

Web 2.0 and National Security Strategies: Similarities Between and Perspectives on Spain and Ecuador. The Cases of #15M and #30S

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Abstract

Internet is a political space and scenery for collective action. It influences and reproduces the events that occur on the “offline reality”. Hence, the cyberspace has become a battlefield where the integrity of the State can be questioned or even harmed. Occasionally, these characteristics are considered threats to the State which intervenes, legislates, monitors or blocks the communication. This phenomenon, called the securitization of the Web, will be studied through the analysis and comparison of two cases that were discussed and even created in the social media: the attempted coup d'état on September 30, 2010 in Ecuador and the 15M movement in Spain. By analyzing the legal and social discourses over these events, this article points out how the State is trying to protect its interest and structure (securitize) in order to maintain its power, force and integrity; everything in the name of the national security.

Keywords: Security, securitization, social media, cyber security, collective action, citizenship, #30S, 15M.

1. Introduction

National security is a matter that is difficult to discuss, understand and implement because it concerns the wider concept of human rights and at the same time it is the basis of legal coexistence both within and outside of States. In this context, national security is an element of tautological and subjective interpretation, subdued to a realist concept of power and to the State: “National Security responds to a series of ideologies, values, conditions and situations that vary according to the interests of those that interpret internal and external threats” (Méndez, 2009).

In this sense, national security would determine our lives since the protection of the State and its citizens would be part of all our everyday settings, according to the legislation of the country where it is being applied. In fact, national security would seek total oversight of all the everyday aspects of citizens. An example of this is the Public and State Security Law of Ecuador, issued in 2009 by the National Assembly, country object of this study, which includes comprehensive coverage of citizens with regards not only to territorial sovereignty but also includes institutions, people, communities, ethnic groups, nationalities, collectives, etc. Additionally, the Law applies “in the area of State security to protection and the control of technological and scientific risks, military technology and industry, to war material, possession and bearing of arms, as well as biological and radioactive materials and substances, etc.” (Article 2, *State Public Security Law*, 2009).

On the other hand, the Ecuadorian legislation is not the only one that refers to the various areas of human life in a comprehensive manner or as *security* in a broad and abstract sense. Currently, the tendency is to have a broad spectrum of what the State should ensure with regards to security. One example is the *Spanish Security Strategy* (2011) which with the motto “the responsibility of all”, targets the failures of globalization, demographic imbalances, poverty and inequality; climate change and technological threats, along with “radical and non-democratic ideologies”.

Thus, by extension, security could extend to all strata of human life, including those having to do with our online “life”: our identity and Internet activity. For this reason, the aforementioned Spanish strategy indicates that:

“For citizens and governments, *cyberspace* and networks of information and communication are a source of new possibilities. They allow for the provision of widely-used services such as search engines and e-mail as well as the management of private services and infrastructures in addition to a growing number of Public Administration services. It is precisely because of its essential nature that its protection and capacity to resist and recover is vital, especially given concerns about its vulnerability. *Cyber-security* is not a mere technical aspect of security but rather a fundamental component of our society and economic system. Given the ever-increasing importance of the information systems of our economy, the stability and economic prosperity of our country depends to a great measure on the security of our *cyberspace*.

This could become compromised by technical reasons, natural phenomena or by illicit attacks. *Cyber-attacks* are a growing threat with which possible aggressors – terrorists, organized crime, companies, States or isolated individuals – could destabilize critical infrastructure. There is precedent (Estonia in 2007, Georgia in 2008 and Iran in 2010) for how the loss of this infrastructure can cause serious damage to a country. *Cyberspace* itself is a setting for espionage by criminal agents as well as other States.” (*Spanish Security Strategy*, 2011)

In addition, if one takes into account that national security has also been elevated to the technological plane, especially with the advent of world-wide threats and cybernetic crimes such as *phishing*, fraud and human trafficking (UNODC), it’s impossible not to conclude that national security has entered into virtual space, that is to say, into what every citizen does through their “digital identity” on the Internet, understood as all activity or information that allows for the identification of a user on the web (OSI, 2011). *Cyberspace* is a new arena of control (Bell, 2007).

