Strategies and Reasons for the Impact of WikiLeaks on World Public Opinion

Estrategias y razones del impacto de WikiLeaks en la opinión pública mundial

Alberto Quian and Carlos Elías

Key words

Web Analytic
• Public Opinion
• Newspapers
• Network Society
• WikiLeaks

Abstract

This study explains when, how and why WikiLeaks emerged as a global phenomenon. Its media strategies were clearly systematised into three stages. Web analytics tools were used to collect data from four different levels of digital popularity: Google searches for the term "WikiLeaks", "WikiLeaks" website traffic, Twitter activity and Twitter followers. Data for more than five years were analysed (from December 2006, when WikiLeaks arose, to the Stratfor case, in 2012). Our results indicate that, in the age of the network society, the popularity of a digital and anti-establishment phenomenon such as WikiLeaks (and the impact of its messages) paradoxically depends on traditional press newspapers ("quality press"). Therefore, newspapers still maintain their influence and legitimising power.

Palabras clave

Analítica web
• Opinión pública
• Periódicos
• Sociedad red
• WikiLeaks

Resumen

Esta investigación intenta explicar cuándo, cómo y por qué emerge WikiLeaks como fenómeno global sistematizando sus estrategias mediáticas en tres claras etapas. Usamos herramientas de analítica web para recoger datos de cuatro niveles de popularidad digital: búsquedas en Google, acceso al sitio web de WikiLeaks, presencia y seguidores en Twitter. Se analizan más de 5 años (desde su nacimiento en 2006 hasta la filtración de Stratfor en 2012). Nuestros resultados indican que, en la era de la sociedad red, la popularidad de un fenómeno digital y antisistema como WikiLeaks (y el impacto de sus mensajes) depende, paradójicamente, de su difusión en la prensa tradicional de papel *(quality press)* que aún conserva su influencia y poder legitimador.

Citation

Alberto Quian: Universidad Carlos III de Madrid | albertoquian@gmail.com
Carlos Elías: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid | carlos.elias@uc3m.es

INTRODUCTION[1]

The WikiLeaks organisation has been the subject of worldwide news coverage. Both its leaks and its founder have featured in documentaries and books. However, there has been barely any research on a phenomenon that has become, for some, the paradigm of a new journalism: that of the massive leaks of secret documents. WikiLeaks has been seen as an emerging model of the *hacktivist* transnational organisation-network. Its strategy has evolved from the publication of raw, unredacted materials, to collaborating with journalists, scientists and activists for them to investigate, use, reuse and edit the contents of documents that the organisation has obtained through secret leaks, protected by high technology. WikiLeaks' roots are in *hacktivism*, focused on the struggle for government and company transparency (Quian, 2016).

In 1998, at the peak of *hacktivism*, the editor of the magazine *2600: The Hacker Quarterly*, Eric Gordon Corley (better known by his pseudonym Emmanuel Goldstein, taken from the novel *1984* by George Orwell) predicted a new era in *hacktivism*: "It will be the equivalent of the civil rights movement, the American Revolution, and the Age of Enlightenment all mixed together" (Goldstein, 2009: 269).

At the beginning of the 21st century, Klein stated that, as the secrets that lie behind the global network of corporations become known by an increasing number of people, their exasperation would cause major political upheavals in the form of waves of outright rejection of transnational corporations and, especially, of those whose brands are better known (Klein, 2001: 24).

Goldstein (2009), Jordan and Taylor (2004) and Vegh (2003) considered that the 11 September attacks in the United States in 2001 were a tipping point for security and the world order, the privacy of the individual and civil liberties. In their opinion, states undertook actions to break encryption systems and any others that guaranteed anonymity on the Internet, to engage in surveillance of our online communications, "all with initial overwhelming support from the terrified public" (Goldstein, 2009: 626).

In addition, "the events of September 11 placed a question mark over the antiglobalisation movement", besieged by a global state of terror that ended up redefining "dissidence as terrorism", whereby activists and *hacktivists* were faced with a legal and violent repression and the protest space dramatically narrowed (Jordan and Taylor, 2004: 65). The state of collective paranoia after 11/9 further contributed to a stigmatisation of hackers and *hacktivists*: they went from being considered criminals to being identified as cyber-terrorists (Vegh, 2003).

The most subversive act by Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, was to take seriously and act on the warning issued in 1999 by Scott McNealy, CEO of Sun Microsystems against corporations and states: "You have zero privacy anyway. Get over it" (Andrejevic, 2014: 2619). Based on this assertion, which places us in a dystopian scenario, Assange considers that "the Internet, our greatest tool for emancipation, has been transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism we have ever seen" (Assange *et al.*, 2012: 1).

The supposed conspiracy between corrupted political power and corrupting economic power was dissected by Assange in his brief essay *Conspiracy as Governance* (2006), the theoretical foundation of WikiLeaks, published on 3 December 2006, which coincided with his organisation's birth. This essay is part of the stage (between July 2006 and August 2007) in which Assange articulated his rhetoric against global control and surveillance, in a series of texts

posted on his blog *IQ.org* (IQ: Interesting Question).

The philosophical foundations of WikiLeaks are to be found in these personal writings, gathered under the name *Selected Correspondence*. Here Assange alluded to the effects of leaked information on the systems of "secretive and unjust governments". In a text entitled "The non-linear effects of leaks on unjust systems of governance (31 December 2006)", he pointed out: "The more secretive or unjust an organisation is, the more leaks induce fear and paranoia in its leadership and planning coterie."

WikiLeaks was launched at the end of 2006, and made public in January 2007, paradoxically, through an internal leak (Aftergood, 2007; WikiLeaks Leak, 2007; WikiLeaks Leak 2, 2007). Assange and a group of hackers and activists set up "the first stateless information organisation", whose "objective, from the beginning, was to operate beyond the reach of justice, obtain documents censored by governments and corporations and make them public" (Hastings, 2012: 46). Since then, WikiLeaks has become a "transnational mechanism to disseminate information beyond the reach of any government, corporation or organisation" (Carr, 2011).

WikiLeaks reached worldwide popularity in 2010, thanks to a series of massive leaks of secret documents about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan but, above all, with the revelations about *Cablegate* (about the ins and outs of US foreign policy discovered by the release of thousands of diplomatic cables between the Pentagon and US embassies). With *Cablegate,* WikiLeaks decided to ally itself with five Western quality press newspapers to publish the contents of the leaked cables: *The New York Times* (USA)*, The Guardian* (United Kingdom), *Der Spiegel* (Germany), *Le Monde* (France) and *El País* (Spain).

The *International Encyclopedia of Communication* (version 2008, edited by Wolfgang Donsbach for Wiley-Blackwell) notes that there is an unwritten consensus in defining "quality press" as newspapers and magazines that: (1) are addressed at the "intelligentsia"; that is, the elites and the decision-makers of a country; (2) are distributed nationally, never regionally; and (3) provide broad and in-depth news coverage, contextualising the information by providing background (Sparks and Campbell, 1987: 456). It also indicates that the "quality press" frequently cooperate with each other.

The leaks by WikiLeaks caused political unrest and obtained worldwide media coverage. They generated passionate debates that still rage: the legitimacy of revealing state and corporate secrets, political transparency, the right of access to all information... There was public debate about the challenges WikiLeaks posed to traditional media and journalists as the watchdogs of power in the current context, where the identity, credibility and business crisis that affects journalism generates enormous uncertainties about the sector, and is questioned by public opinion (Morales Steger, Irisarri Núñez and Martín Cavanna, 2011; Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2011).

