Crowd

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Introduction: Affecting Ambiguities

In their "Fact Check" published on January 22, 2017, even Fox News stated that then-U.S. President Donald J. Trump had clearly exaggerated the number of people attending his inauguration. When Trump claimed that the group size on the field in front of the Washington monument "looked like a million, a million and a half people," Fox News countered that "Trump is wrong. Photos of the National Mall from his inauguration make clear that the crowd did not extend to the Washington Monument. Large swaths of empty space are visible on the Mall." The dramatic battle over numbers shortly after the inauguration did not only offer a first glimpse at the tense relationship between POTUS and "the media" during the Trump administration. It also hinted at the former President's awareness of the importance of this number as a device to boost and legitimize his political agenda and a point of reference in his self-fashioning as a spokesperson of "the people" (in spite of losing the popular vote). The crowd, it seems, mattered (and still matters) to him as part and parcel of his populist performances. It mattered as a collective he could address, a subjectivity emancipated from and resisting the institutionalized political system ("the swamp") that needed to be overcome and replaced by and for the people.

"A crowd is as easily heroic as criminal," writes Gustave Le Bon in his famous *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* from 1895, which quickly became one of the main references in mass psychology's analysis of crowd dynamics and behavior (25). In a nutshell, his diagnosis renders the ambiguity inscribed into this kind of collective organization: A crowd can be disruptive, disturbing, deviant, understood as "the mob" that threatens the established socio-political order through an unruly presence of bodies in the streets (see also Borch 16–17). At the same time, it can be considered as "the people," and accordingly, as an articulation of a political will that has gone unheard for too long due to the failure of institutionalized politics. Unruliness, then, can thus also be conceived as the *conditio sine qua non* for societal transformation for the better.

Along these lines, William Mazarella argues that "[f]rom a liberal standpoint, the crowd, in all its face-to-face potentiality, constitutes at once the origin and

the nemesis of democracy, though never its permanently indispensable lifeblood" (Mazarella, qtd. in Hussain). Tellingly, the organic metaphor of "lifeblood" he employs hints both at the physical, or corporeal, and at the emotional, or affective, dimension inscribed to this form of collectivity. In this vein, then, the crowd—both heroic and criminal—is understood as an "intensive experience of substantive collectivity," and its "breach of the predictable and given creates the possibility that a political subject might appear" (Dean 5–6). The crowd, therefore, "index[es] collective power" (Dean 10) that is able to unsettle hierarchies and to make visible the struggle of established political institutions of representative democracies.

My contribution focuses on this indexical character of the term, as it takes a closer look at "the crowd" as a highly ambiguous signifier that has been used to render collectivity and collective agency in a variety of historical and medial constellations. I will proceed in two steps: First, I will provide a short sketch of (some of) the underpinning images and ideas that inform and are articulated through the crowd as signifier, the reconstruction of which, I believe, helps unravel the ambiguities constitutive of the semantics of the crowd. My aim is not to give a comprehensive overview of conceptualizations of the crowd as an object of inquiry—others have done so quite comprehensively, and I am indebted to their work (see, e.g., Borch; Penna; Schmidt; Schnapp and Tiews). Christian Borch's impressive reconstruction of the semantic implications and connotations of the crowd, for instance, analyzes "crowd semantics" (3) as "distinctly modern semantics, arguably even as *the* semantics of modernity" (5) and sets out to unfold the ways of "problematizing" (in the sense of Foucault) the crowd at different stages of the development of sociological thought (7–8). Even though Borch focuses on scholarly conceptualizations of the crowd, i.e., on "the evolution of sociological crowd thinking as a history of internal disciplinary endeavors" (3), his insights provide both a starting point and a frame of reference for an approach that sets out to examine the potential of "the crowd" as a signifier. Second, and on the basis of this historical reconstruction, I will draw specific attention to the discursive reemergence of the crowd (and its semantic and normative implications) in new media environments in the twenty-first century. Particularly in these environments, I argue, the ambiguities inscribed into the crowd as signifier come to the surface in many different ways. With the help of examples, then, I set out to explore the ways in which the crowd as collective subject is constituted and takes shape in and through new media. In so doing, I assume that, in contrast to (often politically motivated) collective action in the streets that we have been witnessing over the last decade, the virtuality of social media both requires and provides different forms of making the crowd visible. At the same time, the semantics of the crowd in discourse both on participatory cultures in the digital realm and in new social movements are informed by very similar normativities.