The dynamic of this Web 2.0 allows for its co-creation through software that leaves behind static interfaces for those that are multidimensional, movable and transformable (O’Reilly, 2006). The complexity of the action also determines the possibility of having a virtual life, which has been transformed into a physical problem that affects our daily lives. The internet not only reflects the level of communication or the space of accumulation of information capital necessary for the functioning of the Information Society (Castells, 2002): the current Internet is an ever-changing bulletin board that reproduces our lives and, therefore, is susceptible to control by international agencies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) or by a State power.

Therefore, the State can no longer manage public space as the only democratic, deliberative and traditional arena, or what is being referred to in this text as the “public space”. Now, it must also concentrate on the “virtual”, which includes “all that occurs online and is linked to an information society, communication, and to the capacity to move resources on the web” (Habermas, 1981; Castells, 2005; 2010. Cited by Puyosa, 2012).

It’s necessary to recognize that in the virtual spaces, as spaces of deliberation, there are also phenomena of collective action oriented toward achieving common interests in a process of mobilization, shared concerns, opportunities, tension, power and identity through actors working in cooperation or conflict for a determined and collective benefit (Berain, 1996, cited by Maldonado and Urán, 2007). Consequently, if the internet is susceptible to social reality, it’s impossible to separate this online communication from a political action that has differing degrees of action, goals and radicalism.

In fact, this communication has been considered a threat to the State. A recent example is the actions in Syria, where the internet was cut for days in the midst of a civil war¹. In that sense, this online communication can be understood as a social fact that transforms itself into political action and can transform into a threat to the state institutions and to the very concept of national security. Also, *cyber-activism* – the activism and collective action that takes place on the Web – is becoming a possible threat as “there are no clear boundaries between activism and crime” (Caro Bejarano, 2010: 53). Connectivity for the political has transformed the Web into a fundamental channel for collective action, protest and dialogue.

¹ This phenomenon occurred in November 2011. Government forces blamed the rebels and vice versa. 90% of the country remained without service. Refer to *El Universal*, 2012. Available at: <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/886549.html>

For example, the socio-political phenomenon known as the "Arab spring", which started in November of 2010 and which led to the fall of the governments of Libya, Tunisia and Egypt, also unleashed a protest process, created in public and maintained and multiplied on the Internet that became known as "Revolutions 2.0"². All this shows that the connectivity and collective intelligence of Web 2.0 has led to a process of political use of the web by citizens, regardless of their political affiliation.

In this way, the model of collective action defined by Tilly is fulfilled: acting for the common good as part of a common interest group action. There is no longer a massive vision of the movement as an element of massive power, but as a production economy: in this case, these "revolutions" are transformed into a social movement, as they share a structure, interest, mobilization of a group and an opportunity for action (Tilly, 1983). At the time of writing of this text, worldwide there is a joint historical and technological process that allows these elements to be reproduced.

In this way, it is possible to consider the Internet: 1) a multidimensional, dynamic and co-created communication space; 2) a tool for activism and policy; 3) a reflection of offline actions. However, if we are talking about a network fully open to any kind of action as it is now, with an apparent level of anonymity, it is understandable to determine that management of these channels which are able to reproduce, hide, and remove material immediately has become another security problem for the State, which has control this new space of citizenship.

In this context, this article will present two cases of serious political and social events discussed on the internet: a) the abduction of President Correa in Ecuador on September 30, 2010³, one of the first events discussed on the social network Twitter in the country, and; b) a general overview of the political actions generated by the 15M movement in the city of Madrid, Spain while focusing on the early days of the demonstration.

15M refers precisely to large demonstrations in Madrid, which began to take shape between May 15th, 2011 and May 17th, 2011. They were a mobilization against the economic crisis which began with the defense of freedom and free expression on the internet (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013). This online movement led to the creation of the platform Real Democracy Now (Democracia Real Ya [DRY] in Spanish) with headquarters in Madrid. In the summer of 2011, when the unemployment rate in Spain reached 25% due company cuts, – a result of the banking crisis linked to the housing bubble of 2008 – people took to the streets, led by DRY, which ended in them camping for two months following the protests. Although there are no protest camps at the moment, there continues to be strong pressure by the online movement as well as support in street protests, especially against evictions for unpaid mortgages and exposed politicians – protests targeting the people involved – that are aligned to what is considered the established powers of bankers and the market (interview with Ignacio Sierra 2013).