The objective of this study is to find out at which points WikiLeaks had maximum impact and identify which events corresponded to those peaks in popularity. It is intended to investigate a hypothesis that, in principle, is contradictory: What role does the so-called quality press (elites' press) have in a totally digital and anti-system phenomenon such as WikiLeaks? To contrast the effectiveness of the mere massive release of raw data and documents as opposed to the tools of the classic processes of journalism to access, digest and understand information. We sought to analyse how WikiLeaks fared when it: 1) was engaged in raw filtering; 2) collaborated with journalists from the quality press, such as in the *Cablegate* case, and 3) collaborated with alternative and emerging digital platforms and media, rejecting the "quality

press". This study also tries to show the complex scenarios within which the media currently operate, where it is not easy to identify what a journalistic source is and what the media are, and how their aims are interchanged (Elías, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

The popularity of WikiLeaks was used to analyse its impact. Four parameters were selected that identified four levels of public opinion in ascending order. Another contribution of this study is that this selection could be used as a guide to investigate similar phenomena.

1) Popularity in Google searches.
2) Popularity regarding access to the WikiLeaks website.
3) Popularity in moving from the private to the public and talking about the topic: the term used on Twitter.
4) Popularity regarding public militancy: WikiLeaks followers on Twitter[2].

An interesting contribution of this study is the use of data monitoring tools that make up the so-called "web analytics" (Stuart, 2014). Identifying the points of maximum impact of WikiLeaks on the Internet allowed their milestones to be established, and helped to build the story about the evolution of this phenomenon, connecting its impact on the Web with its relationship with the media.

Data on the estimated traffic on the WikiLeaks website (wikileaks.org), Google searches on WikiLeaks and the impact generated on Twitter were obtained and triangulated. The data were spread over more than 5 years: from December 2006, when WikiLeaks emerged, until April 2012, one month after the publication of more than 5.5 million emails from the Stratfor global intelligence agency, the largest leak made by this organisation by volume of documents. In this way it was possible to compare the impact that the successive WikiLeaks leaks had over time[3].

The basic functionalities of the five selected monitoring tools and their application in this study were:

Google Trends

It visualises the interest generated by a topic over time, calculated by the volume of Google searches. The term *wikileaks* was inserted and the following filters were applied for the search:

- Web search
- Geographical scope: worldwide
- Period: 1 December 2006 - 31 March 2012.
- All Categories.

Alexa

Alexa measures the reputation of a website using the number of sites that have links pointing to that website, and provides information on the traffic it receives in order to rank it among all the websites in the world. Alexa collects information from users who have the Alexa Toolbar application installed in their browser, from which traffic statistics

---

[2] At the end of 2010, the year in which WikiLeaks became known worldwide, Twitter had 200 million registered accounts. That year was a turning point for this company, as it became the second most used social network in the world after Facebook. This was due to the fact that 100 million new accounts were registered in that year alone. See:

– *Who's New on Twitter # Hindsight2010*, at https://blog.twitter.com/2010/who-s-new-on-twitter-hindsight2010, access March 20, 2017.

– *Comment: The year that Twitter came of age*, at http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/twitter/8193763/Comment-The-year-that-Twitter-came-of-age.html, access March 20, 2017.

---

[3] The authors note that they have not used inferential statistical techniques (but web analytics tools), so causal results must be regarded with caution.

and user behaviour on the site are generated. This means that the statistics generated are biased for a large number of cases, although for websites with large volumes of traffic (those that feature among the top one hundred thousand in the Alexa ranking, including WikiLeaks) reliability is very high, and is acknowledged in the online market. There is some guarantee about the evaluation of the impact of a website based on reports of these estimated data (Stuart, 2014: 69-73). For our case study, the following measurement indices were used for the site wikileaks.org:

- Traffic ranking: indicates the position of a site among all sites worldwide, based on the number of users who visit it and the number of page views. The graph collects data from the 100,000 busiest sites.
- Scope: estimated percentage of total Internet users who visited the website on a daily basis.
- Page views: estimated percentage of website pages viewed by users each day. The same pages that are viewed multiple times by the same user during the same day are only taken into account once. Therefore, this is the average of single pages viewed per day of the global online traffic analysed by Alexa.

Wildfire App

Monitoring system that provides data per day and cumulative data of the evolution of the number of followers on Twitter[4]. The WikiLeaks account on Twitter was analysed: *https://twitter.com/wikileaks*.

TweetStats

It provides a historical graph of the volume of *tweets* published every month by a Twitter user since the beginning of their activity in this social network. Data from the WikiLeaks account were collected from January 2009 to May 2012.

PeopleBrowsr

Freemium[5] tool that offers information on the impact and influence of a given topic, trend or keyword on Twitter, counting the number of daily mentions up to a timeline of one thousand days. A search for the term *wikileaks* was performed that returned data from October 2009 onwards.

RESULTS

These are the four levels of public opinion involvement suggested by our study.

Virtual popularity: how many Google searches were made for WikiLeaks

Google itself has become a means of mass communication (Elías, 2015), as well as a powerful tool (through the use of big data technology) to assess the popularity of certain ideas or terms. Therefore, a strategy used to measure the impact of WikiLeaks was to quantify searches of this term over time. The *Google Trends* search tool was used, which counts the number of searches for a specific term compared to the total number of searches carried out over a certain period of time, giving a measure of the interest aroused by a particular topic. These do not represent the total figures of the volume of searches, since the data were normalised and presented on a scale from 0 to 100. A value of 100 indicates the maximum popularity of a term, while 50 and 0 indicate a popularity that was half or less than 1%, respectively, in relation to the highest value. The word *wikileaks* was introduced as a search term for the period between Decem-

---

[4] The Wildfire App was purchased by Google in 2012. In 2014 Google gradually discontinued the service.

[5] *Freemium* is a business model that combines free basic services and some fee-paying advanced services.

ber 2006 (when the organisation began to operate) and 31 March 2012 (a month after the start of the Stratfor leaks), for worldwide searches and in all categories.

The results are revealing. Although Wiki-Leaks had already leaked very compromising documents before 2010, it was not relevant for Google search purposes until 2010, when it entered into alliances with conventional media.

The first important peak coincided with the release of the video that showed the killing of 12 civilians in Baghdad (April 2010). Until that date, the score obtained on the scale from 0 to 100 fluctuated between 0 and 1, 0 being the most repeated. On 6 April 2010, just one day after presenting *Collateral Murder* at an international press conference, searches reached a score of 5. The second largest peak corresponded to 26 July 2010, when it reached a score of 11, one day after announcing the publication of Pentagon papers on the war in Afghanistan. The popularity of WikiLeaks skyrocketed on 23 October, one day after the press conference announcing the largest leak of classified documents in history to date: 391,832 Pentagon documents on the conflict in Iraq produced between 2004 and 2009.

The searches had the highest spike (on a scale from 0-100) on 29 November 2010, at the early stage of the American diplomatic cables (*Cablegate*) being published by the consortium of five quality press newspapers. The number of searches fell as the leaks faded into the background, media attention was gradually focused on Assange (and his relationship with the media deteriorated), although since then, the volume of searches has remained above the levels recorded until April 2010.

Between October 2011 and March 2012 the rating on the Google scale remained constant at 2, despite the fact that in December 2011 the *Spy Files* were published and in February 2012 the *GI Files* were leaked with the help of 29 media from around the world.