The Crowd and Its Discourse—Then/Now, Physical/Virtual

Despite the ambiguity expressed through his characterization of the crowd as both heroic and criminal, Le Bon's analysis was considerably clear-cut, ideologically speaking. For him, "the claims of the masses," i.e., the crowd's claims, "amount to nothing less than a determination to utterly destroy society as it now exists, with a view to making it hark back to that primitive communism which was the normal condition of all human groups before the dawn of civilization" (xvii). While this rather negative conceptualization of the crowd reverberated with a general re-emergence of the concept in the late nineteenth century (Schmidt 40), the concept remained insignificant far into the second half of the twentieth century (Schmidt 39). Even though the fascist regimes in Europe gave ample proof to the necessity of studying them (Hussain), another rise in discursive frequency only appeared from the 1970s onwards, with a peak at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Schmidt).

In view of these recurrences, Florian Schmidt suggests that there has indeed been a "reinvention of the crowd" (37),[1] yet its discursive and practical reappearance took different ideological and, as one might add, aesthetic forms: "Astonishingly," he writes, "in the early years of the twenty-first century, we see an almost total inversion of the negative connotations the term crowd previously had. The crowd suddenly started to appear as a source of knowledge, creativity, and productivity, not only in a metaphorical sense but also as a core element in business plans and value chains of countless companies" (42). Schmidt here refers to—and repeats—the (hi)story of what Tim O'Reilly famously labeled "Web 2.0," i.e., new forms of interactive and participatory channels and platforms in digital environments, which, at the turn of the twenty-first century, were heralded as forms of a basically democratic re-engagement of audiences, or consumers of media content, into the processes of production and distribution.

The crowd, then, signified an idea of collectivity that spoke to this promise of participation in and through digital media. It denoted an entity constituted by uncountable individuals, who, through networking and sharing, could contribute to and benefit from a joint endeavor of, e.g., producing knowledge in online encyclopedias or generating media content through the exchange of thoughts and ideas, images, and sounds among an otherwise assumedly heterogeneous constellation of people. The concept of the crowd, then, allowed for combining the notion of unruliness with an idea of collectivity that did not imply an all-too homogeneous, all-too

1 In the eponymous chapter of his book (37–64), Schmidt presents a thorough analysis of the "historic notions of the crowd in comparison with those defining the discourse today," arguing that "[c]ertain aspects of what a crowd was have remained remarkably stable over time, while others have changed substantially" (38).

organized way of collaborating and communicating (as is the case with the concept of "community").[2] Surely, for this "smart mob,", as Howard Rheingold called the online crowd of "produsers" (Bruns), there was no "physical confirmation through touch and a shared space, and thus the physical feedback of possessing strength in numbers" (Schmidt 47). Moreover, as Schnapp and Tiews argue, in postindustrial times, crowding was "channel[ed] […] into certain domains of civic and electoral ritual, entertainment, and leisure" (xi).

Therefore, on the one hand, the crowd gradually changed into an "icon that circulates within a political economy characterized by the co-existence of media aggregation and bodily disintegration," becoming the "subject to a variety of uses and appropriations" (Schnapp and Tiews xi). "In this sense," as Francesco Bailo argues, "the use of the Internet, because of its decentralized and horizontal geography, assumed a symbolic relevance" (38). In the early 2000s, it represented an alternative to "the monopoly of institutions of professional experts," with the project of Wikipedia being perhaps the most prominent example of this "techno-utopian narrative" in which, as Bailo continues, "a self-reviewed crowd could compete with and potentially unseat the experts" (38). At the center of this narrative of the smart crowd, Bailo puts the "citizen user," i.e., the "technologically empowered networked individual" (36) who distrusts established political institutions (39). In social media, this user finds a media-technological framework that allows to both imagine and demand a more direct form of participation and deliberation in the political domain. Moreover, the "aggregative capabilities" of this framework's algorithmic operations contribute to "the formation of online crowds of like-minded individuals who, while sharing no prior associational link, hold similar opinions" (Gerbaudo 750). Meeting people that share, say, certain preferences, lifestyles, worldview, then, is not (or no longer) a coincidence, but the result of calculations that allow for the orchestration of the many at an unprecedented scope and scale.