Currently, the movement consists of several associations – there were "hundreds" of at the time of the protest camps (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013). In addition, people who were not previously involved in the political actions have joined the movement: housewives, public and private employees of all sorts, students, young people and the elderly. In fact, retirees have begun to mobilize, being an important and powerful political force, with at least 7 million pensioners in Spain. Those who are organized are sympathetic to the 15M movement (interview with Ramón Cotarelo, 2013).

In the case of Ecuador, the events took place on September 30, 2010. That day, a group of angry police closed the Ecuadorian streets to protest against the reduction of the economic privileges which they had enjoyed until the reforms put into place by current President Rafael Correa. The President was kidnapped and then released at the end of the day (De la Torre, 2011). The facts were discussed online, primarily on Facebook and Twitter, which was the last outlet that emerged when the information was centralized on the national public broadcaster ECTV. At that time, *tweets* became the unofficial information source, without any mediation during the occurrence, but also included the participation of the Presidency who used the hashtag #30S (See Graphic Number 1)

² The growth of networks in countries of low access is surprising, for example China, which has a strong state censorship mechanism, has prolific bloggers. In this context appeared "Revolutions 2.0": actions that brought down governments in countries such as Tunisia and Egypt (Sedra, 2011).

³ It should be noted that there are now people who have been investigated for this police revolt and penalties have been established in this matter. Therefore, this fact will be interpreted as a historic event with regard to its communication on social networks. Hence, this document is of an academic nature. A commission to investigate the events has been established, which will work until 2014 (*El Comercio*, 2013)

The hashtags used to identify and classify data on Twitter wasn't a government creation. Rather, Eduardo Arcos, a tweeter of Ecuadorian nationality residing in Madrid, proposed the term #30S in order to organize the discussion in the aforementioned social network (See Graphic Number 2)

The police uprising and the violent kidnapping of the President ended with the rescue of Rafael Correa. The Ecuadorian National Police and the intelligence system faced strong criticism for their action and their institutionalization⁴. Although the discussion on the subject continued offline, the virtual part of this conflict had a different political and symbolic event: even if the hashtag #30S was used freely during the day of the kidnapping of the President, months after the fact a request was submitted to register the hashtag in the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property (IEPI)⁵.

1.1. Security responses

The actions that derived from the registry of the hashtag #30S and Spanish government's decisions will be analyzed from the security perspective. Both have in common the fact that social networks were part of their creation: because they have become a bridge, a tool or a logistics channel to achieve these demonstrations or political discussions. In the Spanish case, it has generated a highly complex social movement with several members and organizations that have managed to internationalize (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013; Ramon Cotarelo, 2013; Revilla, 1996). On the contrary, the Ecuadorian action is rather a momentary action of discontent that reached the limits of aggression and that spread through the social networks for their discussion, criticism or information (See Chart Number 1).

Both cases have been broadly discussed and mediated by the State. In Spain, at the moment, apart from the strong repression of the demonstrators in the streets, there is also a reform of the Penal Code which would declare it an offence to call for social protest even online (interviews with Cotarelo, Sierra, 2013). Although there has been no pressure about the internet itself, the registration of the #30S shows control of a fact for purposes of identity and historical integrity of the country.

Now – and this is the core of this work – we see that social media or their content may be State domain, part of the public space and subject to political action. Therefore, they can also be part of a securitization process. Why securitization? Because pointing out, isolating and to some extent politicizing a phenomenon within the State is a way of protecting the state project and the security of its structure (Buzan, Wæver and De Wilde, 1998). The hypothesis of this text is that the strengthening of the penal code in Spain, as well as the registration of the #30S are two actions of securitization from the State that have crossed the public "reality" to also include acts of the cyberspace; everything as a tool for the sake of national security.

People's digital identities can make the calls to political action open to all without, of course, leaving aside the physical action of the human network that would be behind these actions (interview with Leila Nachawati, 2013). However, the force of *cyber-activism* today is undeniable; especially in the case of 15M:

“The **success of the 15M movement** reaches new heights. The Madrid **city council** has **blocked access** to any domain related to the websites that utilize **15M** from the computers for public use located in the municipal libraries.

The website addresses *tomalaplaza.net*, *democraciarealya.es*, or *tomalosbarrios.net* are forbidden and the browser returns a clear message: "**Access denied for content policy**" and adds "**You are trying to access forbidden content**." (Tercera información, 2011) Bolded text for emphasis.