Popularity of the WikiLeaks website: website traffic

One level may be to search for "WikiLeaks" in Google (if the searcher had not heard that term before) and a further level of involvement, which entails greater commitment, is to visit the website. This website traffic can be measured over time using the *Alexa.com* tool, from Alexa Internet, Inc. (a subsidiary of the Amazon.com company). The WikiLeaks website reached its highest position in the global web ranking in December 2010, thus ranking among the top one hundred Internet

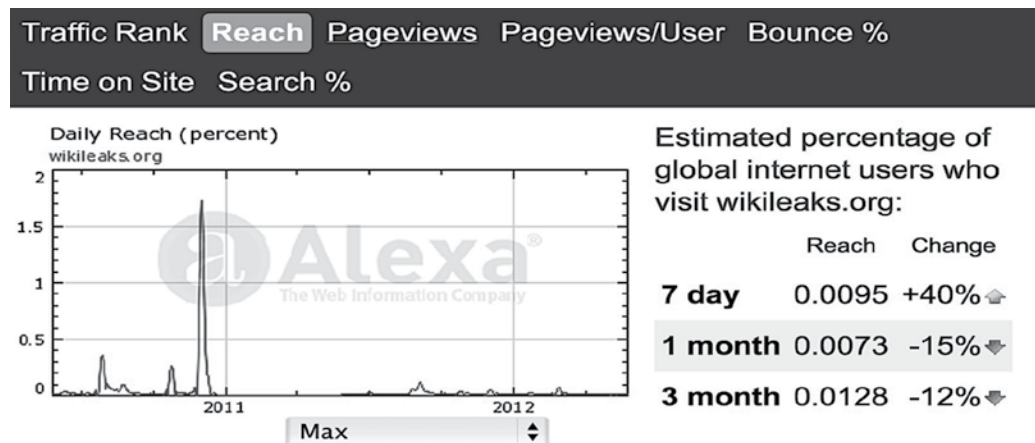**GRAPH 1.** *Evolution of searches for* wikileaks *on Google between December 2006 and March 2012*
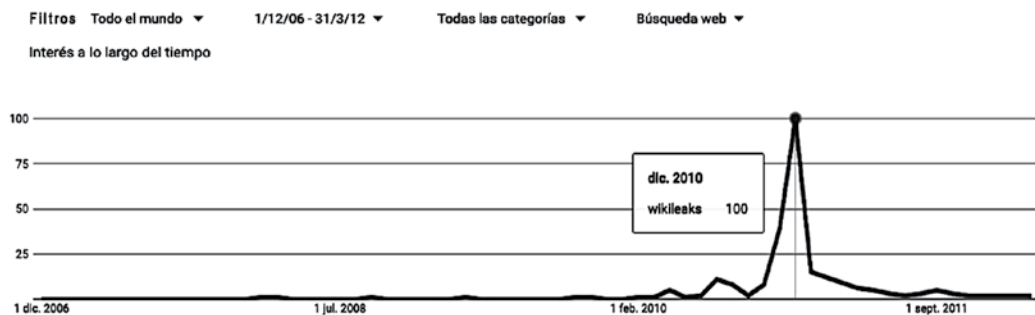
Source: By the authors based on Google Trends data.

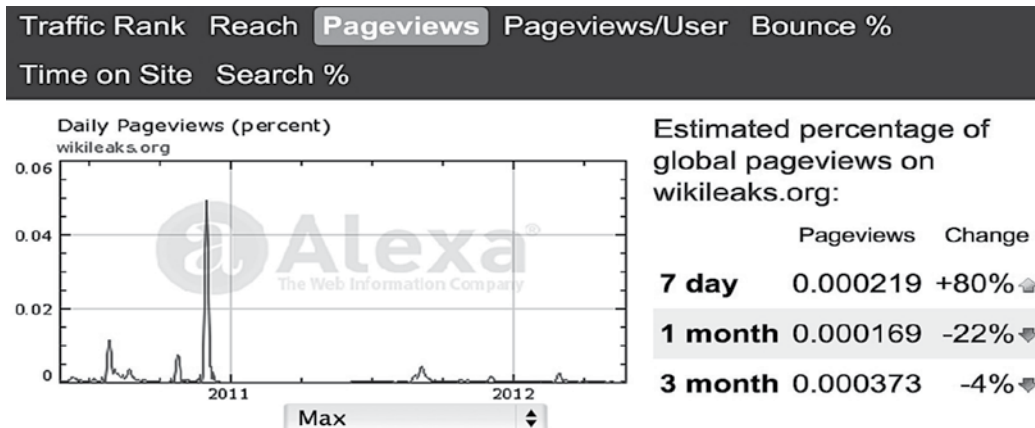**GRAPH 2.** *Evolution of wikileaks.org in the Alexa ranking*

Source: Developed by the authors based on Alexa data.

GRAPH 3. *Reach of wikileaks.org*

Source: Developed by the authors based on Alexa data.

GRAPH 4. *Percentage of single page views per day from wikileaks.org*

Source: Developed by the authors based on Alexa data.

sites with the most traffic worldwide. At the start of *Cablegate* (as well as its collaboration with the five most influential newspapers in the western world), the highest estimated percentage of total Internet users who visited the WikiLeaks website was registered, 1.7%; that is, an estimated 34 million users visited the site in one day[6].

With *Cablegate* WikiLeaks registered the highest estimated percentage of single pages viewed per user in one day: it is estimated that up to 0.05% of the total web pages visited worldwide were from the WikiLeaks site.

Social networks popularity: impact on Twitter

Google searches, and even access to specific websites, are still "private" or "intimate" activities. The next level of involvement entails moving from the private sphere (searching privately) to the public sphere (sharing that term or idea on social networks). Twitter is highly significant in this regard. It is another example of the broken thread between source and media, as it can involve making a public statement for or against something. *People-Browsr* was used to count the number of daily mentions of WikiLeaks on Twitter over a period of one thousand days. It was again corroborated that the highest levels of impact of WikiLeaks coincided with the leaking of the US diplomatic cables, and their publication in the five traditional newspapers: from 29 November 2010 to 9 December 2010. This broke the previous record of references to WikiLeaks on Twitter. They also rocketed on 27 February 2012, which coincided with the announcement of the leak of the Stratfor emails; on that day WikiLeaks was mentioned 107,745 times.

The highest number of mentions occurred on the day of Assange's arrest in London, 7 December 2010; a total of 161,776. This growth of WikiLeaks on Twitter coincided with the largest volume of Google searches about Assange.
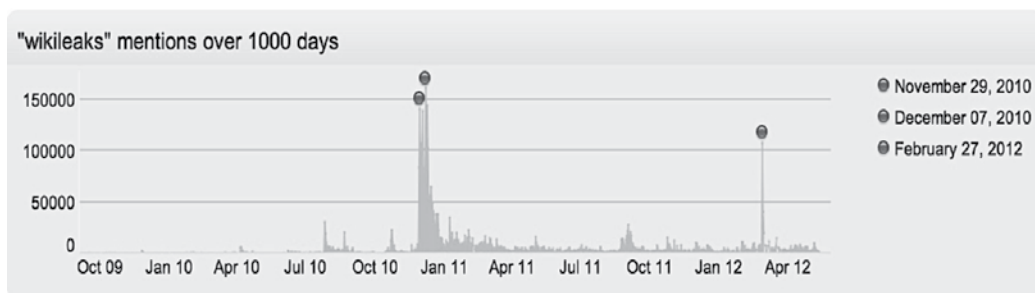
The days of WikiLeaks' greatest impact on Twitter were ranked by number of mentions, and the events that marked those trends.