At the same time, and on the other hand, the technological possibilities of communicating and interacting virtually provided a fruitful ground for the emergence of collectivities as visible political subjects in the early twenty-first century, which have frequently been referred to as crowds, too. Indeed, the rise of "social media platforms as crowd fora" (Dean 15) have significantly contributed to the proliferation of the crowd as an alternative form of conceptualizing collective organization, enabling

2 Indeed, the concept of the online community implies more binding relationships based on mutually shared interests. Though crowds might also follow the same overall goal, the motivations of members might be different from one another. For West and Sims, for instance, communities are constituted by "repeated peer-to-peer interactions" (70), so ties are much stronger than in crowds. At the same time, West and Sims argue that there are a number of "hybrid crowds" (70) with community-like features. This overlap can also be observed in crowd discourse.

people to network and connect over distances instantaneously in order to organize and display bodily co-presence. In this combination of online and offline mobilization, the Occupy movement's protest activities, for instance, have been framed as a crowd-based and -driven questioning of established orders of finance and politics; similarly, the idea of the "unruly crowd" speaking on behalf of democracy also entered the discourse on the so-called Arab Spring, during which physical and virtual collectivities articulated their revolutionary concerns.[3]

In view of the mobilizing potential ascribed to new media technologies, it perhaps does not come as a surprise that there is an "elective affinity between social media and populism," in that the former provides the latter with "a channel for the populist yearning to 'represent the underrepresented', providing a voice to a voiceless and unifying a divided people" (Gerbaudo 746). As Paulo Gerbaudo points out, social media are indeed used (and seem to function) as "gathering spaces where the 'lonely crowds' produced by the hyperindividualism of neoliberal society could coalesce, where the atoms of the dispersed social networks could be re-forged into a new political community, into an 'online crowd' of partisan supporters" (750). Similarly, Bailo, in his study on the populist Five Star Movement (M5S), argues that "[t]he political relevance of multitudes derives first from their capacity to synchronise and act in a coordinated fashion" (6). He concludes that, in the case of M5S, its "spectacular rise […] was made possible by two concurrent trends: a decline in political trust and a Cambrian explosion of individual information and communication technologies" (9).

The notion of the crowd, in the discourse on these forms of collective organization on- and offline, remains highly ambivalent: As Dean notes, some "crowd observers claim the crowd for democracy," while others, in line with historical discourses specifically from the nineteenth century, see in it "the extraordinary rebellion of the masses," characterizing the crowd as "brutal, primitive, even criminal, mobs" (6–7). For some, the crowd storming the Capitol on January 6, 2021, for instance, which was also coordinated through social media networks, bore resemblance to the mob that invaded the National Assembly after the elections in France

3 It is worth noting that the perception of forms collective organization as crowds is always depending on the historical and geopolitical context: As Schnapp and Tiews critically remark, "the face of contemporary multitudes has increasingly become a foreign face associated with conflicts in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa relayed to first world living rooms and bedrooms via electronic media" and that "even in the developing world, contemporary mass actions appear to have become more 'citational'—they quote, sometimes in a nostalgic key, from a previous, now irrecuperable heroic era of crowds" (xii). What might have been an accurate diagnosis in 2006, needs an update now, though, considering the recent rise of populism in Europe and the U.S., which has contributed to a renewed (discursive) presence and relevance of crowds.

in 1848 (Harison). For most, this was an undemocratic act of violence; for others, a heroic deed in the name of democracy.

The Crowd in Digital Media

Even without the affective momentum of physical co-presence that bears the potential to disturb the public order, digital environments have been regarded as sites for the emergence of crowds, providing the possibility "to coordinate temporarily with those of the same mind" (Vehlken 52). I.e., the networking capabilities of digital infrastructures enable a form of interconnectedness that allow users to feel strongly tied to a "certain cause" (Vehlken 49). Just like offline activities of, say, protest movements such as Fridays for Future or the Occupy movement(s), virtual collectivities—conceived of or represented as crowds—might also help "uncouple political, economic and social behavior from the structures of entrenched systems and social organizations such as nations, political parties and labor unions" (Vehlken 49).