This fragment shows the hypothesis of this work: a virtual, worldwide social network, securitized by a State for the purpose of maintaining its power, its legitimacy and its integrity. How is it securitized? By identifying and isolating them and then preventing access to them. Later, as pointed out by two interviewees (Ignacio Sierra and Ramón Cotarelo, 2013), the State would try to reform the law, another classic security action.

⁴ See footnote 3.

⁵ “(...) On May 19th, 1998 a single entity was created with the purpose of uniting all the areas of the protection of creation and was then registered in the Official Register Number 320, in the new Intellectual Property Law, the establishment of the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property (IEPI) that ‘will exercise the attributes and responsibilities established by the Intellectual Property Law ... and will be considered a national office competent for the foreseen intentions in the Commission of the Andean Community’ ”, according to the IEPI webpage, accessed March 13th 2013 at: <http://www.iepi.gob.ec/index.php/quienes-somos>

With regards to the Ecuadorian case, this article will focus on the registration of the aforementioned hashtag #30S in the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property, IEPI, as a securer of an element created in virtual space and appropriated by the State to maintain the memory and the integrity of the State. In addition, the hardening of the Spanish Criminal Code with regards to making calls for protests will be taken into consideration. This process would include social networks as a field of action for national security.

1.3 The analytical arenas

This analysis incorporates the documentary field of texts related to the case of securitization from the perspective of the Political Science and International Relations. It also incorporates the use of testimonies relating to the events, and information from media outlets that documented the phenomena. The theoretical axis that predominates in this text is constructivism, with respect to the theory that notes the presence of actors – individuals – in the international system, with the ability to transform into agents that create, support and legitimize the actions of the State. In that case, the use of speech creates norms that bind and help determine the links between those States. Consequently, securitization (Buzan, Wæver and De Wilde, 1998) refers to the protection against any act that could undermine the State directly, taking legal practices to the extreme and politicizing events through discourses:

“The concept of securitization is based on the political use of terms such as "insecurity" and "threat" on the part of State and non-State elites and their specific effects, suggesting that the power of “safety” used in political discourse (Waever 1995). Therefore, the study of securitization requires replacing the traditional studies of the identification of objective threats to security with an analysis of why and how political elites identify certain problems such as threats to security (Waever 1995: 49).” (Tickner, 2008)

The process aims to stabilize the State and its governmental systems, controlling the ideas that could threaten their status. With regards to social aspects, security has to do with the sustainability "within acceptable conditions of evolution, of models of language, culture, religion, national identity and customs" (Buzan, Wæver and De Wilde, 1998).

In this constructivist line of thinking, individuals like State representatives can call into question and assert your needs, by any means, just as seen in the two cases studied. Despite the intergovernmental agency's need for power, the realist State structure will take care to remain existing (Wendt, 1999; 2005). Therefore, securitization is “an exaggeration of the political perceptions of certain subjects or social problems” (Rivera Vélez, 2012: 17), which emphasizes "practices and narratives and creates meanings legitimated by hegemonic interests and local authorities which, in unison, reproduce national rhetoric on regional security." (Rivera Vélez, 2012: 17).

In the following sections, the securitization model will be used in both cases. There will be an analysis of the legal and media discourses in Ecuadorian newspapers, looking for the significant/expressions that shows the securitizing purposes from both states. This exercise will be a brief use of the Discourse Analysis tool created by Van Dijk (1997).

2. A Securitized Hashtag: Analysis and Results of the Ecuadorian Case

In Ecuador, during the day and the events of September 30, 2010, Twitter was an alternate source of information and discussion when ECTV, the public television channel, took charge of reporting the information of the events. During the rescue of the President, from 9:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., citizens could learn from he was and know first-hand the facts through the tweets of journalists and people close to the scene. It supported or questioned the different factions of the conflict (Colonel and Mier, 2011). Meanwhile, as previously mentioned, Eduardo Arcos proposed #30S as the hashtag for the event. Later, on September 16, 2011 (*El Telégrafo*, 16/12/2011), the Presidency of the Republic and the Secretariat of Public Administration, as representatives of the Government of Ecuador, introduced a request to the Ecuadorian Institute of Intellectual Property (IEPI) to register a trademark on phrases related to the event. Thus, the Ecuadorian State could obtain the ability to demand royalties, collect licensing and request legal action over abuse of registered phrases: "30S" - proposed by Arcos, "30-S" and "Forbidden to Forget" (*Ecuador Inmediato* 08/30/2012). The IEPI also added one more expression: "30S - The day that democracy triumphed". The requests passed all the established processes and technical examinations (IEPI, 2012)⁶.

