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The representation of the Spanish Crown in the public sphere through institutional acts

Abstract

The main objective of this work is to analyse how the representation in the public sphere of the Crown and the Head of the Spanish State is managed towards public opinion through public, official, and unofficial institutional acts, as reported by the House of H. M. the King. To answer the research questions contained in this objective, a quantitative methodological design based on content analysis is carried out (Krippendorff, 2002). This is applied to a corpus of the 996 public, official, and unofficial acts, contained in the web institution of the House of H. M. the King, between 2015 and 2019, for its subsequent computer processing with SPSS statistical software. Through the concept of intramethod triangulation, a qualitative analysis is applied in an auxiliary way to answer RQ3. The results show not only that the presence of the Royal Family, in the acts observed, contributes towards the public staging of its constitutional functions, but also that there is a map of specific audiences on which the Royal House projects pertinent legitimising messages (regarding the Crown and the Head of State) based on perceived social demands. This confirms the existence of a dialogical communication system, supported by a strategic conception of Crown–society relations, which is resolved mainly through ceremonial acts.

Keywords
Crown, Head of State, representation of power, public sphere, organisation of events, public relations, protocol.

1. Introduction

Article 1 of Royal Decree 434/1988, of May 6, on the restructuring of the House of H. M. the King, establishes that:

1. The House of His Majesty the King is the Organism that, under the direct dependence of H. M., has the mission to support him in all activities derived from the exercise of his functions as Head of State.
2. Within this general mission, and in addition to carrying out the corresponding administrative and economic tasks, special attention must be paid to the King's relations with Official Bodies, Entities, and individuals, for the safety of His Person and of the Royal Family, as well as to the rendering of the statutory honors, and the provision of the royal escort when appropriate.

The role that the Royal Household plays in the function and public representation of the Head of State in the exercise of its duties and institutional relations in the terms described by the

Spanish Constitution itself therefore seems unquestionable: as established in Article 57.1 "The Crown of Spain is hereditary in the successors of His Majesty Don Juan Carlos I of Borbón," and hence the King holds the Head of State since "the political system of the Spanish State is parliamentary monarchy" (Article 1.3).

In this context, the organisation of their public events, and their participation in the events of others, seems inherent in the communication strategy of the House of H. M. the King, and contributes to the transmission and public consolidation of the image of the Crown through the dissemination of the acts derived from the institutional agenda of the Royal Family. The General Secretary, in his/her function in the communication unit of the House of H. M. the King, provides information "of the schedule of official activities of the Royal Family, as well as their content and development," as the Royal House itself claims on its website.

The communication of the House of H. M. the King is also characterised by official releases and their incorporation into new technologies derived from the Internet through the website "casareal.es," the YouTube channel "casarealtv," and the Twitter profile "@CasaReal." According to data from the House of H. M. the King, these were created on 10th September, 2012 (although its domain has been in operation since 1998), on 20th December, 2012, and on 21st May, 2014, respectively. According to McGravey (2020), the increase in the institutional use of social networks has enabled official institutions to connect with citizens (and vice versa) both quickly and directly, thereby favouring: a) an improvement of the democratic system (and its policy of information transparency) by guaranteeing access to information and participation to all audiences equally at the same time; and b) the inclusion of a wide audience that can interact directly with the organisations that represent it. The advantages of the organisational use of websites and social networks are derived from their ability to swiftly and effectively promote a conversation between the institution and its audiences (Kent, 2013; Capriotti & Losada-Díaz, 2018), with stakeholders, and also to combat misinformation (Davison, 1996; Lee, Sha, Dozier & Sargent, 2015; Jayarama, Manraib & Manraib, 2015; Guesalaga, 2016; Arroyo-Almaraz, Calle-Mendoza, van-Wyk, 2018; Castillo-Esparcia, Castillero-Ostio & Castillo-Díaz, 2020; Castillo-Esparcia, Fernández-Souto, Puentes-Rivera, 2020).

These digital communication tools, implemented by the House of H. M. the King, seem to be structured through the acts serving not only to materialise the image of the Royal Family but also to initiate and maintain a constant dialogue with society. In this way, the assistance and participation of the different members of the Royal Family in the various public events that make up its institutional agenda seem to become, through its mainly online media dissemination, a tool for dialogic communication with the public by the Crown as a high institution of the State.

Through the organisation of acts, public relations initiate strategic and planned processes oriented towards the management of space and time (Otero, 2017) for the reproduction of a (necessarily public) social space or "a system of hierarchical social differences in terms of a system of socially established legitimacies" (Manzo, 2010, p. 397). This reproduces the positions of the intervening agents and the forces involved in their trajectory (Bourdieu, 2000, 2005) and is linked to the sphere of power (Wacquant, 2017). Under this perspective, public relations contribute towards perpetuating the symbolic power generated by dominant groups who interpret their interests before those of the public, thereby seeking to normalise certain social structures and to perpetuate their position of leadership through public legitimation (Lee, 2006).

