Leadership, Leaderlessness and Leaderless Groups: The case of the Occupy London Movement

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Abstract

This thesis investigates how 'leaderless' social movements are coordinated and sustained by their members. Drawing on an empirical study of the London Occupy protests, it emphasises the socially-constructed nature of 'leaderlessness', arguing that the London Occupy movement can be understood as an ensemble of symbolic meanings, practical accomplishments and communicative political actions that allowed activists to mobilise and develop a broad-ranging repertoire of protest. The thesis examines how divergent but interrelated modalities, including occupation of physical and virtual space, appropriation of both 'new' and 'old' media and dramaturgical use of physical artefacts (most notably the Guy Fawkes mask), were deployed in ways that instantiated a series of highly-charged political 'spectacles', challenging the dominance of the capitalist economic order. This thesis also considers whether the Occupy movement represents a new template for twenty-first-century political activism. Whilst the movement can be seen as distinctively new, in the sense that it operates 'virtually' and without a fixed political programme or formal structure, similar political actions can be traced back to the protest movements of the 1960s and to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century struggles.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Focus and rationale

In 2011, the Occupy movement captured world media attention with its powerful message that economic inequality, joblessness and corporate corruption could be resisted 'from below'. The New York and London Occupy movements were characterised by highly decentralised modes of action, extensive use of digital media and an apparent lack of leadership or formal structures. Although members of London Occupy avoided using the expression 'leadership', making the term problematic for researchers in this field, extant academic accounts focus on a range of leadership issues, such as decentralised decision-making processes (Cornell 2011) and mobilisation of collective action (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007). Recent theoretical work focuses on the socially-constructed nature of leadership (Drath et al. 2008; Fairhurst 2008; Grint 2005; Kelly 2008) and on the idea that leadership is a co-constructed product of sociohistorical and collective sensemaking (Alvesson and Kärreman 2000).

This thesis examines the London Occupy protest as a form of social action that took place in time and space, with particular reference to the artefacts and materials used by the movement. It aims to answer the following research questions:

Q1: How is 'leadership' understood and enacted within leaderless groups? How is leadership performed in the absence of individual leaders?

Q2: How do members of the Occupy movement coordinate without leaders?

Q3: What form do coordination and organisation take in the Occupy movement?

These questions carry political importance, as future social movements might learn from the Occupy movement's leaderless, informal organisation. Moreover, in view of its short existence, it is important to study the shortcomings of this non-hierarchical, decentralised organisation. As Parker et al. (2014b) argue, such horizontal social movements may offer organisational alternatives to capitalism and globalisation, and must be examined not as the best way forward but as an alternative to systems that 'negotiate their own boundaries vis-à-vis the status quo' (Parker et al. 2014b: 361). It is also important to understand what happens in place of leadership in this kind of social movement. This will also contribute to leadership research, answering calls by critical leadership scholars that leadership research requires new avenues of investigation (Alvesson and Spicer 2012; Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Kelly 2008, 2013).

1.2 Structure of the thesis

This chapter provides an overview of the research and outlines the objectives, rationale and structure of the thesis. The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on social movement organisations (SMOs), outlines the main characteristics of the 2011 protests.

Chapter 3 situates the Occupy movement historically in relation to 'new' social movements that emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Chapter 4 explores the socially constructed nature of leadership and, building on Kelly (2008), argues that analysis should focus on the 'forms of life' and 'practical accomplishments' of the London Occupy movement. Building on Sutherland et al.'s (2014) critique, it is argued that the London Occupy movement can be

understood as an ensemble of symbolic meanings and communicative political actions that allowed activists to mobilise and develop a broad-ranging repertoire of protest.

Chapter 5 presents the methodology used in the study, outlining key aspects of the research design, fieldwork and gathering of primary and secondary data. It also highlights that engaging with participants who were wary of outside investigators demanded a reflexive approach to data gathering.

The next three chapters present findings on the occupation of a highly significant urban space and London Occupy's use of virtual space (Chapter 6), new media (Chapter 7) and Non-leaders, artefacts and material cultures (Chapter 8). Each of these chapters highlights how different elements of the protest depended on particular meanings and forms of collective sensemaking.

Chapter 9 relates the data presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 to selected aspects of the literature on social movements, and to theoretical debates on leadership. Finally, Chapter 10 summarises the research findings, identifies the contribution of the thesis to recent debate on leaderless social movements, and suggests some future directions for research in this field.

Chapter 2: Social Movements

2.1 Introduction

This chapter locates the Occupy movement historically among other social movements, since all such movements build on the goals, experiences, orientations and repertoires of protest of previous movements. The Occupy movement is characterised by some observers as a descendant of the global justice movement (Smith 2012), whereas others regard it as no more than an ephemeral 'flash movement' (Plotke 2012). In view of its unique repertoire of protest, in terms of its leaderlessness, occupation of physical space and, more importantly, use of digital media, some mark it as the beginning of a new cycle of movements aided by digital media (Piven 2012). Moreover, as the Occupy movement has employed the repertoires of protest of new social movements beginning in the 1960s, but also shares orientations with the old social movements of the early twentieth century, it is important to situate it historically among other social movements. Some new social movements, such as students', women's liberation, environmentalist and peace movements, will be outlined in this chapter. Occupy London's repertoire of protest will be discussed in detail, showing how Occupy's members used this repertoire to organise their so-called leaderless, horizontal, structureless movement.

2.2 Social movements and organisation studies

A social movement is a collective action by people with shared interests to achieve designated goals. However, its organisation is different from other forms of collective action, such as in formal bureaucratic and hierarchical organisations. According to Davis et al. (2005), social movements and organisation studies are like twins separated at birth, so it is now common to combine the two. Social

movement scholars tend to focus on collective action as irrational, spontaneous, emotional and emergent, whereas organisational scholars focus largely on organisational bureaucracy and hierarchy (Anheier and Themudo 2002). Nevertheless, as discussed in Section 2.1, as a result of the wave of new social movements in the 1960s, old theories of social movements focusing on crowds, irrationality and impulsiveness were replaced by new theories of resource mobilisation, shifting the focus from crowds and riots to resources and organisations. Studies of new social movements have led scholars to consider cultural practices, examining other aspects of society such as consumption, family life and scientific research. Both camps are also interested in organisational politics, which has led to the incorporation of social movement studies into organisation studies. The problem of agency lies at the heart of organisational studies. Social movement theory provides organisational scholars with theoretical mechanisms to explain bottom-up, purposeful change and organisational change without resorting to individualistic models of behaviour (Weber and King 2014). Organisation studies has also borrowed other elements of social movement theories, such as the construction of new organisational forms (Rao et al. 2000), alternative organisational forms (Parker et al. 2014a), the dynamics of covert collective action within organisations (Weber and King 2014) and the transformation of new organisational logics (Carroll and Swaminathan 2000). Several studies focus on the impact of social movements on alternative cultural understandings and collective identity (King and Soule 2007; Rao et al. 2000). Thus, social movements are, and must be treated as, organisational phenomena.

2.3 Understanding social movements

Social movements play a crucial role in contemporary societies, encouraging people to evaluate and defy social trends, government policies and multinational companies' corporate social responsibility (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). In some cases, they inspire new technologies or new ways of using old technologies (ibid.). Social movements seek to raise awareness of the validity of new ideas, such as feminism, LGBT rights, environmentalism and peace approaches. They develop when people identify common interests or concerns that cannot be pursued through existing parties, interest groups and institutions in a society (Byrne 2013). In other words, the raison d'être of a social movement is to challenge dominant social values and cultural codes (Melucci 1989).

There are fundamental differences between protests and social movements. Local protests against a construction project, a particular instance of sexual discrimination or an incident attracting short-term social media attention may give rise to demonstrations or even direct action, as well as more conventional lobbying, but cannot be described as movements if they do not seek to engender support across the whole of a society, if not internationally (Byrne 2013). Therefore, social movements can be defined as 'organized challenges to authorities that use a broad range of tactics, both inside and outside of conventional politics, in an effort to promote social and political change' (Meyer 2003: 30).

Social movements also emerge unpredictably. They do not always arise in societies with greater material want or political inequality. Environmental movements do not always develop in societies with the most acute environmental

problems, and women's movements do not always emerge in societies where women are most disadvantaged. They can thus be seen as counter-rational, in the sense that their adherents appear not to be motivated by self-interest or material advantage. They are also unreasonable, in the sense that their supporters claim justification for defying the law or disregarding 'normal' ways of doing things. They may also be described as disorganised, as they deliberately refrain from formalising their own organisations, even when it would seem advantageous to do so (Byrne 2013: 11). Therefore, it is challenging to identify how, why, when and where social movements emerge.