⁶ The contents of the official communiqué of the IEPI (2012) can be found at: <http://www.conocimiento.gob.ec/el-registro-de-marcas-tiene-multiples-ventajas/>

The National Secretariat of Public Administration pointed out the normality of the process to "preserve the icons that could be considered or converted into elements with heritage, historical or promotional value for the benefit of the country" and to "avoid inappropriate uses or those at the expense of the image of the country or of the facts, circumstances that motivated them." (*El Telégrafo*, 12/16/2011)⁷. This fact would help to increase the incidence of registration of trademarks in Ecuador (IEPI, 2012).

The process took about a year; and it was done to "**avoid possible misuse and distortion for political gain or otherwise, since on 30 September** there took place an event of national and international connotation that led the public to take to the streets to defend democracy and condemn the coup attempt." (*El Telégrafo*, 12/16/2011).

It became clear that sentences, even though they were registered in the IEPI, could always be used "for information or identification purposes" if they were used in good faith, are not for commercial means or make a brand title (*El Telégrafo*, 12/16/2011). The action, that is also covered under the protection of the Law of Intellectual Property [of Ecuador], and decision 486 of the Andean Community of Nations⁸, could raise legal questions. That is to say, anyone could oppose it, according to the law, provided that they have a legitimate interest (*El Telégrafo*, 12/16/2011).

And, indeed, contrary opinions were presented:

"For the analyst Juan Carlos Donoso, everything indicates that the aim of the Government is to appropriate the debate around 30-S, so its version predominates.

Since that date, President Correa and his collaborators have insisted that the police uprising was an attempt to remove him from the presidency.

However, Donoso also points out that during an election year such as 2012, the patent will prevent that eventually some movement with the names 30-S or Prohibido Olvidar ("Forbidden to Forget") be created. (...)

From the legal point of view, the University Professor Íñigo Salvador explains that the trademark registration – as in this case – has the right of exclusion. Thus, if a person or institution wants to use '30 - S' or '30S' they must request authorization from the Executive.

However, in the case of the phrase "Prohibido Olvidar" ("Forbidden to Forget"), Salvador made an observation: they are generic words in Spanish and in a strict sense should not be registered in the IEPI." (*El Comercio*, 14/12/2011).

Also, Eduardo Arcos presented a critical, but measured, vision in this respect (interview, 2013):

"My position is rather nonpartisan, let's say, I am neither correista (supporter of President Correa) nor anticorreista (opposed to the President), nor do I get involved in that game because it seems quite harmful to me, and of course, a media outlet that was very anticorreista intended to put me on that side. A correista tried to throw me to the other side. My message was "This is not against Correa, it doesn't interest me to be in favor or against him, and my interest is that this kind of thing stands the test of time. This is a completely publicly expression (...)."

And it still is?

And it still is, basically my approach was. It's only a hashtag, nothing more than that, and the value that it has isn't that which is proposed, but that people have used it, and have really used it.

You seek to define property and ask others to do the same...

Exactly, it has always been my approach. Because they asked me, "Why don't you register it?" But in the end it's the same, tomorrow if I go crazy and say "You know what, don't use it" it makes no sense."

In any case, the acceptance of the registration of sentences starting from July 26, 2012 to May 2022 is in the Gazette 560 (*Ecuador Inmediato* 08/30/2012).

We can observe several facts: Twitter was taken up by the State infrastructure to make it part of the heritage of the Ecuadorian State. Currently, this channel of startling immediacy and brevity is also transformed into a space for state mediation.

⁷ In this section of text, another public portal called *El Ciudadano* is being cited. The newspapers cited herein are digital editions without pagination. Bold text indicates the authors' emphasis of content.