In particular, the cultural and historical heritage inherent in royal houses contributes towards the development of these processes of image transmission and public positioning. In this respect, they generate established corporate identities that have a special value derived from their ability to transmit stability, continuity, and identity for successive generations of stakeholders (Balmer, 2013, p. 322). In fact, monarchies display powerful visual and verbal

signifiers (Balmer, 2012, p. 27) that are highly connotative (Balmer, Greyser & Urde, 2006; Balmer, 2007, 2009, 2011; Hudson & Balmer, 2013; Otnes & Maclaran, 2015; Otnes & Maclaran, 2018), and that accentuate their importance for the management of relationships and for their link with the transmission of a series of institutional values and messages towards a social context, which, in turn, positively revert to their own image.

At this point, it is worth mentioning that most of the academic publications that analyse the public image and representation of the Crown or those of the Royal Persons who make up and stage these representations institutionally, originate from the British context and focus mainly on the historical perspective (Benoit & Brinson, 1999; Corns, 1999; Smith, 2017). In this regard, with the exception of certain doctoral theses posted in the repositories of various Spanish universities that indirectly touch on this area of study, there is a is strikingly noteworthy dearth of relevant scientific articles that analyse the institutional communication system of the Spanish Royal Family in general, and that analyse from the perspective of the organisation of events in particular. Specific work deserves mention, such as that of Priego (2014) regarding the role of the House of H. M. the King in diplomatic relations, and that of Widlak & Pont (2015) regarding the image of H. M. Queen Sofía in the Spanish press.

It is precisely here where the academic interest of our work lies, whose main objective is to analyse how the representation in the public sphere of the Head of State and the Spanish Royal Family is managed in view of public opinion, by means of public, official, and unofficial institutional acts, as reported by the House of H. M. the King through its website.

2. Public relations, organisation of events, and the representation of power in the public sphere

Public relations strive to "create, maintain, or alter relationships of power, legitimacy, and trust" in order to obtain "communicative advantages, which are neither impartial nor neutral" (Xifra, 2005, p. 33). From a relational perspective (Grunig & Hung-Baesecke, 2015; Ledingham, 2015), the organisation of events facilitates the public representation of a social space that stages the structure of established power (Balandier, 1994) and creates a two-way communication system that generates feelings of adhesion between its stakeholders (Grunig, 2009) and public opinion (Hucker, 2020) through the strategically designed and disseminated visual and audiovisual discourses that are generated by the ceremony. "The ceremony is inherent to whoever holds political power, whatever its nature" (Sánchez, Gómez & Pérez, 2015, p. 17) and publicly stages its power by transferring legitimate messages through the convenient combination of signs and symbols adapted to the specific needs of their audience map (Sierra & Sotelo, 2008).

In fact, since Foucault (1968) and Foucault & Miskowiec (1986) linked spaces, social relations, and power (Tirado & Mora, 2002; Hirst, 2005; Piazzini & Montoya, 2008; Colpas, 2015; Urabayen & León, 2018; Rojas, 2020), the organisation of events has generally been approached as a public relations technique (Otero, 2011; Castillo & Fernández, 2015; Fajardo & Nivia, 2020; Sánchez, 2017; Xifra, 2007, 2011; Valdez, 2019) oriented towards the effective transmission of institutional messages to its stakeholders and towards the generation of benefits in terms of public perception and reputation (Fombrum, Nielsen & Trad, 2007; Villafañe, 2017; Khan & Digout, 2018; Bianchi, Bruno & Sarabia-Sánchez, 2019; Liu, Steel & Vredemburg, 2019; Tetrault & Lvina, 2019).

In this way, ceremonial events and protocol imply a syntax that enables an X-ray to be taken of the state in which the institutional relations of the Royal House are encountered and a staging to be designed for the public positioning of strategic messages (Otero & Pulido-Polo, 2018) linked to the constitutional function of the Crown as included in the Magna Carta. Thus, the techniques for the organisation of events articulate a ceremonial language capable of materialising power relations and their interactions (Spíndola, 2016, p. 29) in a public social

space, conceived ad hoc, to satisfy the interests of the public perception of who organises (issuer) and who participates directly or indirectly (receivers).

The institutional act implies a two-way communication system that is oriented towards channeling the image of the institution towards its public of interest, with a high persuasive and empathic component that generates significant feelings of adherence (Sánchez, 2018). This system enables the public viewing of the institutional message in terms of non-verbal communication (Barrientos, Caldevilla & Vargas, 2019; Pereiro, 2019; Hall, Horgan & Murphy, 2019). The existence and transmission of these strategically planned messages suggest a relational conception (Almiron & Xifra, 2019; Page & Parnel, 2019; Smith, 2017) of the communication of the House of H. M. the King, since they facilitate the relevant public and social positioning of each of the members of the Royal Family based, where appropriate, on the constitutional role played in the structure of the State as approved in 1978.

