

Digital disruption and participation in popular media initiatives in Brazil

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Abstract

This article draws on the results of a doctoral research, defended in June of 2018 at *Université catholique de Louvain*, in Belgium, and discusses the impact of the appropriation of digital resources in the processes of participation in popular media initiatives. One of the main findings suggests that the tendency of individualization, that is likely in the digital context, imposes important challenges to the participation process, a core feature of popular communication practices. The field research, from 2013 to 2016, included interviews with 55 communicators involved in the management and development of 29 popular media outlets in the states of Paraná, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará and Pará, in Brazil. This particular reflection is mainly based on two case studies on the practices of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST – *Portuguese Acronym*) and the network of community communicators Rede Mocaranga, linked to the Projeto Saúde e Alegria, in the Amazon Region.

Keywords: Popular media. Participation. Digital rupture. Movimento Sem Terra. Rede Mocaranga.

Introduction

Participation can be defined as a concept and a set of practices that refer to processes of power redistribution within a given group (PERUZZO, 1998; TUFTE, 2017; CARPENTIER, 2019), favoring the acceptance of differentiated knowledge - including the often marginalized - in specialized productions such as art, a budget composition or a political decision. According to Tufte (2017), communication plays a central role in virtually all efforts to foster and build participation.

More particularly, participation is one of the main characteristics of popular, alternative and community communication, another concept and set of practices associated with the appropriation of communication directed towards and built with the people, especially in contexts of struggles for inclusion and social transformation. In this tradition, deeply influenced by Paulo Freire's pedagogy, participation is considered as a key element that distinguishes communication from information processes (BARRANQUERO; SÁEZ BAEZA, 2010; GUMUCIO-DAGRON, 2014; PERUZZO, 1998). The principle often contemplates some sort of classification, according to the horizontality between message

producers and recipients, and especially the degree of opportunity for members of a given community to participate in decisions regarding communication processes (PERUZZO, 1998; CARPENTIER, 2019).

Digital disruption has increased the complexity of this discussion. Carpentier (2012) recognizes that what can be generally classified as participation may be better described by levels that include access, interaction and the participation itself. This article proposes a reflection on the appropriation of the notion of participation in popular media in Brazil, considering the incorporation of digital resources in these practices. Under the perspective of popular communication approach, popular media - radio, television, print and digital publications - are considered to be alternative - in management, format and content - to mass media.

The text is based on a doctoral research defended in June 2018 at the *Université catholique de Louvain*, Belgium, which analyzed 29 popular media experiences, linked to 17 different organizations, in six Brazilian states: Paraná, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará and Pará. Case studies share three main characteristics. First, they are all linked to social struggles, included or associated with broader strategies of social movements, NGOs or community associations seeking a particular or general transformation of a given reality. Second, all media are in a condition of geographical or symbolic periphery. Finally, they are long-term initiatives, that is, platforms created to accompany social struggles in their continuity.

The approach to the cases was mainly done during three field visits, in October-November/2013, April-May/2014 and October-December/2015. In these visits, the practices were observed and interviews were conducted with 55 communicators, predominantly using an inductive approach (KAUFMANN, 1996). These communicators, involved with media management and development, were taken as privileged informants in the research, as they are considered strategic agents in choosing and prioritizing the use of communication in the repertoire of social struggles (BONA, 2008). The media were organized into three groups, as main, intermediate and secondary cases. The main ones were addressed more than once. The others played different roles in the saturation of the data collected during the research. The evolution of their strategies and positioning was still followed through its activities in social networks.

Participation was one of the most frequent topics for discussion with communicators. It should be clarified, however, that the breadth and character of the research did not allow for in-depth observation of participation practices. Communicators explained what they meant by participation and, where relevant, described the means applied to develop it within their media practices. The reflection presented in this article is therefore the result of the analysis of conversations with communicators and illustrated by two emblematic cases.

The next section provides a brief overview of the evidence of the impact of digital resources on participatory processes in the case studies. Then, the article focuses on its central theme, that is the issue of collective construction, from two main aspects

related to participation. The case studies on the Landless Workers Movement and the Mocaronga Network are then presented and the article concludes with a discussion of the analytical aspects.