⁸ Common Intellectual Property Regime of the Community of Andean Nations (Lima, September 14th, 2000). The complete document can be accessed at: <http://www.comunidadandina.org/ingles/normativa/D486e.htm>

Through the use of legal channels, the State can dominate the discourse of agents, signaling a potential threat in terms of the "distortion of political purposes". Though this discourse, the dynamics of the actors is contained in order to maintain the strength, ideas and memories of the State.

3. *Securitization in Spain (15M)*

15M is a social movement that was born out of a process of protest against the control of the Internet in Spain, but which also developed as a response to an economic fact: massive unemployment in Spain as a result of the cuts coming from the housing bubble of 2008. This crisis led to unemployment of around 25% (according to Ramón Cotarelo, interview 2013). As a response, several organizations grouped under Real Democracy Now which challenged the institutional framework of the Spanish Government:

"The Government is full of people under strong suspicion of corruption. This produces a strong demoralizing factor (...) This produces a great indignation. The only thing that it didn't produce was the name; it was the Frenchman⁹." (Interview with Ramon Cotarelo, 2013)

Thus, the massive response to the economic and social crisis was the series of protest camps of the 15M movement that took place in Plaza del Sol square. The camps, directed on Twitter with the hashtag #acampadasol, were maintained and commented on this social media tool. In fact, when arrests happened on the first day, a prohibition on camping in the Puerta de Sol in Madrid was issued and police abuse was reported on social networks. The call for protests made on Twitter on May 15, 2011 ended in the aforementioned mass protests (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013).

The collective had and has influence. Initially, it would have been a major political player in the result of the rejection (conservative) of the May 2011 elections, which went to the Popular Party over the ruling Spanish Socialist Labor Party. (Errejón, 2011: 121). At the time of the writing of this article, while the camps can't continue due to public safety and logistical reasons (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013), there is still extensive work being done, both through the platform Stop Evictions, which mainly dedicates itself to avoid liquidation and eviction of foreclosed houses.

Indignados has a symbolic value, a value of consensus and a proposal that aims to be ethical and peaceful (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013; Interview with Ramon Cotarelo, 2013). However, frictions have arisen: supposedly, there even members of the security forces who, through infiltration, would seek to suppress the protest from within:

"They are on YouTube (See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLG3Iums9dY>). At a certain point, they caused a stir in one of the demonstrations that took place recently and there were some hooded hooligans causing a commotion. They have a sporty look to differentiate themselves from each other and at some moment enter the uniformed police armed, they begin to hit people with clubs and one starts to shout "I am companion". (...)" (Interview with Ramon Cotarelo, 2013)

Facing violence and street protests, there has also been a broad participation on the internet (See Graphic Number 3)

What are the options of the State against the multiplication of proposals and protests of the 15M movement on the social networks? In this case, and according to Cotarelo and Sierra, it now has increased security regarding the change of the Security Law. This would enter into this limit of legislation that moves the security process (Buzan, Wæver and De Wilde, 1998). In fact, at the end of 2013, a new Security Law, known as "Law anti 15M" contemplated fines to punish concentrations unreported to state institutions. Also, it penalizes "offenses against Spain" (Público.es, 2013).

In other words, the law comes in as the mediator, isolating a fact that they manage through the official discourse. In this case the legislation creates the threat of disturbing public order.

⁹ Referring to Stéphane Hessel, whose book *Indignaos!* (2010) would be the source of the name of the movement which was not taken from the beginning by the protesters. Put simply, it was adopted by them when they realized its usefulness (interview with Ignacio Sierra, 2013). Hessel, a former French resistance fighter, identified the outrage of the youth of the new generation, especially against a world governed by financiers. See: <http://www.indignaos.com/>

This fact becomes part of the official, public agenda and within the standards of protection of the correct State institution – the Ministry of Justice. We enter, then, inside the framework of the strengthening and maintenance of the State structure, its power and status in relation to internal forces. This is where securitization enters the scene.

4. Conclusions

In the future, the internet won't be a space free of political, economic and social actions of all sorts, and as such, nor will it be a universe in which State security is unrelated. The citizens of the world, whether Spaniards or Ecuadorians, display their digital identity with each comment on Facebook or Twitter; therefore, they must be responsible for their comments. Increasingly, our digital lifestyle reflects and reproduces what is offline.