The organisation of events has traditionally been employed to order the spatial-temporal spheres in which the established power manifests itself and develops in the form of the State by conditioning its public projection as a structuring element that projects the group's cosmology abroad (Otero, 2011). In this way, within the framework of social sciences, the organisation of events is linked to the concept of non-verbal communication, through chronology, proxemia, and personal hierarchy, which can be considered semiotic manifestations (Fontanille, 2017) when referring to a "symbolic language of permanent referents" (Otero 2009, pp. 64-65; Lozano 2017, p. 68). The history of civilisation shows the persuasive profitability that those who held political, religious, or social power at each historic moment have made of ceremonial acts, to manage their image, legitimacy, and leadership (Otero, 2000) through the public staging of power relationships and structures that they presented to their subordinates (Coetzee *et al.*, 2020; Hung-Baesecke & Chen, 2020). In the specific case of royal houses, coronation ceremonies, for example, have been used to place a double message around the figure of the King: his virtuosity and leadership capacity as an administrator; and fidelity, obedience, and admiration from his subjects (Henao, 2009).

3. Methodology

The main objective of this work is to observe the acts broadcast by the House of H. M. the King, between 2015 and 2019, as the main communication and relationship management strategy between the Crown and national and international public opinion. Based on a system of the self-production of images, this strategy is oriented towards the representation and public consolidation of the constitutional nature of the Head of State and the Royal Family and, consequently, of the Crown. To fulfil this objective, the following research questions (hereinafter, RQ) are posed:

RQ1. Does the spatial-temporal distribution of the acts influence the public representation of the Crown and the Head of State?

RQ2. To what extent are the acts analysed capable of publicly visualising and materialising the institutional role of the Crown through each of the acts of the members of the Royal Family?

RQ3. Do the observed acts make it possible to draw the audience map of the Royal Household and, consequently, infer a strategic approach to the management of the relations between the Royal Household and the public?

In order to answer these research questions, and by taking the methodology validated by Ertem-Eray (2020) and Pulido-Polo, Hernández-Santaolalla & Lozano-González (2021) as a reference, an eminently quantitative methodological design is established. Specifically, a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2002) is applied on a corpus of the 996 public, official, and unofficial acts contained in the institutional website of the House of H. M. the King, from 2015 to 2019. This temporal delimitation is imposed to cover the reign of Felipe VI in calendar years without the possible biases that could derive from his proclamation in 2014 or the

consequences derived from Covid-19 in 2020. The total number of events analysed respond to the universe in this way, according to the results produced by the institution itself through its website within the parameters described.

The operationalisation of the investigable questions implies the establishment of the following specific objectives (SO):

SO1. Observe the frequency and spatial-temporal distribution of the observed acts. This objective entails the analysis of variables V1.1. Frequency and temporal distribution, and V1.2. Space distribution.

SO2. Determine how the public images derived from these acts contribute towards making each of the members of the Royal Family visible and publicly legitimised in relation to their constitutional function. This objective involves variables V2.1. Nature of the act, and V2.2. Participant.

SO3. Determine whether the acts analysed enable the establishment of a map of audiences that remains consistent with the ratification of the institutional function of the Head of State, thereby implying the existence of strategic planning of public relations. This objective involves variable V3.1. Recipient.

Subsequent to the corresponding training period (performed during the month of August), the coding is carried out between 1st and 30th September 2020 by a single judge, by guaranteeing the intercoder agreement index (Krippendorff, 2004). The analysis files and the codebook were designed based on the works of Capriotti, Zeler & Oliveira (2019), Pulido-Polo, Hernández-Santaolalla & Lozano-González (2021), and on the classification of acts of the House of H. M. the King on its institutional website. Once encoded, the data obtained is stored in Microsoft Excel files for its subsequent computer processing with IBM SPSS statistical software. In an auxiliary way and taking the concept of intramethod triangulation (Santos *et al.*, 2020) as a reference, qualitative analysis is applied to complement the study of RQ3.

4. Analysis

In the first place, with respect to the temporal distribution (Table 1), the data per year and month is significant. An average of 199.2 acts per year is observed. The data relating to 2016 stands out, since there is a significant drop in organised events (standing at 25.2 points below average), while the highest percentage of events is concentrated in 2018, with 22.29% (representing a total of 23 acts above average). There is no clear upward or downward trend, but instead a relatively steady rate is maintained with a maximum differential of 48 points (between 2016 and 2019).