The engagement of audiences and associated communities

The research identified a vast appropriation of digital resources in virtually every initiative analyzed. Only one of them did not use any digital platform at the time, that was Radio Lago, in the community of Lago Grande do Curuai, Pará. All in all, though, even if digital technology has increased the variety of participation channels, the use of digital resources in the relationship with the public is less relevant than in the general process of producing popular media - for example, to consult and download information and materials, to do and record interviews, or to edit productions. Every popular media outlet that creates a page on a social network sees it as a channel of exchange with its audience. Email accounts are less popular among the sample, but play the same role. They partly replace the use of traditional landline telephone with the advantage of getting some metrics from tools such as the “like” button on Facebook – people may not comment or suggest anything, but they support the initiative with a “like”. These channels are frequently mentioned among the ways through which communities and audiences can participate in the shaping of media contents.

Berti (2017) researched the use of internet by community radio stations in the Brazilian Northeastern zone. He classified them as ‘offline’ and ‘online’. The first ones have a blog or website, but do not transmit anything through internet. The ‘online’ radio stations, contrarily, do transmit their contents. These are divided between ‘static’ and ‘dynamic’. The first ones just relay online content already diffused via traditional airwaves through streaming. The ‘dynamic’ broadcasts online and keeps channels to interact with audiences. According to the researcher, these last represent an improvement in participation because they get to collect comments and reactions that influence formats, content and approaches. In the Northeast, however, less than half of all the radio ‘online’ stations can be considered as ‘dynamic’ (BERTI, 2017).

Most of communicators interviewed for this research also mentioned virtual activities that could be classified as ‘dynamic’. It was not that clear, however, how much more participation they represent and how long this participation is concretely directed to the development of productions beyond the traditional request of songs, already largely diffused in radio stations. More research, including reception analysis, could clarify this aspect and determine whether this kind of participation represents any form of engagement from the associated communities and audiences in the development of popular media. Additionally, even if these channels are in place, it is the face-to-face contact that is still the most mentioned way to get people involved in the media production, according to the present research.

The community newspaper *Jornal de Chiador*, in the city of Chiador, Minas Gerais, was the only popular media outlet in the sample that actually integrated a digital platform in its regular planning process. Since June 2016, people have been able to join the preparatory meetings through Hangouts, the videoconference platform of Google, and the record of the meetings is also available on their Facebook page. This was a solution that the coordinating team decided to try in order to improve participation in the meetings. According to one of the communicators leading the project, the objective was to open the greatest number of channels to make it easy for the residents to take part in the process. Internet is one of them, but it does not replace personal meetings, because of structural and cultural conditions in the community.

We have decided that every month, we will organize the meetings through Hangouts. It has been 15 days since we had a preparatory meeting (...) We were five participants and we debated the suggestions of articles. (...) I see internet as an additional way. In any case the idea is to replace our effort for doing personal meetings because, in fact, even if the access to technology and to internet has improved since 2008, it actually affects only some niches. I mean, there are people that don't want to have access to Internet, for age or cultural reasons. Our concern is to open the greater number of channels so people can participate. Vânia and Mr. João, who are leaders in the village, like technology. Ms. Arlete doesn't. (...) With this resource, I can take part in the meetings, even if I don't live in the village anymore, like others in the same condition (Popular communicator, *Jornal de Chiador*, 2016).

Some communicators explained that there are specific audiences for virtual platforms when it comes to suggesting subjects or reacting to already diffused information. As mentioned by the communicator related to the *Jornal de Chiador*, Internet makes it possible for involving former residents who migrated to other regions of the country. For two communicators working for the newspaper *Espaço do Povo*, in Paraisópolis, São Paulo, the habit of using email or social networks to comment was increasing but was still something new. They said that they used to walk around the community to get their stories and thought that “staying closed in the newsroom was a limitation”.

This situation illustrates another finding of the study, which was a broad combination of digital and analog resources, resulting from structural conditions, but also from strategic decisions about the use of media (SUZINA, 2018). In the first case, dependent on market logic, communities in the countryside are constrained by few and fragile connection services, while peripheral communities in large cities face the high cost of services (BIANCO, 2010; BRASIL, 2014). Strategically, choices tend to respect the dynamics of different social groups and value direct contact as another form of mobilization.

Participation and collective construction

Digital disruption opens the way to collaborative and networked media productions, that can provide popular media with a new status in the media sphere. There is nevertheless another element that must be considered. It is related to the aspects mentioned by Peruzzo (1998) and discussed above to determine if the collective behind the communicative action is silenced or better expressed through the work of the communicators, or even if the popular media productions contribute to constitute a collective. The degree of participation is thus associated with the extent to which a community is represented through its media.