However, learning more about their origins, supporters, repertoires of collective action (Tilly 1978) or protest (Goodwin and Jasper 2015), and goals will enhance the study of social movements. This chapter presents the background to social movements and locates the Occupy movement historically within other social movements. Before elaborating on these movements, the next sub-sections examine repertoires of protest and why they have been of interest to social movement studies.

2.3.1 Repertoires of protest

In any society, people protest in a narrow range of routine ways. In modern Western societies, most social movements choose from a surprisingly small variety of tactics, most obviously petitions, demonstrations, marches, strikes, boycotts and sit-ins, which are forms of civil disobedience (Goodwin and Jasper 2015) and represent repertoires of collective action (Tilly 1978) or protest (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). There are four thresholds in repertoires of protest (Dalton 1988). The first is the transition from conventional to unconventional

politics, such as signing petitions and participating in lawful demonstrations. These are unorthodox political activities but are still within the bounds of accepted democratic norms. The second is the shift to direct action techniques, such as boycotts and strikes. The third involves illegal but nonviolent acts, such as unofficial strikes or peaceful occupations of buildings. Finally, the fourth threshold involves violent activities such as personal injury or physical damage (Dalton 1988: 65). The term 'repertoire' may also encompass culturally encoded ways in which people interact in contentious politics (Taylor et al. 2009). Repertoires must be understood not simply as instruments of protest, but as reflections of particular social values and activist orientations (Byrne 2013). Repertoires of protest are also representations of the movements to which they belong and generally create the movements' culture (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Protestors will not usually act against their values to achieve their aims. Especially since the era of the new social movements from the 1960s onwards, social movements devote considerable attention to their means as well as their ends, which is known as 'prefigurative politics'. This term refers to a political orientation based on a premise that the ends achieved by a social movement are shaped fundamentally by the means it employs, and that movements should therefore choose means that embody or 'prefigure' the kind of society they want to bring about (Leach 2013). Both the new social movements and the Occupy movement worked to develop new forms of social engagement, prefiguring democratic and egalitarian relations (Cornish et al. 2016).

Therefore, it might be argued that the values of social movements are non-negotiable, and in this sense they have characteristics in common with religious groups and political parties (Byrne 2013). Repertoires of protest may be defined

as the meaning and symbolic value of a movement. With regard to meaning making and representation, Jasper (2008) argues that protestors' activities, as well as their ideologies, express their political identities and moral vision: 'Tactics represent important routines, emotionally and morally salient in these people's lives' (Jasper 2008: 237). Culture and consciousness are also central to repertoires of protest; they are not limited to tactics of civil disobedience, but often include 'culture – ritual, music, street theatre, art, the Internet, and practices of everyday life – to make collective claims' (Taylor et al. 2009: 866). They create solidarity, oppositional consciousness and collective identity among participants, while also defining relationships and boundaries between collective actors and their opponents (Taylor et al. 2009).

Tactical repertoires are not spontaneous episodes, but intentional and strategic forms of claim-making (Taylor et al. 2009). They also emerge, and are transformed, in the course of physical and symbolic interactions (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Tactics evolve in a series of reciprocal adjustments as a result of actions by the other side of the protest. For instance, violence does not develop overnight in a protest, but results from clashes between the two sides, leading to justification of ever more violent forms of action. Therefore, the tougher the policy, the lower the chance of peaceful protests (ibid.). For instance, social movements in Italy in the 1970s became radicalised due to harsher repression by the police, which led to the deaths of a number of protestors (ibid.). In addition, repertoires of protest vary from one society to another: for instance, barricades are more common in France, whereas direct democracy is exercised more frequently in Switzerland (Kriesi 1995).

Repertoires of protest play a significant role in social movements. They influence each other through collective identities, frames and shared networks (Taylor et al. 2009). For instance, student movements borrowed repertoires such as sit-ins and occupations from civil rights movements and, more recently, the Arab Spring, Occupy and 15M in Spain influenced each other and deployed their networks to frame their political contentions through digital media, as discussed later in this chapter. Repertoires also partly determine organisational structures and social movement organisations (SMOs), as discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Social movement organisations

SMOs are an important aspect of new social movements, ranging from formal to informal. They help to institutionalise movements and support their continuity (Earl 2014). SMOs must mobilise resources from the surrounding environment, whether directly in the form of money or through voluntary work by their adherents; they must neutralise opponents and garner support from both the general public and the élite (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Formally-organised SMOs have centralised and hierarchal structures with rules and regulations, whereas others are decentralised, horizontal and egalitarian, promoting participative democracy (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). Some require enormous funding from members' donations or philanthropic foundations to survive, whilst others rely heavily on the time and energy of their members. In some movements, such as revolutionaries and guerrilla armies, participation is a full-time job, while in others it may involve only one Saturday afternoon per month (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). Whether formal or informal, SMOs enable the collection and strategic distribution of resources, institutionalisation, strategic leadership, organisation of protest events, securing media coverage and building collective

identity (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). They also act as 'powerful sources of identity for a movement's own constituency, its opponents, and bystander publics' (Della Porta and Diani 2009: 137). In some cases, a movement's identity is linked to a charismatic leader, as in the case of Martin Luther King for the US civil rights movement in the 1960s. However, some social movements are more noted for their organisation. For example, Greenpeace and Amnesty International have very structured, private company-type organisations, while the women's liberation movement and Occupy have decentralised and horizontal structures, as discussed later in this chapter.

As previously mentioned, a new type of social movement arose in the mid-twentieth century. The Occupy movement is an interesting case because, although it tends to pursue the goals and orientations of old social movements, it also employs some of the repertoires of protest of new social movements. Given the impact of these repertoires on social movements, the Occupy movement must be located historically to enable particular repertoires of protest to be identified. The Occupy movement is characterised as a leaderless SMO in a continuous variegated pattern, prefiguring the construction of an alternative organisational form in opposition to the neoliberal capitalism system. In promoting prefigurative politics, Holloway (2010) uses the metaphor of 'cracks', referring to resistance groups causing small cracks in the capitalist system. This metaphor serves as a signifier of the small spaces and everyday acts of resistance. Cracks in the system may be attributed to the Occupy movement and to many other movements from the 1960s onward, such as the women's liberation, student and anti-globalisation movements, which have sought to introduce alternative forms of organisation.

In the next section, the history of new social movements will be discussed briefly, noting similarities with the Occupy movement in their repertoires of protest, their goals or their SMOs.

2.4 History of new social movements

According to Tilly and Wood (2013), the rich history of social movements can be traced back to the eighteenth century, when Contentious Gatherings (CGs) arose in public spaces in Boston, London and Charleston, making claims on others outside their groups, including expressions of political support. The nineteenth century witnessed further international movements, prompted largely by migration. A prime example was that of the International Workingmen's Association in the 1860s and 1870s (Tilly and Tarrow 2015).

Moving to the twentieth century, Calhoun (1993) makes a key distinction between old and new social movements. Old social movements were generally preoccupied with labour and promoted Marxist and socialist values, regarding class as the central issue in politics and claiming that a single political economic transformation would solve a whole range of social problems (ibid.). On the other hand, from the 1960s onward, new social movements have worked outside formal institutional channels, emphasising concerns about lifestyle, ethics or identity rather than narrowly economic goals (ibid.). The student and youth, peace, women's, animal rights, LGBT and environmental movements are examples of such movements (see, for example, Hetland and Goodwin 2013; Melucci 1980). New social movements have broadened the definition of politics and defied its conventional division into left and right. Hence, new social movements

encompass issues previously considered to be outside the domain of political action (Scott 1990).

New social movements emerged mainly as a result of rapid technological and political change after World War II, which changed how people earned their livings (Byrne 2013). Inglehart (1977) attributes the development of new social movements to the post-materialist conditions that emerged in Europe in the decades after World War II. He suggests that the values of the post-war generation differed from those of its predecessor, as the relative prosperity of Europe after 1950 reduced people's concern with material goals such as employment, housing and consumer goods. Therefore, drawing on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, Inglehart (1977) argues that people move up to higher-order levels of needs and desires and post-material values, motivating them to support social movements. However, among critiques of Inglehart, one relates to the fact that individuals' value systems are more complex than a focus on just a few issues (Byrne 2013). Another critique relates to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the assumption that people will develop a concern for self-expression and participation once their material needs are satisfied (ibid.).