It was verified that WikiLeaks achieved its highest impact levels on Twitter during *Cablegate*: from 28 November 2010 up to and including 09 December 2010, there were 1,357,984 mentions on WikiLeaks; an average of 113,165 daily mentions. With what was known as *The Global Intelligence Files* (*GI Files*), in 2012, the impact was significantly lower, even though WikiLeaks resorted to a larger number of culturally more diverse —although less influential—media to collaborate with (*El País*, the newspaper chosen for *Cablegate*, is not the same as *Público*, which was chosen for the *GI Files*). The leaks of the second major WikiLeaks alliance with the media barely maintained levels similar to those reached with the *Cablegate* for one day, with 107,745 mentions on 27 February 2012, the day when the publication of the *GI Files* began. One day later there were 40,703 mentions, that is, an impact drop of 62.2%; over the following days, the WikiLeaks *effect* was diluted. The "quality press" seemed to continue to be influential.

Popularity and impact on public commitment: the number of followers

The next level of public opinion involvement is not only to talk about it publicly (being in favour or against), but becoming a follower. One can be a member of a party and not make it public, but being a *follower* on Twitter means publicly expressing support, affinity, interest or curiosity. To measure the influence/popularity of WikiLeaks on Twitter, *Wildfire App* was used, which showed the growth

---

[6] At the end of 2010, there were around 2,000 million Internet users, according to the International Telecommunications Union, a UN body for matters related to information technology.

GRAPH 5. *WikiLeaks' mentions on Twitter*

Source: Developed by the author based on PeopleBrowsr data.

of the number of WikiLeaks followers and their daily behaviour, in the maximum period of time available from that particular tool: from 29 April 2010, when WikiLeaks had 47,994 followers, until 31 March 2012, when it had increased to 1,441,757.

The results showed that the great leaks of 2010, coordinated with the "quality press", boosted the popularity of WikiLeaks on Twitter. In October 2009, its account reached 10,000 followers (Lynch, 2014: 2682); at the end of April 2010 (after the publication of the *Collateral Murder* video), this figure was almost five times higher; seven months later, between 28 and 29 November 2010, it had surpassed 200,000 followers.

The graphs 7 and 8 show that the greatest increase in the number of followers took place between 28 November and the middle of December 2010. On 28 November, when *Cablegate* was announced, WikiLeaks had 196,195 followers on Twitter; one day later this had increased to 238,336 (+42,141).

The greatest growth occurred between 28 November 2010 and 19 December 2010, moving from 196,195 followers to 573,573 (+377,378): an average of 17,153 new followers per day. On 31 December 2010, the figure was 615,068 (+418,873 from 28 November 2010). Between 28 November 2010, and 31 December 2010, WikiLeaks added 12,693 daily followers on average, a trend

**GRAPH 6.** *Google searches for "Julian Assange" in November and December 2010*
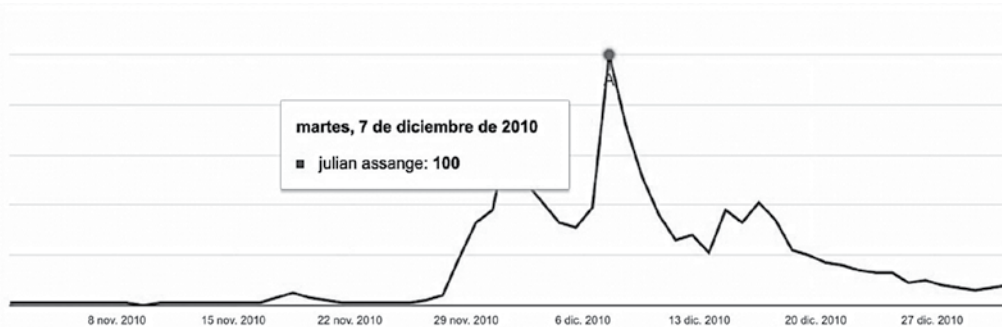
Source: Developed by the authors using Google Trends data.

TABLE 1. *Days of the greatest impact and influence of WikiLeaks on Twitter*

DATE	No. MENTIONS	EVENT
7 December 2010	161,776	Assange arrested in London. Visa and MasterCard suspend payment systems to WikiLeaks.
9 December 2010	144,650	Twitter shut down Anonymous accounts and Facebook shuts down the page for *Operation Payback.* Amazon suffers DDoS attacks. Lula da Silva defends WikiLeaks.
29 November 2010	140,816	One day after the start of *Cablegate.* Assange announces that he is planning to disseminate material about a large US bank in early 2011.
3 December 2010	139,291	WikiLeaks takes a Swiss domain name, WikiLeaks.ch, after its service was removed by its US provider, EveryDNS. A day earlier, the Swedish Supreme Court refused to examine the appeal filed by Assange against his international arrest warrant for alleged sexual abuse and rape; the arrest warrant was confirmed.
8 December 2010	133,102	DDoS attacks by WikiLeaks-supporting *hacktivists* against the Swedish Prosecutor's Office, the website belonging to Claes Borgstrom (lawyer of the two women who accused Assange of alleged sexual abuse) and Visa and MasterCard services.
27 February 2012	107,745	WikiLeaks starts releasing 5.5 million emails from Stratfor, in collaboration with 29 news organisations.
1 December 2010	107,363	The head of the National Security Commission of the United States Senate, Democrat Joe Lieberman, urges all companies that provide services to WikiLeaks to terminate their relationship with the organisation. Amazon expels WikiLeaks from its servers, where it had been hosted since 29 November, claiming numerous computer attacks received since the beginning of *Cablegate.* Interpol confirms that a Red Alert (that is, an international arrest warrant against Assange) had been issued on 20 November, 2010.

Source: Developed by the authors based on data obtained from PeopleBrowsr.

GRAPH 7. *Number of WikiLeaks followers on Twitter between April 2010 and April 2012*
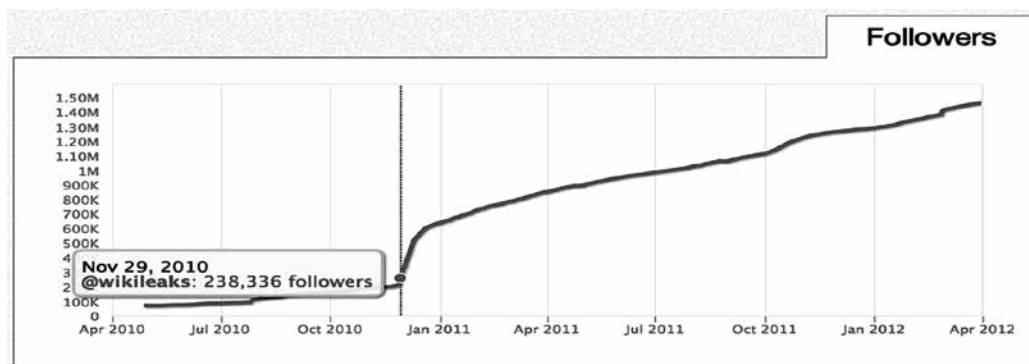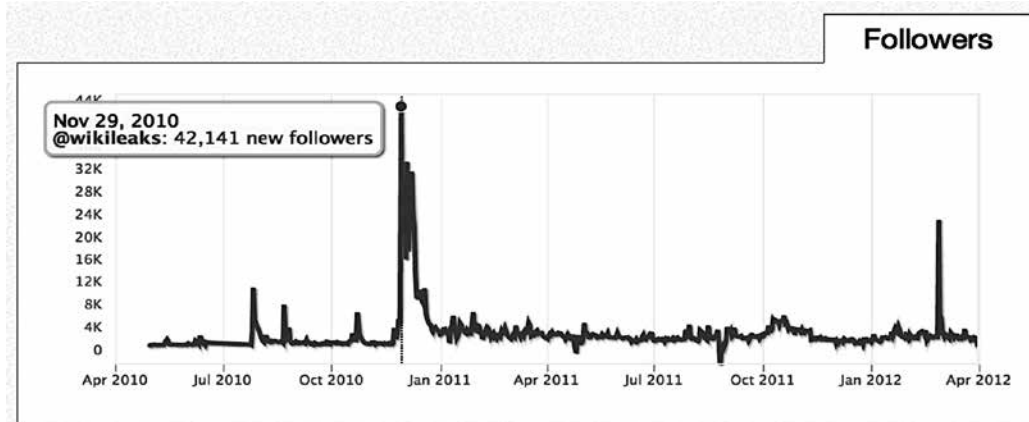