Miguel (2012) has developed a tridimensional concept of representation. Its third dimension concerns the horizontal relationship between those who are represented in the construction of preferences. Making a reference to the work of Clarissa Rile Hayward, the author argues that an asymmetrical society needs the emergence of new public interests, but they must be built upon the participation of affected people if there is any objective of emancipation (MIGUEL, 2012). In popular communication, while broadening channels for participation, digital resources highlight the challenges of power distribution and the risk of creating or deepening unequal forms of participation within groups themselves (CARPENTIER, 2019; ZASLAVSKY, 2019).

The recognition of discursive representativeness is therefore related to the mechanisms put in place by popular communicators in order to include more citizens in the definition of the issues. It determines how long popular media is able to produce new public interests based on collective processes. Two case studies illustrate two aspects that must be observed in this debate: the first case is the MST campsite in the region of Catuquiriguaçu, in Paraná, and the second is the network of community newspapers of Rede Mocaronga, in the Amazon region. The first aspect is the importance of recovering and/or strengthening participation as a normative principle of popular communication, enlarging the perspective about the way participation can happen in a mediatized context. The second is the risk of falling into what Dean (2005) call as the “fantasy of participation” provided by what she denominates “communicative capitalism”.

New resources, old fashioned appropriations

The MST campsite that was observed is part of the largest land occupations in South America, consisting of four settlements and two campsites sheltering more than 7,000 families. The historical and consolidated presence of the movement in the region, in Paraná, provides an ongoing improvement of general services provided to the residents, although the campsite itself has benefited less because of the still open and contested process around the legal status of the land.

There was internet connection, but it was not stable nor widely distributed. There was, nevertheless, an active use of digital platforms in local communication strategies. One Facebook page was a first-order tool for fighting the aggressive communication strategy of the company that demanded the ownership of the lands occupied by the MST. The page was fed by a group of communicators in charge of it, that consulted local leaders of the movement and kept a permanent exchange with members in their general regular meetings as well.

The process highlighted in this particular debate about participation is, however, the effort done by the local communication team to get visibility for the agricultural production generated in the campsite. One of the local popular communicators explained that the appropriation of the technological resources by MST members can happen in varied ways. “The peasants must get access to computers and internet, but they will use it if they want”, he highlighted. To him, the participation in digital productions may pass through other ways of engagement which includes, principally, the reflection about how they want to be represented in movement’s media productions and in the media in general. He illustrated his reflection with one story that had recently happened in the campsite.

There is this story of Mr. Dimas. A journalist came to the campsite, made an article and a photo about him, and published it on internet. Mr. Dimas came to my house every day, asking to see his article. He came three times to my house. I finally printed the article and he cried. ‘I never thought I would be in a newspaper’, he said. And in this article, he was arguing about why we have to eat food with poison if it makes us sick. He said that we should eat healthy and tasty things, with his simplicity in the speaking (Popular communicator, MST, 2015).

This communicator explained that there are two keys of appropriation in the digital field that follows the movement’s conception of communication in general, one is the strategic and the other is the cultural. The latter comprises the permanent listening to the stories, complaints and perceptions of the peasants, from one side, and the feedback about what has been done, from the other side. The story of Mr. Dimas is an example of it, because the peasant himself takes part in the constitution of meaning about his agricultural production and his social activism. The strategic appropriation is the transformation of these stories into instruments of struggle.

The peasant may suggest that we take and diffuse a picture of his/her production of vegetables, that is ‘so beautiful’. I will do it and show outside the movement that those vegetables are beautiful because they are organic. I will then transform the story into an argument within our struggle (Popular communicator, MST, 2015).

This case study suggests two intertwined levels of participation. The first happens between the peasants and the militants charged with communication tasks. The second refers to the relationship between the communicators and the audiences in the larger society. The collective process, in the first level, is a key element of the success of the second level because the communicator refers to it as something that does not provide just content but that intervenes in the definition of the whole strategy.

In this sense, as stated by this communicator, “the participation is not necessarily digital”, meaning that it does not matter if each peasant uses digital resources to take part in any debate or decision. Both himself and his comrade communicators defended the right of the peasants to access the internet. What they said, however, is that this access – or the lack of it – cannot and must not limit or reduce the forms of participation.