Eckersley (1989) relates the emergence of new social movements to the rapid expansion of further and higher education in the post-war era. The expansion of higher education increased not only individuals' ability to acquire information, but also their capacity to think independently and critically (Eckersley 1989; Offe 1985). Studies of post-materialism in different contexts, including Norway and Germany, conclude that education, rather than class or income, has been responsible for the emergence of new social movements (Betz 1990; Knutsen

1990). Thus, higher education may have had a greater impact than economic satisfaction on the emergence of new social movements in the post-war era. The impact of education differs by occupation, as people with greater economic security tend to be more post-materialist. This applies to a greater extent to public-sector roles such as welfare, health and education than to private-sector employees (Offe 1985). Therefore, both financial stability and resulting higher education are among the major reasons for the emergence of new social movements.

Such social movements are described as 'new' because they can be seen as qualitatively different in terms of issues, tactics and constituencies (Calhoun 1993). Moreover, new forms of middle-class radicalism (Pichardo 1997) and the previously-discussed post-materialist era also created a historically specific vision of 'new' social movements. Given the research questions of this thesis, and the Occupy movement's characteristics, goals and repertoire of protest, some relevant social movements of the 1960s are examined briefly in the next sections.

2.4.1 Student movement

The student movement gained momentum in the 1960s as a result of its goals and its repertoire of protest, such as sit-ins and occupation of physical spaces. It had influential predecessors both in America and in the UK. In the former, it was influenced by the activities of the civil rights movement between 1954 and 1968 (Byrne 2013), which was a political and social reaction to years of white supremacy in the USA (Wilson 2013). The student movement both adopted repertoires of protest developed by others, such as Ghandian non-violent

resistance, and also introduced new forms of action, including sit-ins, teach-ins and occupations.

Participation of the educated middle class (discussed above) in social movements was arguably first evident in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s and the anti-war/student movement that arose from the mid-1960s (Byrne 2013). Supporting the earlier argument regarding the mutual influence of social movements and their repertoires of protest (Whittier 2007), the sit-in tactics of the student movement in the USA transferred to Europe. Occupations at the universities of Berlin, Turin and Paris in 1968 were analogous to those in the USA.

The next momentous social movement after the student movement was the women's liberation movement. As previously mentioned, a striking feature of social movements is the degree of overlap between them (Byrne 2013). The student movement of the late 1960s gave rise to the women's and environmental movements and perhaps, to a lesser extent, the peace movement (ibid.). The women's liberation movement's repertoire of protest was similar to that of the Occupy movement, in the sense that both claimed to be decentralised, and have horizontal and leaderless forms of SMO (Freeman 1972).

2.4.2 Women's liberation movement

The women's liberation movement brought about major changes to the lives of many women. It gave them access to professional and blue-collar jobs that had previously been reserved for men, and transformed the portrayal of women by the media. It also affected gender balance and equality in politics and society and innumerable other arenas and institutions (Epstein 2001). According to Byrne (2013), it is hard to argue that the women's movement has won, given the

remaining gender inequalities in Britain, but no one can deny the immense impact of feminist attitudes on public and private attitudes and practices, among the most important of which are legislative changes, such as abortion reform, equal pay, employment protection, the creation of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the implementation of the Sex Discrimination Act. The women's movement had both liberal and radical aspects. On the liberal side, the movement included national organisations and campaigns for reproductive rights, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and other reforms. On the radical side were women's liberation and consciousness-raising groups and cultural and grassroots projects (Epstein 2001). A significant method of recruiting participants to the women's movement was the use of consciousness-raising groups, which were facilitated by non-hierarchical, loosely structured, face-to-face settings isolated from those in power. According to Hirsch (1990), this method uses group discussions of mutual beliefs among the movement's members. In consciousness-raising groups and other settings, women discussed their experiences and politics with the aim of rethinking their understandings of the world (Whittier 1995). Emerging movements may use consciousness-raising to address problems of common concern that cannot be solved through conventional lobbying, and established movements may use it to convince potential recruits of the justness of their goals and the need to fight the status quo. This occurred during the emergence of the Occupy movement with the aid of digital media.

The structurelessness and leaderlessness of the women's liberation movement was another pillar in its repertoire of protest. According to Freeman (1972), the movement had no leader and no structure, and therefore no spokespeople. However, for various reasons, members of the movement attracted media and

public attention and, whether or not they or the movement solicited it, women at the centre of public attention were placed in the roles of spokespeople by default, illustrating that, even in leaderless movements, there is a tendency to look for leaders.

Freeman criticises the structurelessness of the movement, which led the movement into confusion:

> For everyone to have the opportunity to be involved in a given group and to participate in its activities, the structure must be explicit, not implicit. This is not to say that formalization of a structure of a group will destroy the informal structure. It usually doesn't. But it does hinder the informal structure from having predominant control ... We cannot decide whether to have a structured or structureless group, only whether or not to have a formally structured one (Freeman, 1972: 152).

As a result, by the beginning of the 1980s, the movement had no single core. Activists were therefore unable to agree on a unified strategy or analysis, although this did not prevent them from pursuing their own different strategies for empowerment (Buechler 1990). For example, the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp had a radical feminist ethos, but still attracted supporters from throughout the movement. The Peace Camp's repertoire of protest was similar to that of the Occupy movement in terms of its occupation of a physical space, and is thus considered in the next section.

2.4.3 Peace movements

The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp was a monumental example of a peace movement. Peace marches and demonstrations attracted more people onto

the streets than any other type of movement, and had a major impact on British politics. It led to the splitting up of the Labour Party to form the Social Democrats in the early 1980s, and also had an impact on the 1987 UK general election (Byrne 2013). The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) was formed in 1957 and has experienced ups and downs, depending on the world socio-political situation. For example, the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 provoked real fear of nuclear war, but its eventual resolution also suggested that, when it came to the crunch, the superpowers would back off (ibid.). In 1963, an international agreement to ban nuclear testing in the atmosphere also strengthened opinion that multilateral rather than unilateral action was more likely. Thus, from 1964 to 1979, CND dwindled into near obscurity. During that period, protests over the Vietnam War, as well as domestic economic affairs such as trade unionism and nationalism toward the end of the 1970s, weakened CND. However, the campaign was resurrected from 1979 onwards as a result of international socio-political events. For instance, NATO missile deployments and consequent Soviet Union missiles targeting Europe were game-changing events. In addition, the Thatcher-led Conservative government announced its decision to update Britain's Trident missile, further fuelling the movement.

Returning to the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, according to Byrne (2013), Cruise was a more attractive target for 'actions' than Polaris/Trident, as the latter were submarine-based weapons whereas Cruise in the UK was land-based at Greenham Common. In September 1981, a group of around 35, mainly female activists marched from Cardiff to the Greenham Common US Air Force base in Newbury. Their action was in protest against a 1979 NATO decision allowing US nuclear Cruise missiles to be housed at military bases in Europe

(Feigenbaum 2013). After issuing warnings for several years before the missiles were actually deployed, CND's aim was to prevent the missiles from ever arriving. Women in the camp decided to exclude the small number of men involved in the action. They argued that a women-only protest camp would offer the advantage of emphasising the disparity between female peace protesters and male military and civil authorities. The camp flourished over the next few years, welcoming women participants from the UK and abroad. In terms of its repertoire of protest, there were large-scale demonstrations: 30,000 women embraced the base in 1983, and 40,000 in 1984. There were also small-scale, localised tactics, such as breaking into the base to paint slogans and leave reminders of their presence. The camp's impact remained stable until the arrival of the first missiles at the end of 1983, when the most important pillar of the movement's repertoire was revealed: occupation of the RAF Greenham Common base.

Another tactic used in the repertoire of protest was to create their own media. During their years of protest, the Greenham women became media producers, creating their own newsletters, booklets and other ephemeral media. Different forms of media, such as poetry, cartoons, sketches, songs, intricate drawings and haphazard doodles, created images of 'Greenham as a place rich with creativity, spontaneity, political experimentation and self-reflexive thinking' (Feigenbaum 2013: 2). As argued earlier, movements learn from each other's repertoires of protest. The global justice movement (Seattle movement 1999) and the 2011 social movements learned from these repertoires in terms of employing the Internet and Internet-based platforms as means of communication between themselves and with the outside world, as discussed in detail later. Remarkably, the Greenham protest continued from 1981 to 2001 (Feigenbaum et al. 2013) in

the form of a place-based protest, separated both geographically and ideologically from other spaces (Feigenbaum 2010). The role of space is examined further in the next chapter.