Specifically due to the promise of participation inherent in new media, which, I believe, sustains their "uncoupling potential" (at least rhetorically), crowd discourse and its normative ambiguities can best be observed in exactly these environments. Practices of crowd-sourcing and crowd-funding, for instance, quite frequently emphasize the amateur-based creation of content as opposed to professional media production. In so doing, they may be said to constitute what Andreas Reckwitz has called "aesthetic or hermeneutic voluntary communities" (3), consisting of online contributors who are eventually integrated into the joint endeavor of sourcing or funding in and for an individual(ized) collective project. At the same time, the suggestion of alternative means of participation and representation in online environments, more often than not, goes hand in hand with a sense of political empowerment of "the many," unfolding in a specific crowd aesthetics, which compensates for the absence of the physical body through symbolic practices that display "crowdness."

The crowd-sourced media production *Star Wars Uncut*, for instance, illustrates this dynamic of crowd discourse and its formation of collective subjectivities. It is a collective remake of the 1977 *Star Wars* movie from 2010, in which 15-second segments of user-made scenes (or parts of scenes) were recombined to reproduce the entire movie. Immediately after its publication, *Star Wars Uncut* was praised as an example of the democratic character of new media environments and celebrated the crowd's creativity: The online magazine *Vulture* called it "the greatest viral video ever," arguing that "*Star Wars Uncut* is a collectively made work of postmodern folk art," and reviewers did not get tired of stressing the project's potential to offer an alternative to the monopolist tendencies of Hollywood mainstream cinema (Seitz).

As I have outlined elsewhere,[4] the collective endeavor of *Star Wars Uncut* both afforded and was given shape by a discourse which, at the time, focused on the reconceptualization of the "crowd" as a creative team, which, as Surowiecki illustrates in his influential book on *The Wisdom of Crowds*, is imagined to "yield results [...] that are broadly superior to the performance of any individual member of the group" (qtd. in Rouzé 17). The promise of the superiority of the collective, understood as an act of claiming one's right to the story of *Star Wars*, was made particularly meaningful through the creation of the opposition between Casey Pugh, the curator of the remake who acted "on behalf of the crowd," on the one hand, and Lucasfilm, the production company of the *Star Wars* movies as a representative of corporate media on the other.

On an aesthetic level, "the crowd" as a voice of the many articulated itself (and thus came into being as a collective subject in the first place) through an aesthetics of intermedial remixing, through which individual subjectivity was sacrificed for the larger idea of producing one single movie remake. Whereas the 15-second segments uploaded on the project's website did not make sense on their own (just because they were much too short to render a meaningful part of the story), they were edited by the project's curator Casey Pugh—a step which revealed the actual hierarchy of the project and dismantled its egalitarian rhetoric. The crowd, then, did not become visible through bodies and their mediatization on the streets, but was constituted through an aesthetics of bricolage that communicated, or rather produced the heterogeneity usually connected to the notion of the crowd. At the same time, though, the project valued each contribution by acknowledging the choices for a specific media technology in the process of remaking (e.g., "flash animation, Claymation, 3-D animation, old- and new-school video-game graphics, stop-motion-animated action figures and Lego characters and paper dolls, masked performers, and sock puppets" [Seitz]), which were not altered in the process of connecting the pieces of the puzzle. Moreover, the project offered as an incentive for individual participation the chance of being named in the movie's credits as a revenue for the intellectual and creative investment into the crowd's endeavor (thus, through the backdoor of what seemed to be an alternative to established logics of media entrepreneurship, installing a cost-benefits-scheme which also entailed a competitive dimension).

Interestingly, then, though the project featured the crowd as a collectivity, the members of which largely remained invisible, it also provided options of stepping out of an unknown and heterogeneous group of people. Indeed, while users were able to enjoy what Elias Canetti has called the moment of "discharge," i.e. a complete disappearance of hierarchy and difference in a moment of (felt) egality in the constitution of a crowd (18, see also Schmidt 46), it also provided them with a framework

4 My analysis of *Star Wars Uncut* in this contribution is partially reproduced from Butler, "On the Ethics and Aesthetics" and Butler, "The Audience".

for the production of individuality through their very specific creative input and the option of becoming visible (and thus stand out) to different degrees.