In general, the use of digital technologies within the MST’s communications strategies is simultaneously progressive and critically measured. Internet may replace other technological platforms, but the very organic process of participation keeps its roots, through local, regional and national committees that connect and exchange with each other.

Sartoretto (2015) researched the communication practices within the MST. Her study reveals the structural limitations imposed on campsites and settlements and also the process of reflection concerning the appropriation of technologies that goes on locally and nationally.

Appropriation is a process that is currently very present in practice and discussions because the advent of digital media requires collective discussion and analysis so that accepted practices oriented to new media will be negotiated (the Internet in general and digital social media in particular and, to a lesser extent, the devices that enable these media) (SARTORETTO, 2015, p. 192-193).

The very developed means of participation, observed in the case of MST, reveal that the collective appropriation has more to do with a culture than with the technology available and chosen. The challenge of the digital is keeping this culture within a context where participation is so much related to the individual capacity of expressing messages. The risk identified in this research comes up when the access to digital technologies replaces the common space of discussion by this individuality. The case of the community newspaper of *Rede Mocaronga*, in the Amazon region, illustrates this situation.

The voices of many

Rede Mocaronga is associated with work in health and education done by the NGO *Saúde e Alegria* in communities situated on the banks of the rivers Tapajós and Arapiuns, in the territory of the city of Santarém. Two of these communities were visited: São Pedro, beside the river Arapiuns, and Maripá, beside the river Tapajós. Both have no access to

electricity and the energy is provided by fuel generators turned on a couple of hours each day. They both also are situated in the *Reserva Extrativista Tapajós-Arapiuns*, which determines conditions for the households and for collective activities, as well as the rules for economic activities.

São Pedro and Maripá were among the communities that took part in the regional community newspaper *O Mococongo*. As the boat of the NGO *Saúde e Alegria* visited the communities for their regular activities, it collected the local edition of the newspaper. Like in other communities participating in the initiative, it was a single- or double-page report of recent activities made with the resources available: sometimes by hand, with drawings and other local illustrations, sometimes typed and mimeographed. One of the popular communicators remembered how the local edition was produced in Maripá.

Around two years after beginning the project [*Rede Mococongo*], we started with the community newspaper. And we did it here at this place, writing by hand. We sent it to *Saúde e Alegria*, they made copies and got them back to us. Then, we distributed it in the community. They kept some copies to send to other communities as well as we received issues from the other communities. We talked about culture, sport, religion, things happening in the community. (...) It worked really well. We asked people to contribute with news, the coordinators of local associations. We used to take one day of the week, with a team of three to four people, mainly youth, and we went through the community searching for information. They wrote it and, arriving here, we set it up and sent to *Saúde e Alegria* (Popular communicator, Rede Mococongo, 2015).

The procedure was the same in every community engaged to the project and they had done it since 1995. However, the availability of community members to keep doing the local editions diminished progressively until the energy ran out. Although there were divided opinions about the extinction of newspapers, communicators in the project coordination acknowledged that the arrival of Internet connection and, lately, social networking had brought about major changes.

Facebook has taken it all, it was a dazzle. (...) There is also the aspect of local organization. The boys say that the others don't want to do it and, then, they won't do it alone. They don't feel motivated to keep it. (...) But there is not a replacement. Communities that had a community newspaper do not have a community Facebook page and they do not have even a blog anymore. (...) Facebook is easier, the text is shorter, it does not require a lot of elaboration. They write things there and share them with us. They also use a group that we created on WhatsApp. They write those small texts to say that 'there is a celebration happening here, in the community', 'there is this guy that is here

visiting'. But the enthusiasm to make the newspaper does not exist anymore (Popular communicator, Rede Mocaronga, 2015).

For this latter communicator, the evidence was the complementary effect on the blog of the network and the radio program that the NGO has in *Rádio Rural de Santarém*, a radio station whose signal reaches all the communities of the network. By the end of 2015, information in these media was mostly provided by their own team, depending on field visits and their own research.

When we started the radio program, it was supplied mostly by the news coming from the local newspapers. Now, I search for information of what they publish on their Facebook pages or on WhatsApp. This information supplies the blog and the radio program. (...) I keep putting pressure on the guys on Facebook to get some information. But there are some editions that have nothing else than institutional notes, because we get nothing from the communities (Popular communicator, Rede Mocaronga, 2015).