2.4.4 Environmental movements

Another trend in the new social movements since the 1960s has been environmentalism, which has had an even greater impact than women's movements because the issue has a strong profile in Western democracies, all of which have ministries or departments focusing on environmental issues. The European Union and the United Nations both have agencies specifically devoted to the area (Byrne 2013). An important characteristic of environmental movements is their multinational ties. Friends of the Earth (FOE) was originally formed in the US in 1969, and its UK wing, FOE-UK, was founded in 1970, the first ecological group in Britain (Byrne 2013). Its main concern is environmental campaigns focusing on issues such as pollution and the perceived threat of nuclear power (ibid.). Like the women's movement, FOE grew out of student and allied movements, and consciously modelled its loose, decentralised structure on that of the student movement. FOE's activities include both direct actions and conventional lobbying. Greenpeace, another well-known organisation formerly known as 'Don't Make A Wave', was formed in 1970 in America by protesters against nuclear testing off the coast of Alaska (Hunter 2004). The UK branch was established in 1978. The ideologies of Greenpeace and FOE are similar, but they differ considerably in terms of organisation and decision making. Greenpeace is the best-known environmental group in the world. FOE has the largest network of greens globally, but Greenpeace grabs the headlines as a result of its chosen methods of operation. Its structure is more closely related to that of a private-

sector company and its decision making resembles that of the military. Supporters provide money and moral support, and front-line troops carry out actions.

From the outset, Greenpeace's emphasis was on direct public action, the first instance of which was to sail a boat into the American nuclear testing zone in Alaska. This kind of potentially hazardous action has always been at the heart of Greenpeace, which stated in its annual report: 'determined individuals can alter the actions and purposes of even the most powerful by "bearing witness"; that is, by drawing attention to an abuse of the environment through their unwavering presence at the scene, whatever the risk is' (Greenpeace Annual Report 1992-93 cited in Byrne 2013: 139). Therefore, one element of its repertoire of protest was to gain media attention: 'Greenpeace activists have climbed aboard whaling ships, parachuted from the top of smokestacks, plugged up industrial discharge pipes, and floated a hot air balloon into a nuclear test site' (Wapner 1995: 320). The Occupy movement has also used various tactics in its repertoire of protest to gain media attention, such as the Guy Fawkes mask and occupation of a physical space close to the heart of the financial district where money, a symbol of the capitalist system, is handled.

2.4.5 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) movement

As previously discussed, the social movements of the 1960s onwards are referred to as 'new' because they have all focused on ethical and human rights issues. A central issue regarding human rights and love rights is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) movement. Cimino (2012) argues that this movement borrows heavily from Marxist theory, representing an oppressed group dominated economically, politically, socially and psychologically by

predominantly heterosexual society. World War II was arguably the defining moment for American gays because of the unusual conditions of the mobilised society that allowed homosexuality to be expressed more easily in action (D'Emilio 1983). The gay liberation movement has made coming out easier for people from all sectors of society, and the LGBT movement achieved a significant victory in 1973 when the American Psychiatric Association altered a position it had held for almost a century by removing homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. Activists have been invited to the White House to discuss their grievances, and in 1980 the Democratic Party's platform included gay rights (D'Emilio 1983: 238).

In terms of its repertoire of protest, the gay liberation movement's members participated in rallies against American involvement in Southeast Asia, and lesbian members of the movement converged with the Congress to Unite Women. Another tactic was to run workshops similar to the women's liberation movement's consciousness-raising groups at their annual convention of the National Student Association (Goodwin and Jasper 2015). Similarly to the New Left, it also employed hyperbolic phrases in its newspaper, *Rat Subterranean News* (12 August 1969). It concentrated on liberation from oppression, resistance to genocide, and revolution against 'imperialist America', but focused particularly on homosexuals (D'Emilio 1983). Its other tactics included occupying the offices of publishers of hostile articles, demonstrating in several cities, and taking advantage of any opportunity to be seen on TV and at gatherings (ibid.). Although the LGBT movement has not achieved all of its goals, it has managed to voice its agenda and bring rights to its members in some Western countries.

The last trend in the new social movements of the twentieth century was the anti-globalisation movement, frequently referred to as the 'movement of movements'.

2.4.6 Anti-globalisation movements

The last decade of the twentieth century saw the emergence of anti-globalisation and anti-neoliberal capitalist movements. Their main characteristic was protest against the policies of neoliberal capitalists and multinational corporations that have led to inequality and class differences. These movements were concerned both with general quality of life and with allocations of material rewards between different social groups (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Attention to social justice and material conditions, such as poverty, have been central to the recent wave of protest against neoliberal globalisation because the living conditions of a large majority of the world's population are threatened (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Navarro (2007) argues that neoliberalism and globalisation have had a detrimental effect on essential aspects of human societies, in the form of poverty, inequality and ill health. Global capitalism has breached the historical alliance between capitalism, the welfare state and democracy. There has been a shift from Keynesian-driven economics, with the state playing an important role in governing the market, to neoliberal capitalism, under which labour protection and workers' rights have been reduced (Della Porta and Diani 2009).

The most well-known movement in this category is the global justice or anti-capitalist movement, also known as the global 'movement of movements' or 'network of networks' against neoliberal capitalism (Chesters and Welsh 2006; Maeckelbergh et al. 2014) because of its repertoire of protest. This movement has

employed Internet and computer-mediated communication, enabling it to organise with the aid of new technologies (Della Porta and Mosca 2005).

The 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protest in Seattle was the largest protest of the global justice movement. On 30 November 1999, the city of Seattle witnessed 50,000 demonstrators protesting against the third WTO conference assembled to launch the Millennium Round (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Protestors chanted slogans such as 'the world is not for sale', 'no globalisation without participation', 'we are citizens, not just consumers', 'WTO = capitalism without conscience' and 'trade: clean, green and fair' (Della Porta and Diani 2009). In terms of their repertoire of protest, in addition to extensive use of Internet-based platforms, they staged a series of sit-ins, in which almost 10,000 demonstrators sat tied together in chains on the ground using 'lock down' and 'tripod' techniques (making it difficult for police to remove them), in order to stop most of the 3,000 delegates from 135 countries from reaching the inaugural ceremony (ibid.). Their use of the Internet as a pillar of their repertoire of protest has attracted attention. As discussed earlier, throughout history, movements have adopted their predecessors' repertoires of protest. However, Della Porta and Diani (2009) suggest that a new element was added in the case of the Seattle movement: the inherently transnational nature of the movement and its use of new media enabled various networks of activists to connect to each other (Della Porta and Diani 2009).

New media such as television, and more recently fax, mobile phones and the Internet, have transformed the ambitions and communication capacity of social movements. The Independent Media Center (also known as Indymedia or IMC)

was founded just before the Seattle encounter began on 24 November 1999 (Kidd 2003). This was because protestors were starting to feel the need for autonomous media and appreciating the strategic importance of making an 'end-run around the information gatekeepers' (Tarleton 2000: 53). Indymedia (www.indymedia.org) is defined on its homepage as 'a collective of independent media organizations and hundreds of journalists offering grassroots, no corporate coverage. Indymedia is a democratic media outlet for the creation of radical, accurate, and impassioned truth telling.'[1] Open publishing is an essential element of the Indymedia project. It enables independent journalists and media producers to produce and contribute to the growing anti-corporate globalisation movement (Kidd 2003). Moreover, anyone who respects a few ground rules can create a local node of Indymedia, and during the Seattle protest, it claimed to have received 1.5 million hits (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Just two years from its foundation, the IMC network had become a critical resource for activists and audiences across the world, providing 'an extraordinary bounty of news reports and commentaries, first-person narratives, longer analysis, links to activist resources, and interactive discussion opportunities from around the world' (Kidd 2003: 50).

Unlike the IMC, in recent movements, digital media have been used not only to generate news and content for activists, but also to catalyse and initiate social action, and in so doing realise what Juris (2012) calls the 'logic of aggregation'. Juris argues that there are two logics that can be applied to digital media usage. The first is the logic of networking, which is a cultural framework that gives rise

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[1] https://www.indymedia.org/or/index.shtml

to practices of communication and coordination across diversity and difference on the part of collective actors, as happened in the case of IMC. The second, the logic of aggregation, involves assembling masses of individuals from diverse backgrounds in physical spaces (Juris 2012).