Another new media constellation which featured both the collectivity of the crowd and the individuality of its members was *The Johnny Cash Project*, an online platform designed by director Chris Milk and digital entrepreneur Aaron Koblin to create a video clip to Johnny Cash's song "Ain't No Grave" through crowd sourcing. Its aim, it says on the platform's website, was to commemorate the American country singer and its oeuvre. The project was described, or described itself, as participatory, as it argued that it creates "a living, moving, ever changing portrait of the legendary man in black" by collecting individually designed video clip frames, which are then put together to generate one coherent audiovisual narrative. The "mission statement" of the project, which can be found on the website, elaborates on the participatory nature and effects of the endeavor, emphasizes both the collectivity of content creators and their individual contributions: "The Johnny Cash Project," it announces, "is a global collective art project, and we would love for you to participate […] Your work will then be combined with art from participants around the world, and integrated into a collective whole: a music video for 'Ain't No Grave,' rising from a sea of one-of-a-kind portraits."[5] The simultaneity of wholeness and one-ness is also reproduced through the videoclip itself, as it contains a short "making of"-story preceding the visual rendering of Cash's song, which features statements of contributors from all over the world and emphasizes the collective dimension of the project by giving both countries of residence and the frame number in a caption. In so doing, the "making of" enhances the tale of collective empowerment both fueled by the project and its discourse. At the same time, the contributors' statements, which seem to be randomly selected, highlight their individual relationships to Cash and thus produce the idea of "one-of-a-kindness."

The mode of interaction between user and website was highly determined and framed by a commercial logic—indicated by the self-identification of the endeavor as a "project" in the first place, which, in turn, addressed members of the crowd as what Steve Sammartino (*The Great Fragmentation*; *The Lessons*) has called "projecteers". Moreover, besides producing a Johnny Cash video clip, the project also served as a "showcase for the HTML5-friendly Google Chrome" introduced in 2008 and subsequently established as the most popular browser (Proctor and Maher). Finally, and in accordance with project's architecture, there were "terms & conditions" defining the limits of the collective's creativity. In this vein, then, Carolin Guertin, in her study on digital prohibition, has pointed out that *The Johnny Cash Project* was indeed "severely

5 All quotes in this paragraph taken from the original website www.johnnycashproject.com, which has been partially redirected to https://www.radicalmedia.com/work/the-johnny-cash-project.

restrictive, permitting only a single kind of illustration—created in the project's own interface—to be used" (135).

Yet, whereas Guertin calls the project a "nonreflexive 'reflexive remix'" (135), other scholars at least partially reproduce and perpetuate the tale of collective empowerment that the project itself contributes to stimulating. Apart from Koblin himself, who extensively elaborates on *The Johnny Cash Project* in a TED talk about the creative use of crowd-sourced data,[6] Leigh Edwards, for instance, in his study on the *Triumph of Reality TV*, calls it "one exciting and lively example" of Pierre Levy's "collective intelligence knowledge model" (36). It might well be due to this ambivalent perception of the project, being considered both part of a "new business model" and an alternative epistemology, that it is featured as "best practice" in David Alan Grier's *Crowdsourcing for Dummies* and, at the same time, canonized in the "Moments of Innovation" archive of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where it is described as "part art project, part memorial, and part collaborative storytelling project—it continues to evolve today […] users can still submit their images to the music video, making it a dynamic and continuous memorial to the man and his music."

Whereas the collective subjectivity of the crowd in crowd-sourcing activities such as *Star Wars Uncut* or *The Johnny Cash Project* is produced within narratives of co-creation, collaboration, and participation (even if reproducing a commercial logic) that, more often than not, is driven by a libertarian ideology, the crowd also appears as agent in rightwing (online) activism. In these contexts, the idea of the unruliness of the crowd and its unfiltered articulation of the people's will forms the semantic framework for the mobilization of politically motivated action. The crowds that emerge, then, "disturb liberal critics because they challenge the composition of the liberal subject—as a political being who possesses reason, intent and individuality" (Hussain).