Table 1: Temporal distribution.

Year	Participants				Frequency (No. acts)	Valid %	Accumulated %
	H. M. the King	H. M. the Queen	Their Majesties	Royal Family			
2015	91	45	66	3	205	20.58	20.58
2016	71	48	52	3	174	17.47	38.05
2017	91	38	69	2	200	20.08	58.13
2018	115	45	54	8	222	22.29	80.42
2019	90	57	40	8	195	19.58	100.00
TOTAL	458	233	281	24	996	100%	100%

Month	H. M. the King	H. M. the Queen	Their Majesties	Royal Family	Frequency (No. acts)	Valid %	Accumulated %
January	32	15	22	2	71	7.13	7.13
February	31	16	31	0	78	7.83	14.96
March	30	18	18	1	67	6.73	21.69
April	24	25	29	4	82	8.23	29.92
May	59	27	32	0	118	11.85	41.77
June	66	22	38	1	127	12.75	54.52
July	48	28	15	0	91	9.14	63.65
August	7	0	6	1	14	1.41	65.06
September	39	24	17	1	81	8.13	73.19
October	45	28	27	10	110	11.04	84.24
November	45	14	28	3	90	9.04	93.27
December	32	16	18	1	67	6.73	100.00
TOTAL	458	233	281	24	996	100%	100%

Source: Own elaboration.

The high total figures for 2018 also coincide with a significant increase in acts involving H. M. the King (115 versus an average of 91.6 acts), which indicates a significant increase in institutional public representation that corresponds to the Head of State. These figures can be related to the high concentration of largely political events that occurred in 2018 both outside and within Spain. While foreign policy is mainly marked by the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union (Brexit), in Spain important political events take place such as the Catalan question, the motion of censure, the Andalusian elections, and the 40th Anniversary of the Constitution. This year, furthermore, H. R. H. the Princess of Asturias receives the Golden Fleece from the hand of the King, marking the beginning of a progressive public positioning of the Princess as the legitimate successor to the Crown. It is observed that 2018 and 2019 are the years in which the entire Royal Family attend the greatest number of events (8 each year): a trend that is expected to increase progressively according to her increased protagonism (and in direct relation to her age) of which it is presumed that the Princess will be designated as the future Head of State. Although outside the period analysed, it is worth mentioning in this regard that, in 2020, Princess Leonor has been involved in two important public speeches in events of special relevance for those who hold the title of Princess of Asturias. The first time she makes a speech is at the Princess of Girona Awards 2020, and, at the Princess of Asturias Awards ceremony, this trend towards her public and institutional positioning is consolidated.

The significant increase in the public presence of H. M. the Queen is especially relevant if the data from 2019 is compared to that of previous years. This is not so for H. M. the King, who returns in 2019 to the figures relating to the annual average attendance at public events (official or not).

Finally, the results show that the most prolific months are June, May, and October, which account for 35.64% of the events in the period studied, among which the sports, political, and institutional events and the awards ceremonies stand out in a variety of cultural, social, and scientific fields.

Secondly, with regard to spatial distribution, compared to 4.92% of events organised abroad, 95.08% of events take place in Spain. This statistic reveals the institutional importance of public presence in the Spanish socio-political and official context. The figure of H. M. the King counts for 43.37% of the events organised in Spain: a percentage that fits in with the functions that correspond to the Head of State according to the Constitution in Article 62. In the events organised in Spain, the results obtained by provinces stand out (Table 2) as do those by institutional headquarters relative to the Royal House: The Royal Palace and the Palace of Zarzuela.

Table 2: Spatial distribution in terms of provinces.

