map. Text indicates attributes, size indicates amount of original tUGC with the displayed attributes and colour indicates the absolute amount of retweets for each pattern (from 1 to 403) (Source: Author).



Appendix E – Discursive Function Theoretical Foundations

The attribute Discursive Function is the result of a deep analysis of some theoretical referents and a few iterations with the data to test its operational validity. Table E1 is the result of the combination of three sources: Speech Acts (illocutionary acts that hinder meaning), testimonial literature and the iterative observation of data. It displays the metadata for *Discursive Function* within the realm of the creation of testimonial content during social protest and their theoretical grounding, to be detailed as follows.

				TESTIMONIAL LITERATURE							
				Constructed Meaning			Phatic (Absence of Meaning)	Open Meaning (audience judges)			
				Persecutor	Benefactor	Self (social)	Self (personal)	Event	Protagonist		
				Unjust	Touching	Sublime	Empathy	Objective (absence of moral judgement)	Moral judgement		
				Indignant	Moved	Horror	Identification	Impartial/Neutral (pursuit of impartiality)	Sentiment		
SPEECH ACTS LITERATURE				SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PRACTICES							
General Illocutionary Speech Acts		Paradigms of Verbs		Applied Broad Speech Acts	Applied Case- specific Speech Acts	Denunciation Accusation	Sentiment	Aesthetic	Conversation	Documentation	Final Topic
Declaration	Declare, nominate		Political Action	Accuse	X						
Directive	Ask, order, command, request, beg, invite, permit			Mobilize		X					
Expressive	Thank, congratulate, apologise, condole, welcome		Self-Expression	Astonishment			X				
Commissive	Promise, swear			Identity/Selfie				X			
Assertive / representative	Describe, call, conclude, deduce		Communication	Narration/Documen- tation/Diffusion						X	

Table E1: Theoretical and empirical development of the attribute *Discursive Function*. (Source: Author)

Besides *illocutionary acts* (Searle, 1976), another theoretical reference to this attribute is the literature on testimonial content, so far vastly applied to mediated testimonial content¹⁰⁶ (Ashuri & Pinchevski, 2009; Boltanski, 2004; Peters, 2001). The possibilities for *meaning* within the realm of mediated witnessing, for Ashuri and Pinchevski (2009), rely on the work of Luc Boltanski (2004) in his critique of the spectacularisation of distant suffering by media. According to the latter, the reaction of the spectator can only take the form of speech since he's miles away and, according to Peters (2001), possibly temporally dislocated. Such speech can take forms built on the literary genres "in which speech about suffering can be formulated in a way which enables us to join together a

¹⁰⁶ For a more complete assessment of the literature on the issue, refer to chapter II (tUGC)

description of the person suffering and the concern of someone informed of this suffering” (p. xv). They are *pamphlets*, *novels* and *art criticism* and they generate, respectively, the three forms of speech about the distant suffering: *denunciation*, *sentiment* and *aesthetics*, following the author’s argument that the perspective of documenting a fact is inseparable from how such document affects the audience, “involving inseparably both an argumentative and an affective dimension” (p. xv).

Our hypothesis is that speech must at the same time report to the other both what was seen and how this personally affected and involved the spectator. There is only a finite number of ways in which this can be done (...) We call these three forms, the topic of *denunciation*, the topic of *sentiment*, and the *aesthetic* topic. (p. xv)

Though the emotions and literary genres may be emulated by users as they are hit by feelings like with those described by Boltanski with even more intensity, for they **live** it, we can identify, analysing the data, two other forms of speech: (i) Communication-centred messages and (ii) Phatic messages. The first uses neutral-like media jargons and frames with the intent to emulate journalistic practices such as references to time and place (such as “#ForaTemer na Paulista agora” | *#ForaTemer at Paulista Avenue right now*), except for the fact that there is no media institution mediating. This kind of discursive strategy is more clearly identified with the idea that meaning-making is a responsibility of the audience, such as the commented (mass)mediated witnessing. On the other hand, the *phatic* style also hinders a more communicational form, but under a socializing perspective, as a conversation, a personal expression centred in the self, such as identity expressions during the protest. Those could be *selfies* or other forms of clear self-expression regarding identity, such as the following message: “Sou mulher, sou feminista e digo não ao machismo e a corrupção. #ForaTemer” | *I’m a woman, I’m feminist and I say no to machismo and corruption. #ForaTemer*.

The first two discursive functions both reflect a political action through discourse: *Accusation* reflects, building on Boltanski’s work (2004), the

identification of a perpetrator, a criminal, an offender or, in his words, a *Persecutor*, such as when one calls president Michel Temer “golpista” (meaning the “author of a coup d’état”), “corrupt” or both: “@OGloboPolitica Como é que o golpista disse? 40, 50, 100 pessoas??? #ForaTemer #ForaGloboGolpista <https://t.co/ZltlRCXkC5>” (*What did the coup-maker say? 40, 50, 100 people???*, in reference to president’s affirmation that about 40 people were protesting). *Mobilization* reflects a clear call for action either via textual message “#FORATEMER VEM PRA RUAAAAA!!!!” | #FORAREMER COME TO THE STREEEEETS!!!! or with hashtags such as #LutarSempre (fight forever). The third and fourth functions are related to self-expression: *Astonishment* and *Identity/Selfie*. The former relates to the *expressive* illocutionary act, reflected in the form of *Astonishment*, a translation Boltanski’s category of *Sublime* -applied to the reality of the protest mediated through Twitter- that is, the predominance of the aesthetic-related speech over other sentiments. Examples would contain expressions of amazement or wonder such as over-adjectivation or metalelements of speech such as emoticons or graphic signs (capital letters, exclamation signs and so on): “BEAUTIFUL THING”; “it’s so pretty!!!!”; “Police cars. Seriously?”. *Identity/Selfie* comprises messages that reflect the identity such as a selfie picture during protest or an identity statement: “I was there”; “I did my part”; “Me, right now”; “I only hang out with who is against Temer” and so on. Last, but not least for is the most used metadata, is the *Communication* function, which comprises statements of narrative, documentary or diffusion nature, usually emulating journalistic standards, at least the textual dimension.