Wide use of digital media has created a participatory culture, which increasingly demands room for ordinary citizens to express themselves and distribute their creations as they see fit – a tool that was once 'the privilege of capital-intensive industries' (Van Dijck 2009). The enormous impact of user-generated content (UGC) on everyday life, using digital media platforms such as social networking sites and blogs, has gradually captured world attention. According to *Time Magazine*, the sense of community and collaboration derived from employing the Internet is being used as a revolutionary weapon, not to change the world but to change how the world changes. As a result of the massive use of digital media to create UGC, in 2006, *Time Magazine* named 'You' as Person of the Year: 'for seizing the reins of the global media, for founding and framing the new digital democracy, for working for nothing and beating the pros at their own game' (*Time Magazine*, 16 December 2006).[2] Five years later, *Time Magazine* chose the 'Protester' as Person of the Year, for using digital media to capture the world's attention and disseminating messages, whether marching against dictatorships in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya, or protesting against neoliberal capitalism and austerity measures in Western countries, as in the case of the 15M movement in Spain and Occupy movements across the world.

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[2] http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1570810,00.html

2.4.7 2011 social movements

The social movements of 2011 differed from the new social movements discussed earlier in this chapter in terms of their goals and orientation. Despite the new social movements' orientation toward lifestyle, ethical issues and social identity concerns, the Occupy movements around the world and the 15M movement in Spain returned to the concerns and demands of the old social movements while continuing to pursue the goals of the global justice movement. In other words, these social movements demanded equality and a fair distribution of wealth among all sectors of society, advocating and exercising alternative forms of organisation to capitalism (Parker et al. 2014a). Capitalism has undoubtedly produced unprecedented levels of growth and wealth; however, it has 'created a trickling-up effect leading to the increased concentration of wealth in the hands of a few' (Parker et al. 2014b: 13). The Occupy movement highlighted class conflict through the slogan 'We are the 99%', which was roared in protest against the unfair distribution of wealth among the world's population, where one per cent of society holds most of the wealth. For example, in 2011, the wealthiest one per cent of US citizens controlled 40 per cent of American wealth and took in nearly a quarter of the nation's yearly income; whereas the corresponding figures 25 years earlier were 33 per cent and 12 per cent (Stiglitz 2011, cited in Parker et al. 2014a).

This return to old labour movement values may have been linked to the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, which forced people to choose between paying for groceries or rent, denied them high-quality medical care, and forced them to work

longer hours for less pay, if they were lucky enough to get a job in the first place.[3]

They gathered in the financial heart of New York City to occupy the symbol of capitalist class power (Milkman et al. 2013), a move back to the surge in labour movements during the Great Depression and the financial crisis of the 1930s (Brody 1972). As previously mentioned, what most of these recent social movements have in common is the decentralised and horizontal structure of their SMOs, akin to twentieth-century movements such as the women's liberation movement (Freeman 1972), and their common use of digital technology and new media in their repertoires of protest, similarly to the anti-globalisation movement, as well as their occupation of physical public spaces, as with the Greenham Common and student movements.

The 2011 social movements started with the Arab Spring in the Middle East and then resurfaced in Europe with the 15M or Indignados movement. The latter was the most well-known anti-austerity protest which took place in Spain in May 2011, fuelled the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York in September 2011 and then spread across the world.

Time Magazine's selection of 'the Protestor' as 2011 Person of the Year reflected the leaderlessness of these social movements across the world: 'In 2011, protesters didn't just voice their complaints; they changed the world.'[4] *Time* went on to state:

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[3] http://wearethe99percent.tumblr.com

[4] http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/0,28757,2101745,00.html #ixzz1q8IVhWzq

Everywhere this year, people have complained about the failure of
traditional leadership and the fecklessness of institutions. Politicians
cannot look beyond the next election, and they refuse to make hard
choices. That's one reason we did not select an individual this year. But
leadership has come from the bottom of the pyramid, not the top. For
capturing and highlighting a global sense of restless promise, for
upending governments and conventional wisdom, for combining the
oldest of techniques with the newest of technologies to shine a light on
human dignity and, finally, for steering the planet on a more democratic
though sometimes more dangerous path for the 21st century, the
Protester is TIME's 2011 Person of the Year.[5]

It should be noted that the goals of the Arab Spring movements were different
from those of Western social movements in 2011. This was because the Arab
nations were emerging from radically different social conditions and
manifestations of political oppression that led to emancipatory movements to
depose dictators. However, the 2011 social movements used the same repertoires
of protest to boost their leaderless SMOs, as discussed in the next sub-section.

The Arab Spring

The Arab Spring started with the Tunisian Revolution, which successfully ousted
long-time President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. It began on 17 December 2010 when
an unemployed man, Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in protest against
confiscation of his wares and the brutal behaviour of the police. According to

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[5] http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2101745_2102139,
00.html

social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, he had been slapped by a female officer. This framing of the issue incited anger against the government, which was already high as a result of economic issues such as inflation and high unemployment, as well as a lack of political freedom such as the right to free speech. This led to a series of street demonstrations in January 2011 (Lotan et al. 2011). The case of the Tunisian revolution is important here because of the framing used to fuel anger and discontent among young and unemployed people. According to Postill (2016), Mohammad Bouazizi's cousin, Ali added two 'white lies' to the story that accompanied the video of the street vendor setting himself on fire and becoming Tunisia's martyr. The first was the notion that Mohamed was a university graduate (in fact, he never completed high school) and the second was that a female officer slapped him in the face, which never took place (Postill 2016). As Internet scholar, Merlyna Lim explains:

> By adding these two ingredients – a university graduate and a slap – to the story, Ali rendered Mohamed's burning body political, affixing to it the political body of a citizen whose rights were denied. Mohamed Bouazizi no longer represented the uneducated poor who struggle to provide food on the table, but represented all young people of Tunisia whose rights and freedom were denied (Merlyna Lim, cited in Postill 2016).

This framing was exactly what young and unemployed Tunisian people wanted, a framing that reflected the beliefs, feelings and desires of people who would potentially join the movement (Snow et al. 1986). It was aided by digital media, which circulated this fabricated story first in Tunis and then across the world. As Goodwin and Jasper (2015) argue, good frames do not do anything by themselves,

but must be combined with organisations and networks and other kinds of mobilising activities. In the case of the Tunisian revolution and the Arab Spring, networks were established with the aid of digital media and online platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This again illustrates the impact of digital media, in terms of the logic of aggregation (Juris 2012), as a powerful tool to recruit members to the movement. The use of digital media for recruitment was similar to the consciousness-raising groups used to recruit protestors on a smaller scale into the women's liberation movement in the 1970s, as discussed earlier.

Following the success of the Tunisian revolution, Egyptian activists organised a demonstration in Cairo on 25 January 2011, marked as National Police Day, to protest against police abuses (Lotan et al. 2011). People occupied Tahrir Square, and within 18 days, the revolution forced Hosni Mubarak to step down from power. According to Castells (2013), over two million people demonstrated in Tahrir Square at some point. This was aided by Internet networks, mobile networks, pre-existing social networks, street demonstrations, occupations of public squares and Friday gatherings around mosques. These actions all contributed to the spontaneous, largely leaderless, multimodal networks that enacted the Egyptian revolution (Castells 2013). The use of digital media in the Arab Spring's repertoire of protest was a key characteristic of the movement in terms of its leaderlessness, as reflected in *Time Magazine*'s choice of Person of the Year in 2011.