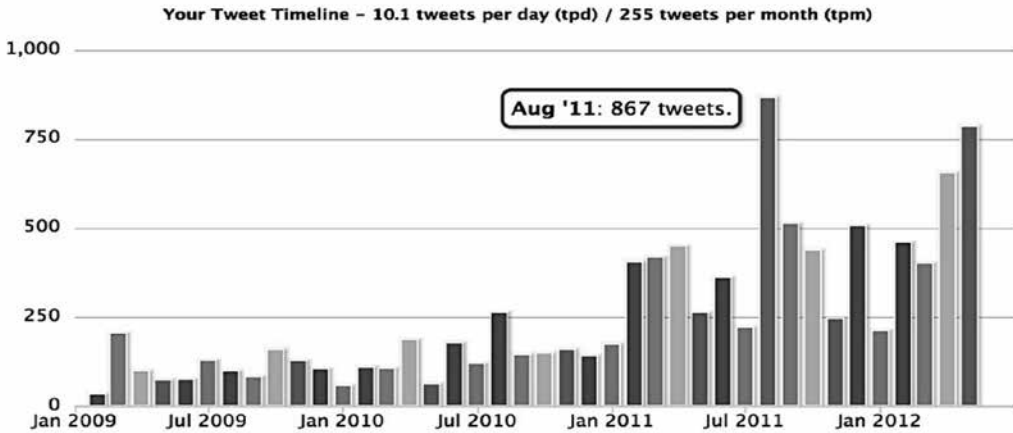*Source:* Developed by the authors based on Wildfire App data.

that decreased in 2011 and 2012. On 1 January 2011 it had 617,030 followers; between that date and 31 March 2012, its account had 824,727 new followers, with an average of 1,812 new followers per day. This growth trend led WikiLeaks to surpass one million followers on Twitter on 30 July 2011, becoming the 436th account to reach this figure, an "atypical case" (as a "radical group dedicated to information transparency") in Twitter's *millionaire* club (Lynch, 2014: 2679).

WikiLeaks reached its maximum impact on 29 November 2010, with a record 42,141 new followers. However, on 27 February 2012, when the *GI Files* were announced, it added 22,163. It is very important to note that, despite the fact that at that time the organisation had joined forces with 29 newspapers from all over the world, it did not reach the same levels of impact that it had generated at the end of November and the first week of December 2010, thanks to its collaboration with *The New York Times*, *The*

GRAPH 8. *Number of WikiLeaks followers on Twitter between April 2010 and April 2012*

Source: Developed by the authors based on Wildfire App data.

GRAPH 9. *Number of tweets published by WikiLeaks on Twitter each month*

Source: Developed by the authors based on TweetStats data.

Guardian, *Le Monde*, *El País* and *Der Spiegel*. The impact of the leak of Stratfor's emails lasted for just one day, the day when it was announced. One day later, on 28 February 2012, WikiLeaks gained only 5,434 new followers and the trend progressively declined.

Control test: WikiLeaks activity on Twitter

Web analytics experts hold that a lot of activity (in *tweets*, blog posts, etc.) multiplies the impact on the Web. A control test was considered necessary for the study under discussion here: to obtain data on WikiLeaks activity on Twitter, to check if its phases of greater growth coincided with the periods of the source's greatest activity. *TweetStats* was used, which provided the number of *tweets* that WikiLeaks published each month, between January 2009 and May 2012.

The data are revealing when comparing how the number of followers fared and the impact that the organisation had on Twitter, and on the Internet in general. The comparison of

the data shows that more WikiLeaks activity on Twitter did not result in a greater response from users. WikiLeaks reached its highest level of activity on Twitter in 2011 and 2012. However, it was in 2010 when WikiLeaks achieved its greatest impact on the Internet and the greatest growth in the number of followers on social networks, reaching its peaks at the beginning of *Cablegate*, at the end of November and the beginning of December 2010, when its Twitter activity was discreet when compared with that of later years.

In November and December 2010, at the height of the WikiLeaks phenomenon, WikiLeaks *only* published 159 and 141 *tweets*, respectively (a daily average of five). These data contrast with the 857 *tweets* published in August 2011 (a daily average of almost 28), which coincided with the controversy over the release of all the US diplomatic cables that were unredacted and did not protect the sources' identity, allegedly due to a WikiLeaks' error, which was later reported first by the German newspaper *Der Freitag* and later, by *Der Spiegel* and *The Washington Post*.

This led WikiLeaks to respond and defend itself publicly on its Twitter account with a series of messages to deny the press accusations[7].

DISCUSSION

Before 5 April 2010, when the video of 12 civilians being killed by a US Army Apache helicopter in Iraq was published, WikiLeaks and Assange had a moderate impact on world public opinion. But in December of that year, WikiLeaks was already a global phenomenon and Assange was one of the most famous people on the planet, with powerful enemies and passionate friends and admirers (Manne, 2011). The founder of WikiLeaks has been considered both a new Galileo and a "social bandit" (Elías, 2015), in the epic sense defined by Hobsbawm in his book *Bandits* (Hobsbawm, 1969). On 4 December 2010, a week after *Cablegate* began, WikiLeaks boasted on Twitter to be twice as well-known as Wikipedia, according to Google results[8] (Barok, 2011: 1).

These results show that the highest popularity peaks of WikiLeaks on the Internet coincided with the partnership with *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde* and *El País* on *Cablegate*. That is, WikiLeaks reached its maximum impact and popularity when it was in partnership with only five media which belonged to the "quality press", in a coordinated action. But once relationships with these "quality" newspapers broke down, and despite the fact that the leaks did not cease and its activity in social networks increased during 2011 and 2012, WikiLeaks did not manage to match the popularity and the impact levels achieved at the end of 2010.

In addition, the curves coincide with those of the historical records of searches and editions of the WikiLeaks entry in Wikipedia. That is, a new level of involvement has been added to the four levels outlined in this study (increase in Google searches, more traffic on the website, greater presence on Twitter and increase of followers). This level fits our curves: an increase in the number of searches for and editing of the term WikiLeaks on Wikipedia (Quian and Elías, 2017).

The results suggest that there is a relationship between the impact of "quality press" newspaper leaks and the socio-political impact of WikiLeaks. It can be deduced that the unprecedented collaboration in *Cablegate* was decisive in the legitimation, popularisation and impact of WikiLeaks in the public sphere.