However, although cyberspace does not have a defined owner and the internet is a universal collective creation, States are taking actions on the matter. The NSA global surveillance case, where the National Security Agency of the United States supposedly spied the internet data belonging to citizens and authorities of different countries, is an example of the tendency (*The Guardian*, 2013). Even though they can't appropriate the World-Wide Web, they can control what the digital identities of citizens express through politicization or legislation of online actions, which is a new process in terms of the technological channeling of securitization.

Although this action is amoral – impossible to qualify as "good or bad" within the realistic vision of the State and its monopoly on violence – it's important to open a debate on the subject. There are national security issues at play within the social networks be it organized crime or the prevention of social disorder, which is any form of protest or mobilization.

The issue is balance, something difficult to achieve in everyday life and difficult to maintain in an anarchic international system battered by national and foreign interests. Each State can apply securitization, but would have to avoid falling into espionage and thereby violating human rights. The NSA actions (*The Guardian*, 2013) are a good example: what is the boundary between security and espionage? Is it possible for the State to take action on a global resource such as the construction of the Web 2.0? Can it act on what is created online without there being a governance system?

Although two possible cases of securitization are explained in this text, it is still difficult to determine the usefulness and legitimacy of these State actions in the future and if they conflict with the freedom of expression or not. Facing these problems leaves an open gap for academia as well as for the legal and technological fields, the latter or which, as Castells (2002) points out, defines us socially as much as we define it.

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Interviews of Ramón Cotarelo (Professor, UNED, Madrid); Leila Nachawatti (Communications Professor, Universidad Carlos III, Madrid); Ignacio Sierra, (DRY; Madrid, 2013) and Eduardo Arcos (Hipertextual, Madrid, 2013).

Chart Number 1

#30S/30S	#15M/15M
Rebellion of a sector of the Ecuadorian society (thousands of people online and in public spaces) to demand specific rights for their collectives (police, military, students, professors)	Revolution (<i>Spanish Revolution</i>) that defined a collective action in the process of becoming a social movement that transcended the Spanish government and sought to put an end to the current lines of power and politics in Spain. Tens of thousands of participants online and in public spaces.
National collective action	Complex social movement
Call for protest in public spaces, participation in public spaces and in virtual spaces.	Call for protests in public spaces and online, participation in public spaces and in virtual spaces.
Defined institutional reforms for the police and controls related to communications.	Defined new political lines and results of political and electoral processes
Securitized through the patent registry of the term “30S”.	Securitized, attempt to control access in public libraries to links to the 15M movement.

Source: Fredy Rivera Vélez; Gilda Alicia Guerrero Salgado, 2012.

Graphic Number 1



Text translation: Government declares a state of emergency

Source: Screenshot took from the article by Coronel and Mier, 2011



Source: Screenshot of the webpage topsy.com. Accessed in 2012.

Text translation:

msarthou: Photos of #30S #ecuador <http://blogs.lanacion.com.ar/en-foco/tension-en-ecuador>

americaeconomia: Ecuador. Former president Lucio Gutiérrez calls for Parliament to be dissolved <http://bit.ly/ddDCBc> #correa #30S #ecuador

palulo: Ecuadorians, what you're seeing now on the national television is only one side of the coin. #30S #ecuador

RT @eduardopalacios: It seems like at any moment the convoy will leave with Correa #30S #ecuador

csalazar764: Is it normal for the police to be the cause of chaos, panic and disorder in a country? #30S #ecuador #policiasEC

Graphic Number 2

Text translation: I propose #30S as the short hashtag to identify what's happening in #ecuador

Source: Screenshot obtained from the blog of Eduardo Arcos: <http://edarcos.com/post/14165815352/el-gobierno-ecuatoriano-intenta-registrar-30s-como>

Graphic Number 3

Source: Screenshot of the webpage topsy.com. Accessed in 2012.

Text translation:

Spyfull27: RT unforgiven_too: Confusion and distress among relatives of detainees # 15M

Elenasanchezra RT @arseionescolar: A taxi driver in Madrid: "Behind the #15M is Rubalcaba. He is very clever. He is a chemist!

analoretwit: And I walked over there yesterday, It felt peaceful #acampadasol #Madrid #15M

pirata_madrid: Declaration from PIRATA Madrid Declaration on the movement # 15M in Madrid and other cities.

Anon_vv: More than 100 people sleepin in Sol Square, in Madrid. Spread the word and join! ##15M #15MANI #tomatela calle #democraciarealya