The 15M Movement

The 15M movement in Spain followed the same path in terms of its repertoire of protest. Protestors used occupations, demonstrations and digital media to protest against the Spanish government's austerity measures. Growing social discontent

as a result of austerity measures and policies led Anonymous Group and individual citizens to start to mobilise themselves through social networks to conceive and prepare a general call for citizens to mobilise (Morell 2012). The 15M movement marked the largest occupations of public squares since the country's transition to democracy from the Franco administration of the 1970s. The movement adopted a repertoire of protest similar to its precursor in the Middle East, the Arab Spring. It relied heavily on new information and communication technologies (ICTs) to mobilise protesters, and became a prime example of self-mobilisation or a social network organised through the Internet (Morell 2012: 386). The biggest protest on 15 May took place in Madrid, when self-styled *indignados* chanted slogans such as 'we're not merchandise in the hands of politicians and bankers', and 'the guilty ones should pay for the crisis' (Hughes 2011). The movement defined itself as a grassroots, decentralised, non-party, non-violent citizens' movement (ibid.). The Arab Spring and the 15M movement reportedly inspired the Occupy movements across the world, as indicated on Occupy Wall Street's website.[6] The next chapter examines the Occupy and Occupy London movements in greater detail as case studies for this research.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has illustrated the link between social movements and organisation studies. It also outlined the need for understanding social movements by considering to their SMOs and repertoires of protest. Moreover, the chapter covered a history of new social movements to set the scene for the next chapter,

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[6] http://occupywallst.org

the occupy movement. Some examples of new social movements, such as students', women's liberation, environmentalist and peace movements have been discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3: The Occupy Movement

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Occupy movement employed similar repertoires of protest to the 15M movement and the Arab Spring. Extensive use of digital media, occupation of a physical space and leaderless organisational forms were pillars of the social movements' repertoires of protest in 2011. This chapter outlines the emergence of the Occupy movement, and its life cycle in details.

3.2 The emergence of the movement

The Occupy Wall Street movement started on 17 September 2011 when hundreds of protesters marched through the streets of Manhattan and set up an encampment in Zuccotti Park, on what has been called the 'US Day of Rage' occupation of Wall Street. This triggered similar protests across the US and in more than 82 countries. The Occupy Wall Street movement introduced itself in its website as:

> a leaderless resistance movement with people of many colours, genders and political persuasions. The one thing we all have in common is that We Are The 99% that will no longer tolerate the greed and corruption of the 1%. We are using the revolutionary Arab Spring tactic to achieve our ends and encourage the use of nonviolence to maximize the safety of all participants.[7]

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[7] http://occupywallst.org

The initiation of the Occupy movement is linked to an article that appeared in *Adbusters* magazine in July 2011, which stated that 'On September 17, we want to see 20,000 people flood into lower Manhattan, set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street for a few months. Once there, we shall incessantly repeat one simple demand in a plurality of voices'.[8] Various activists responded to this online call for a 'Tahrir moment' in downtown Manhattan on 17 September 2011, the anniversary of the signing of the US constitution (Milkman et al. 2013). To advertise the gathering, *Adbusters* created a very professional poster depicting a ballerina posing on top of the New York charging bull (Figure 1). The background of the poster shows tear gas in the air and riot police wearing gas masks. The *Adbusters* call and its hashtag (#occupywallstreet) on the poster gained momentum on digital media, especially Twitter and Facebook. This was arguably the initiation phase of the movement.

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[8] http://www.adbusters.org/blogs/adbusters-blog/occupywallstreet.html

Figure 1. Occupy Wall Street poster
Source: Adapted from http://designobserver.com (http://designobserver.com/feature/the-poster-that-launched-a-movement-or-not/32588)

3.2. The occupation

Thousands of people occupied the financial districts of large US cities (Hall 2012).

Most protestors wore Guy Fawkes masks to illustrate their discontent with the

status quo and capitalism (Kohns 2013). These became a symbol of protest

against the system. This relates to the logic of aggregation discussed earlier,

assembling masses from diverse backgrounds (Juris 2012) using digital media to

circulate the #occupywallstreet hashtag. One of the most important actions apart

from Occupy Wall Street was Occupy London, which started on 15 October 2011

(Halvorsen 2012). This arguably marked the beginning of the occupation phase of

the movement.

Most Occupy protesters were highly-educated young adults who were under-

employed and/or had recently experienced layoffs or job losses (Della Porta

2015). Many were in substantial debt, especially those under 30 years old. As a result, the reason most often cited for protesting was their personal experiences of economic hardship (Mitchell 2012: 8). With its memorable slogan, 'We Are the 99%', and because it laid no formal demands on the table, the Occupy movement was able to attract supporters with a wide variety of specific concerns, many of whom had not previously worked together. They occupied a physical space (occupation phase) to voice their concerns. This phase enabled face-to-face communication in a physical occupied space. The Occupiers used the physical space to organise themselves and hold general assemblies and, more importantly, converted that physical space into their home.[9] Intense messaging through digital media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs, as a pillar of the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest, made its physical space a trending location (Milkman et al. 2013). The physical space became a 'venue for magnetic gatherings, face-to-face assemblies whose alluring power depends to a great extent on the intense flow of messaging radiating out of them and in turn attracting people towards them' (Gerbaudo 2012: 13). The importance of occupied spaces at the heart of modern cities may be considered in relation to the power of 'empty space' identified by Michelet in the history of the French Revolution:

> The Champ de Mars! This is the only monument that the Revolution has
> left. The Empire has its Column, and engrosses almost exclusively the
> Arc de Triomphe; royalty has its Louvre, its Hospital of Invalids; the

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[9] http://theoccupiedtimes.org/?p=2528

feudal church of the twelfth century is still enthroned at Notre Dame:

nay, the very Romans have their Imperial Ruins, the Thermae of the

Caesars! And the Revolution has for her monument: empty space

(Michelet and Cocks, 1847: 4).

Both physical space and digital media acted as infrastructure for the Occupy

movement in terms of providing meeting arenas and free spaces (Haug 2013).

Such spaces fulfil two functions for social movements:

First, they provide a structural integration by connecting groups with

each other, collecting resources, preparing protest activities, and doing

public relations. Second, they aim at a cultural integration of the various

groups and networks in developing a common frame of meaning (Haug

2013: 708).

In this regard, a well-known example of network meetings was the feminist

movement's consciousness-raising group in the late 1960s discussed earlier.

Movements themselves do not necessarily construct free spaces, but

paradoxically such spaces are often connected with the most traditional

institutions. For instance, churches, as pre-existing free spaces in the community,

played a critical role in mobilising and organising the US civil rights movement

(Goodwin and Jasper 2015). Schools, recreational facilities and other

organisations may also function as free spaces. Polletta (1999) distinguishes

between three types of free space – indigenous, transmovement and prefigurative

– which differ according to the associational ties that characterise them and the

practices they support. Indigenous spaces are free spaces that create and maintain

dense ties among small, locally-based cadres of activists (Futrell and Simi 2004).

Transmovement spaces connect activists from across existing local movement

networks, and create new networks in the movement. They also link isolated actors and local cadres into broader activist networks. Prefigurative spaces are settings in which actors attempt to 'prefigure the society that the movement is seeking to build by modelling relationships that differ from those characterizing mainstream society' (Polletta 1999: 11). What makes free spaces such a crucial resource for social movements, as well as organisational change, is that they facilitate meetings and other kinds of face-to-face encounters to provide the kinds of associational ties that foster the 'capacity to identify opportunities, supply leaders, recruit participants, craft mobilizing action frames, and fashion new identities, tasks essential to sustained mobilization' (Polletta 1999: 8). Ropo et al. (2013) argue that 'material places lead people through embodied experiences, such as feelings, emotions and memories of the place. These experiences form and shape the direction of their actions, interpretations and judgements' (Ropo et al. 2013: 381). In the case of the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest, free spaces encompassed not only physical spaces, but also digital media, enabling it to continue face-to-face communication through interfaces in virtual space. This did not reduce the importance of physical space to the movement, as it gained its name and identity by occupying physical space. Gerbaudo (2012) observes the role of social media in constructing a choreography of assembly as a process of symbolic construction of public space, which facilitates and guides the physical assembling of a highly dispersed and individualised constituency. The Internet facilitated Occupy's tactical and strategic development of 'weak ties' between the social networks of previously disparate groups of activists and affiliations with distant groups (Theocharis et al. 2015).