By cross-referencing the data obtained with the events related to the WikiLeaks phenomenon, we were able to divide the history of this organisation into three key strategic stages, delimited by the different impact achieved by its leaks and its relationships with the media. These stages can be paradigmatic for other digital organisations seeking legitimation: 1) developing on the margins of the media system; 2) collaborating with the prestigious press to become legitimised; 3) collaborating with alternative media and criticising the prestigious press.

---

[7] See: WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (2011, 29 Aug.). Current story being spun about wild cables, including from Spiegel, is significantly incorrect. [Tweet] Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/108131963898052610

WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (2011, 29 Aug.). WikiLeaks "insurance" files have not been decrypted. All press are currently misreporting. There is an issue, but not that issue. [Tweet] Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/108251897961517056

WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (2011, 29 Aug.). There has been no "leak at WikiLeaks". The issue relates to a mainstream media partner and a malicious individual. [Tweet] Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/108261633859649536

[8] See: WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (4 Dec., 2010). "Wikileaks' now twice as known as well-known as "Wikipedia" according to Google. [Tweet] Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/11002485711835136

First stage: "Growing from the margins"

This covered from the end of 2006 (when WikiLeaks was born) until 5 April 2010, when the *Collateral Murder* video was released. During this period WikiLeaks published numerous highly valuable secret documents, with full editorial autonomy; however, its impact was limited, as our study has confirmed. This stage was characterised mainly by the publication of raw documents that sought media coverage.

Second stage: "Partnership with quality press"

The one with the greatest impact. Assange established close relationships with quality press newspapers, which he had always considered to crawl up the ladder of political and corporate power (Bartlett, 2011). The rejection of radio and television, the media with higher audiences, was significant. This strategic change coincided with a key event: In early 2010, WikiLeaks received the largest stash of secret documents ever leaked until then, hundreds of thousands of documents sent by Private Manning about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and US diplomacy. Neither WikiLeaks nor any information organisation, however broad, could manage such a huge archive.

Two needs came together: (1) taking advantage of the influential press to achieve maximum media and socio-political impact; and (2) having a broad and professional team of collaborators that could manage and edit a huge amount of raw material, to pass it through the journalistic filter and make it digestible for the general public. That was how WikiLeaks planned the big leaks in 2010, when it reached its peak in terms of popularity. First, with specific partnerships agreed with international media for the diffusion of *Collateral Murder* (the first turning point for WikiLeaks in making itself known globally) and the massive leaks of the *Papers on the War in Afghanistan*, in July 2010, and the *Iraq War Diaries*, in October 2010. And, finally, with the exclusivity agreement with five global newspapers for *Cablegate*, at the end of November 2010, when it reached its maximum impact.

In the case of *Cablegate*, this study verified that, although only a few diplomatic cables were passed through a journalistic filter, the impact of WikiLeaks was noticeably greater than that achieved in September 2011, after publication of all of the 251,287 leaked cables on the website, once the relationships with its *quality press* partners had broken down.

This partnership grew out of the need for a geolocation and for the message strategy to go viral in order to have the most effective impact on public opinion. It was reported in the four most influential Western languages: English, French, Spanish and German: "Working across national borders assured that stories would be driven by local interest but have international consequence" (Uricchio, 2014: 2569).

The four newspapers had a combined total circulation of 1,884,954 copies on average: *The New York Times*, 913,850; *The Guardian*, 282,002; *Le Monde*, 319,022 and *El País*, 370,080, in addition to the roughly one million weekly copies of the German *Der Spiegel*[9]. The unique visitors to the digital editions of these newspapers were: *The New York Times*, 44.8 million; *The Guardian*, 29.15 million; *Le Monde*, 6.67 million and *El País*, 12 million[10]. The four newspapers had 92.62 million unique users.

With this new strategy, WikiLeaks legitimised its role of gatekeeper of the "quality press" (but not of the radio and television) and its

---

[9] International Federation of Audit Bureaux of Certification (IFABC) for the four journals and Der Spiegel for the data of the German weekly. Average data 2010.

[10] comScore. All the data of unique users were from December 2011, except those for *Le Monde*, which was from June of that same year. We do not have data for *Der Spiegel*.

journalistic model of selection, verification, edition and hierarchisation of the information, renouncing the principles that had governed its activity as an organisation inspired by *cypherpunk*[11], which had ascribed to the hacker ethic (Jones and Brown, 2011; Assange *et al.,* 2012): free and unrestricted access to information and any intellectual technology that has something to teach about how the world works, decentralisation, distrust of established power structures and trust in computers as tools for improving our lives; fight against the alienation of the human being and search for the truth (Levy, 1984).

The newspapers collaborating in *Cablegate* accepted the compromises made by *The New York Times* with the US Department of State, which also served as gatekeeper (Jiménez and Caño, 2010). "They choose what should be published and how, under the guidance of the Department of State, according to an editorial in *The New York Times*" (Villeda Saldaña, 2011: 69).

It has been noted that the process of releasing the cables was not an exercise in free journalism, but rather a new staging of the press collaborating with governments, since *The New York Times* "informed the Government of USA of each and every one of the cables that they were going to publish" (Hastings, 2012: 48).

The WikiLeaks universe expanded at the same time as the media discovered the potential of combining collaboration, networks and high technology (Leigh and Harding, 2011: 25). At the end of 2010 WikiLeaks seemed unstoppable. *Cablegate* and the arrest of Assange in London on 7 December 2010 led to WikiLeaks' maximum peak in popularity. The editorials of the prestigious press praised WikiLeaks: "Revealing the concealed is the touchstone of committed journalism" (*El País,* 19 December 2010).

Third stage: "collaboration with alternative media and criticism of the quality press"

After the relationships with its partners in *Cablegate* broke down, at the beginning of 2012, WikiLeaks selected other media that were distributed around the world, but did not meet the conditions of being "quality press" for the Stratfor case, the largest leak by volume of documents ever. The impact was noticeably lower, as the data from this study has suggested, but WikiLeaks sought a halo of independence from smaller newspapers compared to the "quality press", as the latter is aimed at the elites. In Spain the chosen newspaper was *Público*, which had a circulation of 87,983 copies in 2011, compared to *El País* (*Cablegate*), which that year registered 365,117, according to OJD; in addition, the digital edition of *Público* had 1.4 million unique users in December 2011, far from the 12 million that *El País* had managed to attract, according to comScore data. It seems that an anti-system organisation becomes more reinforced if it appears in the pro-system press (*El País*) than in press engaged in the criticism of the system (*Público*).

On 27 February 2012, WikiLeaks began publishing 5.5 million emails from the global intelligence company Strategic Forecasting, Inc. (Stratfor), headquartered in Texas, through 29 media outlets around the world. This massive leak was attributed to the hacker movement Anonymous, which hacked the Stratfor website (Ball, 2012). It was performed by hackers belonging to AntiSec (a contraction of Anti-Security), a faction that emerged in the summer of 2011, in the middle of Anonymous becoming fragmented into an archipelago of hackers' *islands* (Coleman, 2014: 283). Dubbed *The Global Intelligence Files,*[12] these documents, dated from between July 2004 and the end of December 2011, revealed the

---

[11] This neologism is different from *cyberpunk*.

[12] See: http://wikileaks.org/the-gifiles.html (last accessed: 15 July 2015).

operation and techniques used by Stratfor, and the relationships of this company with its customers, including the C.I.A., Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs, embassies and multinational companies.