Province	Participants				Frequency (No. acts)	Valid %	Accumulated %
	H. M. the King	H. M. the Queen	Their Majesties	Royal Family			
A Coruña	7	5	2	0	14	1.48	1.48
Álava	1	1	0	0	2	0.21	1.69
Albacete	2	0	0	0	2	0.21	1.90
Alicante	2	2	1	0	5	0.53	2.43
Almería	1	0	0	0	1	0.11	2.53
Asturias	2	6	11	5	24	2.53	5.07
Ávila	2	2	0	0	4	0.42	5.49
Badajoz	1	1	1	0	3	0.32	5.81
Baleares	8	3	7	5	23	2.43	8.24
Barcelona	22	5	7	1	35	3.70	11.93
Burgos	2	3	1	0	6	0.63	12.57
Cáceres	3	5	0	0	8	0.84	13.41
Cádiz	11	0	0	0	11	1.16	14.57
Cantabria	2	0	3	0	5	0.53	15.10
Castellón	1	0	0	0	1	0.11	15.21
Ciudad real	0	1	0	0	1	0.11	15.31
Córdoba	0	0	1	0	1	0.11	15.42
Cuenca	0	0	1	0	1	0.11	15.52
Girona	1	0	7	0	8	0.84	16.37
Granada	2	2	0	0	4	0.42	16.79
Guadalajara	1	0	1	0	2	0.21	17.00
Guipúzcoa	2	0	1	0	3	0.32	17.32
Huelva	0	1	0	0	1	0.11	17.42
Huesca	1	0	0	0	1	0.11	17.53
Jaén	2	0	1	0	3	0.32	17.85
La Rioja	2	5	1	0	8	0.84	18.69
Las Palmas	7	0	5	0	12	1.27	19.96
León	2	1	0	0	3	0.32	20.27
Lleida	3	0	0	0	3	0.32	20.59
Lugo	0	1	0	0	1	0.11	20.70
Madrid	256	154	185	13	608	64.20	84.90
Málaga	2	1	2	0	5	0.53	85.43
Mérida	1	1	0	0	2	0.21	85.64
Murcia	9	0	4	0	13	1.37	87.01
Navarra	3	1	4	0	8	0.84	87.86
Palencia	2	1	2	0	5	0.53	88.38
Pontevedra	6	0	0	0	6	0.63	89.02
Salamanca	3	1	4	0	8	0.84	89.86
Santa Cruz de Tenerife	1	2	5	0	8	0.84	90.71
Segovia	4	1	0	0	5	0.53	91.24
Sevilla	11	1	5	0	17	1.80	189.03
Soria	2	0	0	0	2	0.21	93.24
Tarragona	3	0	1	0	4	0.42	93.66
Teruel	0	1	0	0	1	0.11	93.77
Toledo	3	0	3	0	6	0.63	94.40
Valencia	14	3	3	0	20	2.11	96.52
Valladolid	2	2	1	0	5	0.53	97.04
Vizcaya	10	2	0	0	12	1.27	98.31
Zaragoza	11	1	4	0	16	1.69	100.00
TOTAL	433	216	274	24	947	100%	100%

Source: Own elaboration.

In terms of provinces, the first issue of note is that 49 of the 50 Spanish provinces have been visited by members of the Royal Family between 2015 and 2019. This data allows us to deduce an intention to claim equality in the presence of the Crown in each and every territory. Implicit in this data is the need to publicly position two strategic messages in the current socio-political context: one related to the territorial unity of the State and the other oriented towards the positioning of the King as Head of State in every one of the territories. The second issue involves the logical concentration of 64.20% of the events in Madrid, which contributes to the public positioning of the city of Madrid, "in its condition as capital of the State and headquarters of the General Institutions," as expressed in Article 10 of the Royal Decree 2099/1983, of 4th August. However, despite the logical concentration around the capital, there are other provinces where the frequency of events stands out (but at lower levels): Barcelona (3.70%), Asturias (2.53%), Balearic Islands (2.43%), and Valencia (2.11%) in a first level; and Seville (1.80%) and Zaragoza (1.69%) in a second order. These provinces require this greater institutional presence derived from their socio-political, institutional, and/or historical context. In Barcelona, most of the events are related to the economy (primarily International Congresses on Tourism and Technology) and institutional activity: of the nine institutional events held in Barcelona in the last 5 years, four are from 2017 (an especially relevant year regarding territorial policy in Cataluña), two in 2018, and none in 2019. In Asturias, the events recorded are essentially linked to the presentation of the Princess of Asturias Awards held in October (the previous lunch, receptions, the awards ceremony, and subsequent visit to the Exemplary City of Asturias). In the Balearic Islands, the events coincide with the official holiday of H. M. the King and H. M. the Queen in Marivent Palace, although the annual presence of the Royal Family also stands out at religious events (such as Easter Mass in Palma Cathedral), and at sports and cultural events of various kinds. In Valencia, we find events related to Science and Economics, with the presentation of the King in the Jaume I Awards (for the promotion of scientific research and development in Spain) and various economic forums and congresses. In Seville, cultural, economic, and military events stand out (Armed Forces Day 2019), while in Zaragoza, military ceremonies play a leading role (visits to the military base or presentation of military dispatches) as do those related to the economy.

Regarding institutional headquarters of the Head of State, a relative equity is observed between the Palace of Zarzuela, which hosts 54.49% of the events, and the Royal Palace (45.51%). The events organised in the Royal Palace have greater institutional power and their location tends to obey the inveterate tradition. In other words, they are acts that, from a historical and institutional perspective, require such a location. This is the case of events such as the Easter Military parade, the National Holiday Reception, Official Visits, and the Presentation of Credentials. The events organised at the Palace of Zarzuela are usually linked to a more sociocultural, scientific, political, or international factor, such as receptions for foreign leaders (such as Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, President of Iceland, in February 2015), the presentation of awards (such as the "Enrique V Award for the Development of the Ibero-American Business Space," in February 2016), meetings of foundations (such as the Board of Trustees of the Carolina Foundation, in March 2017), family celebrations (such as family lunch for the 80th birthday of His Majesty King Juan Carlos, in January 2018), or for the swearing-in and consultations with political officials (such as consultations with the representatives appointed by political groups with parliamentary representation, in June 2019).