One local communicator agreed about the influence of Facebook and added a critical perspective about the effect of this migration on the dynamic in the communities.

I think there was an influence over the newspaper [*of Facebook*]. Instead of going there to write on the paper, staying for an hour to write a story, verifying the information and eventually needing to correct it, I can send it directly. I get the news and send it directly. There is less work to do. The problem is that the community does not see it. It goes directly there, the team of *Saúde e Alegria* sees it, but the community does not (Popular communicator, Rede Mocaronga, 2015).

At the time of the field visit, the internet connection at Maripá was interrupted, but, as a fact, the visit to the community of São Pedro was planned through Facebook messenger. Later, the activities of these communicators were tracked by community news posted on their personal pages. During the visit, there was evidence that a good proportion of their free time was spent online, mainly on Facebook. There was only one connection point in the community, installed in the building shared with the radio and the *telecentro*, a structure established in many marginal communities in Brazil, where there are computers and internet connection. Many young people also connected via cell phones.

In São Pedro, the community newspaper was not produced anymore either. There was no community page and the community blog had gone down. The information channels available were the radio station and those personal pages on Facebook. It must be said, however, that the communicators interviewed described a very intense routine of collective

production, mainly surrounding the community radio station. That is why this depicts the situation as a risk to the quality of participation in comparison with the dynamic established for the production of the community newspapers.

For a communicator in the coordination of the network, there is a social capital that was constituted and keeps present and active. According to the local communicators in São Pedro, they met once a month to evaluate and prepare future actions. In parallel, they exchanged a lot between themselves in a complementary position of “communicators and listeners” so they could improve the quality of radio broadcasts.

It is also important to have in mind that the cases just described are situated in very small communities. São Pedro is home for around 120 families and Maripá for 74. The collective process is not assured by this reality but it may be more accessible than in large communities in urban centers, for example. The dispersion may increase the risks for taking digital individual expression as participation missing the point of qualified representation and confirming asymmetries instead of reducing them.

Final considerations

As already indicated, the format of this research did not allow a detailed analysis of participation processes in each experiment and the reflection is based mainly on the reports of the communicators. At this level, it is possible to substantiate issues that emerge from new practices resulting from the incorporation of digital resources in popular communication and also from the transmutation of the meaning and form of the collective, and which may give clues about the kind of representation that may arise from these processes.

On the one hand, there is the principle of participation, which is in the matrix of the concept and practices of popular communication and which is associated with one of the pillars of representation, which says that “internal dialogue is a crucial moment in the representative process” (MIGUEL, 2012, p. 11). On the other hand, digital technology is positively valued for the greater opportunity for expression offered to citizens (CARDON, 2010; CASTELLS, 2013). This is an important achievement, especially for often excluded groups, but it is something different from the collective power coming from horizontal processes, as formulated in the concept of popular communication. The notion of bottom-up, proper to this tradition, is not based on the individual process, but on the relational one, as defended by Freire (1987, p. 39) in its central definition, which says that “nobody educates anyone, nobody educates themselves, men educate themselves, mediated by the world”. This is different from the idea of one citizen, one smartphone, one media.

The potential of emancipation coming from popular media is based on a collective construction of meanings standing for one’s situation and for the change that a social group wants to see. The creation of individual Facebook pages, as illustrated in the case of São Pedro, does not mean that the collective process is ignored or lost. The social capital built in the historical process in the community, as mentioned by one of the communicators, must

also be considered. Several local communicators turned up as community leaders, taking advantage of communication skills.

One of the coordinators of Rede Mocaronga recognized, however, the “crisis of individualism” coming with the Facebook wave and the challenge of keeping collaborative processes in future projects. To him, “the internet has created a false impression of participation” with this idea that all voices have a way of expression, while “the big groups keep dominating even the digital space”. His thoughts are close to the critical reflections of Jodi Dean, to whom a model of communicative capitalism is based on fantasies of abundance and participation.

Thus far I’ve discussed the foreclosure of the politics in communicative capitalism in terms of the fantasy of abundance accompanying the reformatting of messages as contributions and the fantasy of participation accompanying the technology fetishism. These fantasies give people the sense that our actions online are politically significant, that they make a difference (DEAN, 2005, p. 66).