WikiLeaks turned to 29 information organisations from around the world, more spread out geographically, more linguistically and culturally diverse and more heterogeneous but, in general, less influential worldwide than those involved in *Cablegate*. The chosen ones were: *ABC Color* (Paraguay), *Al Akhbar* (Lebanon), *Al Masry Al Youm* (Egypt), *Asia Sentinel* (Hong Kong), *Bivol* (Bulgaria), *Carta Capital* (Brazil), *CIPER* (Chile), *Dawn Media* (Pakistan), *L'Espresso* (Italy), *La Repubblica* (Italy), *La Jornada* (Mexico), *La Nación* (Costa Rica), *Malaysia Today* (Malaysia), *McClatchy* (United States), *Nawaat* (Tunisia), *NDR/ARD* (Germany), *Owni* (France), *Pagina 12* (Argentina), *Plaza Pública* (Guatemala), *Pública* (Brazil), *Público* (Spain), *Rolling Stone* (United States), *Russia Reporter* (Russia), *Sunday Star-Times* (New Zealand), *Ta Nea* (Greece), *Taraf* (Turkey), *The Hindu* (India), The Yes Men[13].

The results of this study have shown that the impact of these leaks, despite their volume and their broader and more varied network of collaborators, was much lower than that of 2010, mainly during *Cablegate*.

CONCLUSION

The data from this study reinforce the hypothesis that an emerging and anti-system medium such as WikiLeaks necessarily depends on the ability to take advantage of the

---

[13] The Yes Men are two activists formed by Andy Bichlbaum and Mike Bonanno who practise what they called "identity correction': unmasking multinational corporations and the entire network of political and economic interests conducive to their own protection, to the detriment of the citizens from all over the world. At: http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Yes_Men, access January 21, 2017).

publicity provided by conventional media (Andrejevic, 2014: 2626), which still enjoys a dominant position in countries with a capitalist system (Fuchs, 2014). Alternative media such as WikiLeaks are less likely to be recognised or read by ordinary citizens without that support. The "quality press" gave WikiLeaks credibility and legitimacy and allowed the leaks to be published as "responsible journalistic acts". The data suggest that WikiLeaks to a large extent depends on the mass media (generally printed) and traditionally considered as "quality media" to confer journalistic legitimacy (that is, ethics) on the flow of documents available to them. That is, alternative information initiatives required being endorsed and formally refined by journalistic verification.

In return, WikiLeaks offered these newspapers a competitive advantage in their markets: exclusivity, a lifeline at a critical time for the press, which was experiencing a credibility and business crisis. *The Guardian*'s website, for example, registered 4.1 million unique users on the day when *Cablegate* was released, the highest number in its history so far. Between 28 November 2010 and 14 December 2010, 9.4 million users consulted WikiLeaks content on *The Guardian*'s website. About 43% of all traffic came from the US (Leigh and Harding, 2011: 225). WikiLeaks was validated by the press, which then regained the status, prestige and trust lost by neglecting its role, according to some. Thus both parties gained credibility, a *win-win* situation. By choosing the "quality press", Assange also secured some legal protection for WikiLeaks, hiding behind its partners' rights to freedom of press. Any legal action against the WikiLeaks founder or his organisation would then involve a direct attack on press freedom by five of the most influential media in the world. This aspect has been widely debated (Maurer, 2011; Assange, in Forbes, 2011; Leigh and Harding, 2011).

Throughout 2011 the disagreements between Assange and the newspapers that he

had selected as necessary collaborators to achieve their objectives were staged: maximum political impact and publicity for WikiLeaks. The marriage of convenience of the influential press to WikiLeaks ended in September 2011, when WikiLeaks decided to publish the diplomatic cables in full without traditional journalists editing the information before release. On 1 September 2011, WikiLeaks decided to share this responsibility with its followers, who were invited to vote on Twitter on whether all the raw diplomatic cables in WikiLeaks' possession should be published in full on the website, without censorship, without going through the filter of any traditional media[14]. The next day, WikiLeaks announced the release of all of the cables[15].

This decision provoked criticism from its five media allies for *Cablegate*. In a joint note published on 2 September 2011, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde* and *El País* condemned the publication of the 251,287 cables without hiding the identity of the sources, considering that "the disclosure of the identity of the informants could endanger said sources". This marked a small upturn in the impact of WikiLeaks on public opinion (as shown in the charts provided), as it once again became a central theme in the mainstream media (even if it was only critical).

WikiLeaks' leaks continued in 2011 and 2012. On 27 April 2011, WikiLeaks began to publish 779 secret reports from the Pentagon, dated between 2002 and 2009, relating to abuse of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay.

The publication of the *Spy Files*[16], 287 documents with information on the activities of security and espionage companies in 25 countries began on 1 December 2011. The documents were disseminated with the collaboration of Bugged Planet (collaborative, public project against global surveillance, created by Andy Müller-Maguhn, member of the Chaos Computer Club, the oldest veteran hacker group in Europe)[17] and Privacy International (British NGO that defends the right to privacy of individuals)[18], as well as media organisations from six countries: *The Washington Post* (United States), *L'Espresso* and *La Repubblica* (Italy), *The Hindu* (India), OWNI (France), ARD (Germany) and the *Bureau of Investigative Journalism* (United Kingdom). This case was the precursor to the revelations made by Edward Snowden 2013, when he uncovered the global and massive surveillance system of the US government and its allies.

It was precisely at the end of 2011 when the origins of a new and third stage could be identified. After a bitter public debate with its former collaborators, which underlined the tension between the traditional journalistic model and the values of hacker ethics, WikiLeaks started on a new path with a greater range of partners. The new strategy was established in 2012, when it tried to compensate for its loss of impact after *Cablegate* by expanding the range of collaborating media, from five of the largest to 29 smaller, but more geographical and idiomatically diverse partners. The data suggest that, although the Web is free and has global access (and makes access to large communication media equivalent to access to small media outlets), in terms of popularity among the public opi-

---

[14] See: WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (01 Sept., 2011). Global vote: should WikiLeaks release all US cables in searchable form? tweet #WLVoteYes or #WLVoteNo Why: http://t.co/GGON8cd [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/109068142260649984

[15] See: WikiLeaks [wikileaks] (02 Sept., 2011). Shining a light on 45 years of US "diplomacy", it is time to open the archives forever. http://t.co/ViHlu8o [Tweet]. Retrieved from https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/109435223200104448

[16] At: http://wikileaks.org/the-spyfiles.html, access July 15, 2015.

[17] At: http://buggedplanet.info/ access, July 17, 2015.

[18] At: https://www.privacyinternational.org, access July 17, 2015.

nion it is more profitable to collaborate with the media that are considered to be "quality press" than with the alternatives, even if the number of partners involved increases from 5 to 29.

This study has identified WikiLeaks' milestones, its different stages (related to its relationship with the media) and strategies, showing that its impact on public opinion may be related to the application of classic journalistic processes and the influential power of the "quality press", which seems to remain key in achieving legitimacy and the maximum impact of a message in the Internet age.

This study suggests another equally interesting hypothesis to be explored: that the loss of prestige by Assange and WikiLeaks due to the influence of the dominant media reduced its public impact. It is an inverse, but complementary, process to the approach and hypothesis posed here. It leads to the conclusion that the maximum impact of WikiLeaks and its revelations seems to be subject to the impact and prestige of the five newspapers that allied themselves with it in *Cablegate,* and the reduction of its impact and popularity after 2011 seems to be related, to a large extent, to the break-down with those media. That is, the—traditional printed—press still gives influence and prestige, even to anti-system phenomena that criticise this very kind of media such as WikiLeaks.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aftergood, Steven (2007, 3 de enero). "Wikileaks and Untraceable Document Disclosure". *Secrecy News*. Federation of American Scientists. Available at: <http://fas.org/blogs/secrecy/2007/01/wikileaks_and_untraceable_docu/>, access June 2, 2015.