In terms of countries (Graphic 1), the data reveals a clear preeminence of the figure of the Head of State in diplomatic relations, which is especially notable in the case of France (with his intervention before the Plenary of the European Parliament, his attendance at the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council, the acts of the Centenary of the Armistice of the First World War, and lunch with the President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron), and Germany (where he attends the presentation of the International Charlemagne Prize to the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, or the Spanish-German

Forum). The presence of the Queen in Italy is also worthy of note (with her attendance at "World Food Day" or her visit to the Royal Academy of Spain in Rome) and in Switzerland (with events mainly related to the World Health Organisation). There is no presence of Princess Leonor or Infanta Sofía in public events outside national territory. The preeminence of France can be explained by two factors: it is Spain's gateway to the rest of Europe and the seat of the European Parliament (Strasbourg).

Graphic 1: Spatial distribution in terms of countries.
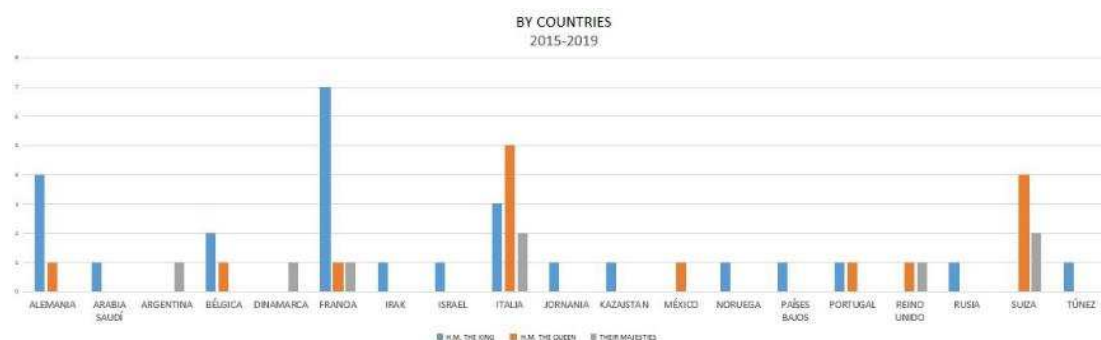
Source: Own elaboration.

Thirdly, with respect to the nature of the act, the data is of particular interest regarding the participating members of the Royal Family. The activities of H. M. the King (Table 3) are concentrated around economic, diplomatic, institutional, and military events, which account for 71.61% of the total number of acts attended. There is no data on their attendance at events related to health, and that related to solidarity and sustainability is not significant. The data in 2018 stands out, as mentioned earlier, where there is evidence of an increase in activity in institutional and military acts. Apart from the data in 2018, from a diachronic perspective, a relatively steady rate is maintained around the average in terms of the nature of the act, except for a slight decrease in the institutional and economic categories, and there is an interesting increase in education and culture activities. This data is in accordance with the needs of Spanish society until 2019.

Table 3: Separate activities of H. M. the King and H. M. the Queen.

Category of the act	Year					Frequency (No. acts)	Valid %	Accumulated %
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Activity of H. M. the King								
Institutional	19	12	14	24	14	83	18.12	18.12
Defence	11	14	11	17	12	65	14.19	32.31
Economy	20	14	20	21	16	91	19.87	52.18
Solidarity	3	0	4	0	2	9	1.97	54.15
Sustainability	0	0	1	3	1	5	1.09	55.24
Education	2	2	1	6	4	15	3.28	58.52
Culture	3	4	7	9	7	30	6.55	65.07
Sports	6	8	5	8	4	31	6.77	71.83
Science	5	2	7	5	6	25	5.46	77.29
Mass Media	3	3	3	5	1	15	3.28	80.57
International Relations	19	12	17	19	22	89	19.43	100.00
Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
TOTAL	91	71	90	117	89	458	100.00	100.00
Activity of H. M. the Queen								
Institutional	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.43	0.43
Defence	3	0	1	1	1	6	2.58	3.00
Economy	1	5	1	3	3	13	5.58	8.58
Solidarity	15	14	11	16	12	68	29.18	37.77
Sustainability	0	1	0	0	3	4	1.72	39.48
Education	3	5	4	5	6	23	9.87	49.36
Culture	8	8	7	8	14	45	19.31	68.67
Sports	0	0	0	1	2	3	1.29	69.96
Science	2	2	2	0	2	8	3.43	73.39
Mass Media	3	2	2	1	4	12	5.15	78.54
International Relations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	78.54
Health	9	10	12	10	9	50	21.46	100.00
TOTAL	44	47	40	46	56	233	100.00	100.00

Source: Own elaboration.