However, distinctions can be made in the utility of different Internet-based media. Castells (2013) argues that, unlike Twitter and Facebook, the Tumblr page 'We are the 99 percent' was used not to broadcast or plan upcoming events, but to humanise the movement. Tumblr is a powerful storytelling platform (Castells 2013) that enables people to write their stories and share them with others. Several stories were posted on this platform, which garnered support for the Occupy movement as well as generating a feeling that others would hear their voices on this particular Internet-based platform. One of many pictures uploaded by Occupiers is illustrated in Figure 2.
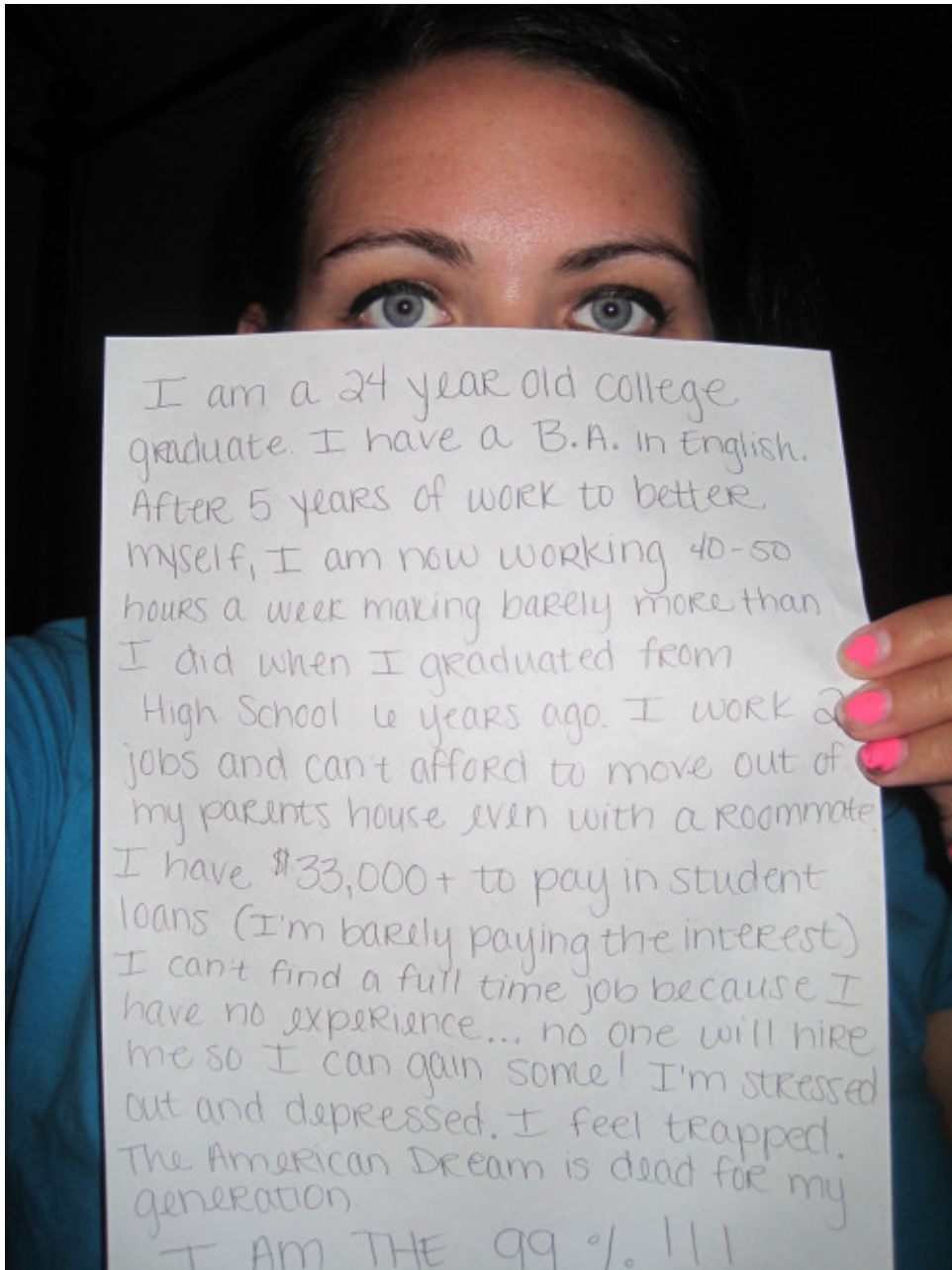
Figure 2. Example of picture uploaded by Occupier
Source: Adapted from http://wearethe99percent.tumblr.com

Earl (2014) argues that Occupy's 'we are the 99%' Tumblr page built identity

internally and externally. Internally, the site helped potential Occupy supporters

develop a sense of what Occupy was about, without ever attending a physical

occupation. This relates to the earlier argument regarding the importance of the

Internet in acting similarly to the women's liberation movement's consciousness-

raising groups. Internet and digital media are a powerful tool enabling the

recruitment of members at anytime and anywhere. In terms of external identity building, the website was an important focal point for the media, who were exposed through the website to the diversity of Occupy supporters and their many different reasons for supporting the movement (Earl 2014).

Given the importance of new media, these platforms should be regarded not simply as facilitators of the diffusion process but as a new element in the repertoire of social movement tactics (Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010). The Internet empowers social movements in four major respects: it is used as an additional logistical resource for 'resource-poor' actors; as an expression of protest; as a means of identity building; and in a cognitive way to inform and sensitise public opinion (Della Porta and Mosca 2005). The media also provide space through which to spread movements' ideas. SMOs have become more skilled in influencing the media, developing specific know-how as well as reputations as reliable sources of information (Della Porta and Diani 2009). Media may also act as mobilisers of protest, especially on 'highly emotional and symbolic issues that create an atmosphere of consensus, emotion, and togetherness' (Walgrave and Manssens 2000: 235), as was the case in the Tunisian revolution. In the case of the Occupy movement, the cleverly designed Occupy Wall Street poster and its #occupywallstreet hashtag, as well as its circulation through digital media, gathered thousands of people to initiate the movement by occupying Zuccotti Park (Hall 2012). With regard to the importance of new Internet-based media for SMOs, Van Aelst and Walgrave (2004) cite the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's branding of the Internet as a vigorous means of organising:

The internet will continue a large role in the success or failure of antiglobalization protests and demonstrations. Groups will use the internet to identify and publicize targets, solicit and encourage support, organize and communicate information and instructions, recruit, raise funds, and as a means of promoting their various individual and collective aims (Canadian Security Intelligence Service, cited in Van Aelst and Walgrave 2004: 106).

As ever more social movement activity has moved online, the necessity for SMOs has begun to be called into question in the context of online-only protests (Earl 2014). However, SMOs may still be quite relevant to online organising in three situations:

a) when organizing occurs online in support of offline events, or, more generally, when organizers choose not to, or fail to, leverage unique affordances of Internet enabled technologies; (b) when long-term and enduring struggles are necessary to achieve desired outcomes; and (c) when stable networks are critical to securing participation (Earl 2014: 48).

These issues must be addressed when studying SMOs. They are highlighted throughout the various phases of the Occupy movement, from initiation to phases labelled in this thesis as the 'latency' and 'post-latency' phases of the movement after the eviction phase.

3.3 The eviction

The New York police evicted the Occupy Wall Street movement on 15 November 2011. The Occupy London movement, which had begun less than a month after

Occupy Wall Street, was evicted two months later on 28 February 2012. Their eviction from the physical public spaces they had occupied for several months threatened their existence and led to a period of latency. There was extensive discussion in mainstream and social media regarding police brutality and division in St Paul's management in defending the Occupiers' rights,[10] as well as their right to stay in their camps (Gerbaudo 2012). This led to the growth of new media such as Tumblr pages, Facebook and Twitter accounts, as these became almost the only method of communication between the Occupiers after the eviction. However, Occupy members across the world argued that the evictions were not the end of the Occupy movement. Occupy campaigner Ronan McNern said, 'We are calling on people to take the conversation out of St Paul's and into their homes',[11] while another protester stated, 'You can't evict an idea'. In other words, the movement has attempted to continue its existence in virtual space.

3.4 After the eviction

The post-latency phase has been more engaged with digital (Internet-based) media in terms of spreading the Occupy movement's messages and reacting to social issues by announcing events or dates of gatherings. More recent types of activity by Occupy members after the eviction and in the post-latency phase have been more intellectual and less visible projects, such as farming, fighting debt, theorising on banking and working on a voluntary basis. For instance, a voluntary group was formed to help people who had been affected by Hurricane Sandy. By

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[10] http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/29/world/europe/in-london-church-officials-move-to-evict-protesters.html
[11] http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/oct/14/occupy-protest-st-pauls-pulpit-cathedral

emphasising its horizontality and its decentralised, highly flexible and network-based characteristics, the Occupy Sandy relief effort successfully channelled volunteers and supplies to existing local institutions using Facebook and Twitter. As a result, according to mainstream media, the Occupiers provided aid for those affected much more quickly than government-sponsored organisations such as the Red Cross, which were delayed by the huge level of bureaucracy involved.[12] Thus, while 'the Occupy movement had disappeared as a "movement", the network-system it had created remained strong and active enough for an initiative to be able to activate it and develop a new subnetwork-system out of it very quickly' (Nunes 2014: 37). This is in line with the earlier argument that movements influence each other and use each other's repertoires of protest, gaining concrete assistance from other movements' SMOs and recruiting members from existing networks (Whittier 2007).