Dean’s approaches can also be associated with Wolton’s (2005) and Habermas’ (2006) concerns about the relationship between connectivity and deliberation. They recall that even if communication can improve public speaking, achieving connectivity does not mean necessarily promoting exchange (HABERMAS, 2006; WOLTON, 2005). Dean’s observation of the reduction of messages into contributions, as a result of digital disruption, describes an intense flow that replaces information by circulation, which means also a reduction of meaning-making and a suppression of the political character of communication. It breaks the representational system, as defined by Hall (2013), where the dialogue among participants is what enables them to build culture.

In the case of MST, the interviews suggest a concern for advancing with digital strategies without losing the historical organizational process of the movement. The network of communicators attached to local and regional sites produces information for all MST media productions. There is, however, a deliberate effort to make this information preserve the perspective of the whole movement through local, regional and national processes of participation. In 2013, one of the communicators of the movement’s national team recalled a path of about three years of the first approaches to social networks. During the time of this research, the movement consolidated a special committee dedicated to digital issues. It is a slow and reflective process.

In the last three years, we have been exploring social networks such as Twitter and Facebook, that are more popular. They are important. They contribute to our process of communication with a certain part of the society, with the city. (...) In the countryside, internet is still a perspective. Even if there may be

connection in a school, in a cultural center, the access is rather restricted. (...) There is another aspect that on internet, it is not possible to divide what is directed to internal and to external audiences. (...) Internet is this instrument that provides interaction and an instant communication. We need and we are learning how to deal with the internal and external uses. (...) We have been working with the youth of the movement so they can contribute to advance in this process trusting the organization of the movement itself as a moderator factor (Popular communicator, MST, 2013).

Dean recognizes the importance of Internet for social activism, but calls attention to the illusions of equality of opportunities and of increase of democracy promised by digital culture. According to her, the high circulation of opinions makes people feel as they were politically active. In this understanding, the democratic ideals of inclusion, participation and deliberation are reached by a networked society where everyone, thanks to technological advances, can potentially express their views. The problem is that this availability of diversity suggests an agreement, meaning that “the imagined unity of global (...) is one where there is no politics” (DEAN, 2005, p. 69). The natural conflict behind the negotiation of meanings is foreclosed inside a large process of circulation of contributions, and only the rescue of the real world can bring that conflict back.

The problem is that all this tolerance and attunement to difference and emphasis on hearing another’s pain prevent politicization. Matters aren’t represented—they don’t stand for something beyond themselves. They are simply treated in all their particularity, as specific issues to be addressed therapeutically, juridically, spectacularly, or disciplinarily rather than being treated as elements of larger signifying chains or political formations. Indeed, this is how third-way societies support global capital: they prevent politicization. They focus on administration, again, foreclosing the very possibility that things might be otherwise (DEAN, 2005, p. 56-57).

The level of representation can only be achieved by a participation that is based on and contributes to collective processes that recognize conflict. The idea of meaning is very important in this debate, while there is a search of recognition of each voice, as a process of subjectivation and intervention in the social order.

Meaning is what gives us sense of our own identity, of who we are and with whom we ‘belong’ – so it is tied up with questions of how culture is used to mark out and maintain identity within and difference between groups (HALL, 2013, p. XIX).

To Dean (2019), the destructive power of communicative capitalism is exactly that it tears down processes of subjectivation while transforming communication into economic assets. She establishes a clear frontier between communication as a meaning-making process and communication as circulation of individual contributions that do not necessarily produce the dialogue capable of building and changing frameworks of interpretation.

According to the present analysis, the popular media observed is searching for representation, in the sense of transforming the meaning usually diffused and accepted about who their attached communities and movements are, what they believe and fight for. In this context, the principle of participation, as defined in the tradition of popular communication, becomes a feature to be strengthened, under the principle of parity of participation (FRASER, 2010).

These cases illustrate a reinterpretation of the meaning of the collective, which tries to associate the community articulation, not always based on a technological platform, with the potential of digital platforms for a better participation in the symbolic struggles of society. The distribution of power relative to a popular media may not be in the appropriation of technology itself, but above all in the dynamics that guide the work of communicators. It is necessary to identify if the community speaks through this media, even if there is a spokesperson who concentrates the public expression. An up-to-date understanding of participation should consider the conditions created to foster shared understandings and create counter-audiences that can challenge situations and relationships.

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