This data reinforces the public visibility of H. M. the King, in accordance with the Constitution recognising the Head of State as the highest exponent of institutional representation that "assumes the highest representation of the Spanish State in international relations" (Article 56) and to whom corresponds "the supreme command of the Armed Forces" (Article 62).

Regarding the activity of H. M. the Queen (Table 3), the data confirms a complementary agenda to that of the Head of State, and focuses on solidarity, health, and culture, which account for almost 70% of her participation in public events (69.95%). In a second order, education, the economy, and the media stand out, which account for 20.6% of her public presence. There is no solo diplomatic representation in international relations and her progressive public support for the world of culture is striking (which almost doubles from 8 events in 2015 to 14 in 2019). In the same way as with the King, this data publicly reinforces her constitutional role in accordance with Article 58: The Queen consort lacks a constitutional role except as provided for the regency. Her formal position in public events is that of First Lady (Otero, 2002). Recently, due to the urgency of the situation, and by virtue of the concept of representation included in Article 9 of the Royal Decree 2099/83, H. M. the Queen presided solo over the Jaume I Awards ceremony, in the case of the preventive confinement of H. M. the King due to Covid19.

The comparative analysis of the individual agendas shows the complementarity of the activities in a perfect balance of differentiated roles for the holder of the crown and for the

consort, with a clear predominance of the former over the latter. While the activity of the King is predominantly focused on institutional, military, economic, and international relations events, the activity of the Queen concentrates on events of a more social nature, mainly related to health, solidarity, and sustainability. Together they provide an institutional image, inside and outside Spain, with a special sensitivity towards culture and education, thereby publicly reinforcing the coordinated and stable activity of the Crown.

Table 4 summarises the joint activity of Their Majesties the King and the Queen, as well as that of the entire Royal Family. The joint activity of Their Majesties includes a total of 281 events, of which 26% are represented by cultural events (usually awards ceremonies and inaugurations of exhibitions and conferences), and 23% by institutional events. This data, in addition to reinforcing the State's commitment to the highest level of representation with culture, conveys a message of unity, strength, and perpetuity of the Crown and, consequently, of the State model described in the Constitution. In particular, the preamble of the Royal Decree. 2099/83 establishes the need to regulate precedence in public acts for the correct transmission of the image of the institutions as well as for greater recognition of the field of culture. The remaining topics are distributed by transferring equity of the Royal couple in matters of international relations (12%), media (8%), economy and education (7% each), defence (5%), science and solidarity (4% each), and sports (3%). The public representation of the Royal couple in matters of health and sustainability obtains residual percentages.

Table 4: Activity of Their Majesties and the Royal Family.

Category of the act	Year					Frequency (No. acts)	Valid %	Accumulated %
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Activity of Their Majesties								
Institutional	15	12	20	11	8	66	23.49	23.49
Defence	4	3	2	3	3	15	5.34	28.83
Economy	5	3	5	5	1	19	6.76	35.59
Solidarity	1	0	5	2	4	12	4.27	39.86
Sustainability	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.36	40.21
Education	4	5	6	3	1	19	6.76	46.98
Culture	17	15	15	13	12	72	25.62	72.60
Sports	1	3	1	1	1	7	2.49	75.09
Science	3	2	3	2	2	12	4.27	79.36
Mass Media	6	5	5	4	3	23	8.19	87.54
International Relations	9	4	5	10	5	33	11.74	99.29
Health	1	0	1	0	0	2	0.71	100.00
TOTAL	66	52	69	54	40	281	100.00	100.00
Activity of the Royal Family								
Institutional	3	3	2	8	5	21	87.50	87.50
Defence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	87.50
Economy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	87.50
Solidarity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	87.50
Sustainability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	87.50
Education	0	0	0	0	1	1	4.17	91.67
Culture	0	0	0	0	2	2	8.33	100.00
Sports	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
Science	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
Mass Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
International Relations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	100.00
TOTAL	3	3	2	8	8	24	100.00	100.00

Source: Own elaboration.