Digital media allow for the formation of these crowds (or the formation of a discourse on them) online, sometimes even before physical bodies are gathering in the streets. In this sense, they serve as "preparatory media" which help crowds come into being (discursively, and physically). Before Trump supporters stormed the Capitol on January 6, 2021, social media had provided a platform for the articulation of dissatisfaction and the need to overcome the status quo. They served as media to represent individual claims, which, through algorithmic calculations, were connected to each other despite of their heterogeneity. Indeed, as Luke Munn argues in his study of the ultra-conservative social media service Parler, "networked media had already been working to provide it with 'just enough' cohesion, transforming it into a more

6 In his TED-talk, Koblin also refers to Surowiecki's *The Wisdom of Crowds* to underline the idea of collective creativity articulated through *The Johnny Cash Project*.

dangerous political body […] bringing together an array of pro-Trumpian voices to form an imagined collective" ("More than a Mob").[7]

On an aesthetic level, this process of producing the crowd as collective subjectivity finds expression through listing and (re)combining hashtags, which at once render the diversity of the people involved, while also making connections. As Munn observes, "if these hashtags work to surface the post to different communities, they also function to stitch those communities together, to construct a collective identity. These tags are bridges between camps, asserting that, despite their obvious differences, there are some common ideals and shared interests" ("More than a Mob"). Moreover, the crowd was constituted by the sharing and circulation of memes through which political positions could be articulated in a highly condensed form, and which worked as a shorthand iconography of Trump supporters whose digital shitstorming dramatically turned into a physical and overtly violent storming of the Capitol.[8] Collective meme-production and circulation, however, not only turns out to be an element of crowd aesthetics, but also, as Carolin Wiedemann has shown in her study on forms of collective organization in digital environments, also entail a specific affective, or affecting, momentum. In her analysis of meme creation and circulation on 4chan, she argues that "the single actors become part of something bigger that they can't perceive during its development. That is where processes of affection are occurring" (181).

Crowdification: On the Production and Productivity of a Social Figure

I have argued that the re-emergence of crowd discourse at the beginning of the twenty-first century could be considered an effect of the co-occurrence of a growing mistrust in the established political institutions (specifically, but not exclusively in Western liberal democracies), the ensuing rise of populism and the emergence of social media as platforms of digital communication serving as "crowd fora" that help render this form of collectivity visible. This revival of the crowd and its discourse draws on the ambiguities inscribed into the crowd as signifier, which adds to its affective potential and makes it adoptable to different ideological frameworks and their narratives. In other words, a specific constellation of political, socio-economic and technological developments has afforded crowd thinking and speaking and thus constituted the crowd as a collective subject assigned with agency through being addressed and acknowledged as such.

7 See also Munn's *Red Pilled* for a comprehensive analysis of what he calls "digital hate" on social media.

8 For an analysis of the significance of memes for the U.S. American alt-right, see Woods and Hahner.

Through this perspective, which centers on "the crowd" as a signifier producing a specific form of collective subjectivity, the crowd appears as what Sebastian Moser and Tobias Schlechtriemen have called a "social figure," i.e., a figure that emerges in different historical constellations, functioning as an emblematic type which represents contemporary debates, issues, and experiences of a society in a highly condensed way (165; 171–3, my translation). As such, as Schlechtriemen argues, social figures form the "avantgarde of [a society's] diagnosed problems" in and through which ambivalent, if not contradictory, trends and tendencies are articulated (151, my translation). Borch, in his semantic history of the crowd in sociological research, argues along similar lines, pointing out that "the crowd may be seen as a diagnostic category: it offers a lens or prism on how sociology has observed modern society and its social and political constitution at different times" (15).

Against this backdrop, and instead of asking for a definition of the crowd or its characteristics, then, it might be worth focusing on processes of "crowdification,'" i.e., on the ways of producing the crowd, which, as a social figure, both constitutes a collective subjectivity and articulates imaginaries of political participation and representation. Accordingly, one may ask how the crowd is created (through discourse and practices) in a specific sociocultural, political, and/or economic environment. Who is addressed and thus constituted as "the crowd," how, and by whom? What are the media-technological, social, etc. circumstances in which collectivities are framed and become visible as "crowds"? What are their affordances that enable or stimulate processes of "crowdification" in the first place? As hinted at above, there have already been a number of endeavors that have begun mapping this field of investigating the production and performativity of crowd discourse (see, e.g., Borch; Schnapp and Tiews). Yet, I believe that the most recent convergence of political concerns and media-technological developments, which added to the appropriation of crowd discourse and crowding practices in both left-wing and right-wing political circles, still needs to be explored in further detail. Starting from these questions, then, may open up a perspective that will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of both crowd discourse and the use of crowding strategies in processes of political mobilization.

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