Andrejevic, Mark (2014). "WikiLeaks, Surveillance, and Transparency". *International Journal of Communication*, 8: 2619-2630.

Assange, Julian (June 8, 2006 - August 29, 2007). *Selected Correspondence*. Available at: <http://

web.archive.org/web/20071020051936/http://iq.org/>, access March 22, 2017.

Assange, Julian (December 3, 2006). *Conspiracy as Governance*. Available at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20070829163014/http://iq.org/conspiracies.pdf>, access March 22, 2017.

Assange, Julian *et al.* (2012). *Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Intenet*. New York - London: OR Books.

Ball, James (September 2, 2011). "WikiLeaks publishes Full Cache of Unredacted Cables". *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/media/2011/sep/02/wikileaks-publishes-cache-unredacted-cables>, access June 16, 2015.

Ball, James (February 27, 2012). "WikiLeaks publishes Stratfor emails linked to Anonymous attack". *The Guardian*. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/media/2012/feb/27/wikileaks-publishes-stratfor-emails-anonymous, access June 4, 2015.

Barok, Dušan (May 19, 2011). *Sourced in, Unsourced Out: Leaking as the Common Knowledge Production*. Rotterdam: Master Media Design and Communication: Networked Media, Piet Zwart Institute.

Bartlett, Rachel (November 28, 2011). "Assange Accuses Editors of Being 'Corrupted' by Power". *Journalism.co.uk*. Available at: <http://www.journalism.co.uk/news/assange-accuses-editors-of-being-corrupted-by-power/s2/a546922/>, access June 28, 2015.

Carr, David (November 5, 2011). "Is this the WikiEnd?". *The New York Times*. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/sunday-review/is-the-wikileaks-movement-fading.html>, access July 8, 2015.

Coleman, Gabriella (2014). *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous*. London - New York: Verso.

Cryptome (January 7, 2007). "WikiLeaks Leak". Available at: <http://cryptome.org/wikileaks/wikileaks-leak.htm>, access June 3, 2015.

Cryptome (January 9, 2007). "WikeLeaks Leak 2". Available at: <http://cryptome.org/wikileaks/wikileaks-leak2.htm>, access June 3, 2015.

El País (September 2, 2011). "WikiLeaks anuncia la publicación de todos sus cables diplomáticos sin proteger a sus fuentes". Available at: <http://in-

ternacional.elpais.com/internacional/2011/09/02/actualidad/1314914403 850215.html>, access June 17, 2015.

Elías, Carlos (2010). "The Future of Journalism in the Online Public Sphere: When Journalistic Sources Become Mass Media in their Own Right". *Estudios sobre el mensaje periodístico*, 16: 45-58.

Elías, Carlos (2015). *El selfie de Galileo. Software, social, político e intelectual del siglo XXI*. Barcelona: Península-Planeta.

Forbes, Patrick (dir.) (2011). *WikiLeaks: Secrets and Lies* [documental]. London: Oxford Film and Television.

Fuchs, Christian (2014). "WikiLeaks and the Critique of the Political Economy". *International Journal of Communication*, 8: 2718-2732.

Goldstein, Emmanuel (ed.) (2009). *The Best of 2600: A Hacker Odyssey, Collector's Edition*. Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Hastings, Michael (2012). "Julian Assange: la historia más fascinante del siglo XXI". *Rolling Stone España*, 148: 44-53.

Hobsbawm, Eric (1969; Spanish version, 2003). *Bandidos*. Barcelona: Crítica.

Hood, Christopher (2011). "From FOI World to WikiLeaks World: A New Chapter in the Transparency Story?". *Governance*, 24(4): 635-638.

Jiménez, Vicente and Caño, Antonio (2010, November 28). "La mayor filtración de la historia deja al descubierto los secretos de la política exterior de EE UU". *El País*. Available at: <http://www.elpais.com/articulo/internacional/mayor/filtracion/historia/deja/descubierto/secretos/politica/exterior/EE/UU/elpepuint/2010112 8elpepuint_25/Tes>, access June 30, 2015.

Jones, Shaina and Brown, Jay Ward (2011). "'The Assange Effect': Wikileaks, the Espionage Act and the Fourth Estate". *Media Law Resource Center Bulletin*, 2: 115-147.

Jordan, Tim and Taylor, Paul (2004). *Hacktivism and Cyberwars: Rebels with a Cause?* New York - London: Routledge.

Klein, Naomi (2001). *No logo: el poder de las marcas.* Barcelona: Paidós.

Leigh, David and Harding, Luke (2011). *WikiLeaks y Assange. Un relato trepidante sobre cómo se fraguó la mayor filtración de la historia*. Barcelona: Deusto.

Levy, Steven (1984). *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

Lynch, Lisa (2014). "'Oh, WikiLeaks, I would so love to RT you': WikiLeaks, Twitter, and Information Activism". *International Journal of Communication*, 8: 2679-2692.

Manne, Robert (March, 2011). "The Cypherpunk Revolutionary: Julian Assange". *The Monthly*. Available at: <https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2011/february/1324596189/robert-manne/cypherpunk-revolutionary>, access March 30, 2015.

Maurer, Tim (2011). *WikiLeaks 2010: A Glimpse of the Future?* Discussion Paper 2010-2011. Cambridge: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School.

Morales Steger, Begoña; Irisarri Núñez, José A. and Martín Cavanna, Javier (2011). *Esporas de helechos y elefantes. La responsabilidad corporativa de los medios de comunicación por la elaboración de contenidos II. Los diarios nacionales de información general*. Madrid: Fundación Compromiso Empresarial.

Pacheco, Liliana (2011). "Wikileaks e Internet: O que poderá mudar no jornalismo a partir daqui". *Estudos em Comunicação*, 9: 31-43. LabCom, Laboratório de Comunicação e Conteúdos On-Line. Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal.

Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2011). *Views of the News Media: 1985-2011*. Washington: Pew Research Center.

Quian, Alberto (2016). *Impacto mediático y político del activismo hacker en la sociedad red. Estudio de caso: WikiLeaks*. Getafe: Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. [Doctoral Thesis].

Quian, Alberto and Elías, Carlos (2017). "Wikipedia y sus relatos colaborativos como indicador de interés ciudadano". *Revista Prisma Social*, 18: 85-123.

Sparks, Colin and Campbell, Michelle (1987). "The 'Inscribed Reader' of the British Quality Press". *European Journal of Communication*, 2(4): 455-472.

Stuart, David (2014). *Web Metrics for Library and Information Professionals*. London: Facet Publishing.

Uricchio, William (2014). "True Confessions: WikiLeaks, Contested Truths, and Narrative Containment". *International Journal of Communication*, 8: 2567-2573.

Vegh, Sandor (2003). *Hacking for Democracy: A Study of the Internet as a Political Force and Its Representation in the Mainstream Media*. University of Maryland, College Park. [Doctoral Thesis].

Villeda Saldaña, D. (2011). "Julian Assange: Periodismo científico, conspiración y ética hacker". *Quehacer*, 181: 58-69.

WikiLeaks (September 1, 2011). "Global - Guardian journalist negligently disclosed Cablegate passwords". Available at: <https://wikileaks.org/Guardian-journalist-negligently.html>, access June 17, 2015.