Finally, the joint data related to the activity of the Royal Family shows a public position that is under construction and in progressive ascent, since it is linked to a gradual public configuration, firstly, of the Princess of Asturias as heir to the Throne and, secondly, of the Infanta Sofía in the line of succession. The data shows that the few joint appearances of the Royal Family (in 24 acts) are strongly concentrated around the institutional role and, in a very incipient way, on culture and education. Although still few and far between, due to the ages of the Princess and the Infanta, these acts fulfil a double function. They not only communicate and corroborate the role of the "new" Royal Family for the Crown, but also serve to publicly demonstrate and represent the future Head of State, by progressively extolling her dominant position and legitimising her constitutional role. As established in Article 57.1 of the Magna Carta, "the succession to the throne will follow the regular order of primogeniture and representation" with "the Crown Prince, from his birth or from the event that originates the calling [...] the dignity of the Prince of Asturias and the other titles traditionally linked to the successor of the Spanish Crown."

Regarding the target variable, the results of triangulation show the existence of three main audiences: direct attendees (primary audience), media (intermediate audience), and general public opinion (indirect audience). The primary audience is essentially made up of first authorities, the hierarchy of the convening or invited organisation and specific sectors depending on the nature of the event being attended. The latter, according to the inference made, are mainly the institutions of the State (172 acts) and the sectors of culture (149 acts), the economy (123 acts), and the international community (122 acts). In the background, there are the sectors of cooperation and solidarity (89 acts), and of defence (85). And at a third level, there are the educational (58), health (52), communication (50), scientific (45), and sports (41) sectors. Specifically, in relation to the primary audience, a clear distinction is observed based on whether the act is official (organised by the State) or unofficial. When the act is official, three main groups of attendees are observed: a) the so-called first authorities (López–Nieto, 2006); b) national authorities (either regional or local) directly related to the nature of the act; and c) artistic, scientific, political, business, sports, or social and popular leaders (Pulido-Polo, 2016), as appropriate to the nature of the act. When the event is unofficial, four groups of direct attendees are observed according to the following priority: a) first authorities; b) representatives of the organising entity according to their hierarchy; c) national authorities (and, where appropriate, regional, and local authorities) directly related to the nature of the act; and d) personalities depending on the nature of the event.

5. Conclusions

The analysis carried out confirms that the representation and public consolidation of the constitutional nature of the State Headquarters and the Crown is strongly supported by a strategic system of self-production (and dissemination) of images that derives from the profitability of the public presence of the Royal Family in the acts, both their own and those of others, that make up their institutional agenda. As Sánchez establishes, "every society uses a wide variety of symbols and rituals to represent (and reaffirm) power [...] rituals are actions that not only signify realities, but by the same action transform the realities they signify" (2013, pp. 101-102). In other words, ceremonies not only help to position the reality they communicate in the public sphere, but, given their high persuasive power, they also provide their senders (the convening entity) and main participants (direct recipients) with a convenient public perception in relation with certain strategic messages that enables them to initiate and maintain bidirectional communication processes in an infinite loop in which their legitimacy is fed back into public opinion (Greenhill, 2020) in terms of reputation (Kim, 2019; Xifra, 2020; Browning & Sweetser, 2020).

By taking into account the results obtained, the spatio-temporal distribution of the acts not only influences but also determines the public representation of the Crown, and shows

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the specific relevance of the King and the Spanish Head of State in the political system of the parliamentary monarchy that, according to García (2019, p. 48), is based on four differential characteristics: a) it is a judiciary embodied physically and humanly in the figure of the king, but whose institutional existence exceeds that of the person of its holder; b) it represents in itself the unity of the State, and establishes itself as its supreme organ; c) its identity is inherent to the lifetime status of its holder, ensuring its independence; and d) it is a neutral suprapartisan body that articulates the constitutional consensus and promotes the natural functioning of the institutions.

The presence of the Royal Family in the acts analysed enables the institutional role of the Crown to be publicly visualised and materialised in accordance with the Spanish Constitution, which states that "the pillars of the new political regime are based on a constitutional monarchy with separation of powers emanating from national sovereignty" (Toribio, 2019, p. 393), while staging the constitutional functions that correspond to H. M. the King. These are complemented by a more social activity, embodied in the figure of H. M. the Queen in her capacity as consort. Likewise, the results show a progressive public positioning of the Princess of Asturias as the legitimate heir to the throne, in line with the constitutional text.

Finally, the analysis shows the existence of a map of specific audiences on which the Royal House projects pertinent legitimising messages (from the Crown and the Head of State) based on social demands: a fact that confirms the existence of a communication system dialogical that, consequently, implies the strategic conception of public relations (Ferguson, 2018) in the form of Crown-society that is largely resolved through acts. It could therefore be inferred, in light of this research, that the role of the organisation of events and, consequently, of the protocol, refers to a specific relationship strategy.

In this way, and as a final conclusion, this work shows not only that public relations manage the power relations between an organisation and the audience in its environment, but also that this management reaches its maximum exponent in the official sphere in relation to the representation of the Crown. This is due to the development of institutional goals that are both naturally and formally aimed at fluidifying the relational framework of the monarchical institution with its political and social environment.

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