Another impressive activity of the Occupy movement in the post-latency phase was 'The Rolling Jubilee', which emerged out of networks of artists and activists associated with Strike Debt, an offshoot of Occupy Wall Street (Nunes 2014). As Aitken (2015) explains, the Jubilee was a series of interventions in secondary debt markets that allowed Strike Debt to buy, and then forgive, debts owed by distressed Americans, using donations received from people interested in the Occupy movement and its goals. To date, this movement has raised over $700,000 from mainly small donations, with which it has managed to buy and cancel almost

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[12] http://nation.time.com/2012/11/13/best-of-enemies-why-occupy-activists-are-working-with-new-york-citys-government/#ixzz2JO6uGF5a

$32 million of bad debts offered for sale for at a fraction of their face value in secondary debt markets (Rolling Jubilee website).[13]

3.5 The movement's repertoires of protest

The above discussion regarding the importance of digital media in different phases of the Occupy movement illustrates digital media's significant role in upcoming social movements, as the concept of space is redefined, allowing new questions to be asked and demanding new approaches to answering them (Spitzberg et al. 2013). These issues and concerns regarding the relationship between physical and virtual space are examined in greater detail in Chapter 4, given their significant role in the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest.

Returning to the movement's repertoire of protest, another widely-used tactic was the use of art and aesthetics which, according to Valenzuela et al. (2012), are repositories of collective emotions. The Occupy movement used these to delegitimise the prestige order of institutions and what they actually deliver. As Shrivastava and Ivanova (2015) suggest, the processes of legitimation and delegitimation involve new meaning creation and sense making and are associated with rituals and emotions. The use of aesthetics therefore plays a significant role in legitimacy processes, serving as a form of knowledge that questions and destabilises norms. Aesthetics can often be used to overcome oppression in society by undermining structures of discursive legitimacy (Postrel 2003). Aesthetic questioning can help make norms more socially responsible. The Occupy movement achieved this using the artistic media of slogans, songs,

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[13] http://rollingjubilee.org/

paintings and street theatre. Aesthetics were also involved in the use of the Guy Fawkes mask as a symbol of resistance and 'being against the Man' (Lithgow 2012), and gained popularity through both digital and mainstream media as a symbol of the Occupy movement. The mask relates to a 30-year-old graphic novel, *V for Vendetta* (Moore and Lloyd 2008) and a ten-year-old movie. The main character in the comic-based movie, V, is a modern Guy Fawkes who rebels against a fascist government. He has become a symbol of protest against the status quo for young protesters, mainly in Western countries (Lush and Dobnik 2011). The hacker group, Anonymous had already used the mask to represent the idea of anonymity, as well as protest and revolution (ibid.). The anonymity with which the mask provided the Occupiers fitted perfectly with Occupy's idea of horizontality, in the sense that it created the non-identity, and therefore non-individualisation, with which Occupy sought to represent itself (Olson 2013). As a result, the Guy Fawkes mask became a symbol of contemporary protest movements and functioned as a figure of the protest movement's unity (Kaulingfreks and Kaulingfreks 2013). Mitchell (2012) observes that a key ideological feature of the Guy Fawkes mask is the iconography of non-sovereignty and anonymity, which renounces the face and figure of the charismatic leader in favour of the face in and of the crowd, the assembled masses. The mask gained further popularity after the initial Occupy events. On 5 November 2013, the Anonymous group organised the first Million Mask March to protest against mass state surveillance, the increasing imposition of austerity, political corruption, politicisation of the Internet, and capitalism itself (Harbisher 2016). The mask has also been used to attract public and media attention, as successful movements often develop controversies to make them more newsworthy by using symbols

and images that capture attention (Della Porta and Diani 2009). In other words, 'the secret of movement access to the media is to engage in colorful protest' (Rochon 2000: 180).

As discussed above, the claimed leaderlessness of the Occupy movement and its structure is one of its unique characteristics. Many other social movements, especially since the 1960s, have advocated prefigurative politics with the aid of participatory democracy, decentralisation and a horizontal structure. The Occupy movement sought to exercise an egalitarian and democratic society through its practice of participative democracy. However, participative democracy has been widely critiqued. Whilst the Occupy movement is clearly rooted in this tradition, its morphology relies on small groups of activists rather than thousands of members. Moreover, while an organisation is new and vital, consensus decision making may be valuable in encouraging unity. In the longer run, however, consensus may exert a conservative influence, stifling the prospects for organisational change (Lakey, cited in Cornell 2011: 47). Another shortcoming of decentralised movements based on participatory democracy is that it prevents many people from putting all their talents to work for the organisation because of a fear of being seen as seeking to take charge or showing off. On the other hand, if people contribute all their talents despite such concerns, their work may not be recognised because of the leaderless organisational structure, making them feel unappreciated. Another shortcoming of the Occupy movement is that, despite claims by the group that it was leaderless, specific people still ended up making the decisions (Cornell 2011). However, these recent social movements have sought to do much more than merely question existing structures of democratic governance; they have also slowly built alternative structures and procedures,

replacing representative democracy with participatory systems (Maeckelbergh et al. 2014).

Returning to the research questions of this thesis regarding the means and nature of coordination, given the leaderlessness of the Occupy movement and its rejection of traditional leadership, there is a need to focus on the process of leadership and sensemaking in Occupy's SMO. This thesis investigates leadership in this so-called leaderless movement in order to address the research questions. Applying organisational studies research to social movements is not unprecedented, as several other studies have previously done so, as illustrated in the next chapter.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has located the Occupy movement historically within the social movements of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It has focused on how 'old' and 'new' social movements have differed in their basic political orientations and repertoires of protest.

While the Occupy movement has focused on economic inequality and struggle against the capitalist class, it has also incorporated repertoires closely associated with new social movements, such as sit-ins, occupation of physical spaces, and the use of alternative media. Another distinguishing feature is the use of powerful iconography and symbols. The Guy Fawkes mask symbolises the leaderlessness and anonymity of the movement.

Researching these features raises important methodological questions. As argued in Chapter 4, these elements need to be viewed as part of a broader repertoire of protest that includes the occupation of physical space and extensive use of digital

media. Chapter 4 will explain how this thesis is informed by recent theorisations

of leadership and 'leaderlessness'.

Chapter 4: Leadership, Sensemaking and Social Movements

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 presented a socio-political and historical review of social movements from the mid twentieth century onwards, locating the Occupy movement historically among movements with similar goals, orientations and repertoires of protest. This set the scene for answering the research questions regarding how and in what forms members of a so called leaderless social movement coordinate with each other. The effects of social movements' repertoires of protest on their SMOs has also been highlighted. Examination of the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest will shed light on the impact of leadership on SMOs.

This chapter begins with a review of relevant leadership research literature. It discusses the foundation of the social construction of reality and how people make meaning in their everyday lives. This leads to the concept of leadership as a shared form of life (Kelly 2008) embedded in 'a socio-historical and collective meaning-making process, and negotiated on an ongoing basis through a complex interplay among leadership actors' (Fairhurst and Grant 2010: 173; see also Alvesson and Kärreman 2000). Given the significant role of SMOs' repertoires of protest, it is argued that the Occupy movement's collective meaning-making process relates to different modes of generating meaning. This highlights the concept of the multimodality of leadership, which helps clarify and analyse different modes that generate meaning in the movement's repertoire of protest. Finally, the social construction of space and time as different modes of generating meaning are discussed.

4.2 Leadership research

Although the Occupy movement does not favour the terms 'leader' and 'leadership', leadership research is used in this thesis to investigate the research questions, since the focus of interest is in forms of coordination adopted by a so-called leaderless movement in place of leader(s) and leadership. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the leadership concept can be used to investigate collective action and explore everyday organisational activities (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007). Leadership plays a significant role in transforming rejection of the status quo into collective action (Flew 2014). Thus, the leadership concept helps reveal mutual influences between individuals and groups (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007: 1355). Zoller and Fairhurst (2007) observe that, although Zald and Berger (1978) do not raise the concept of leadership in their discussion of SMOs, they note that, in order to achieve change, movements must be able to sustain conflict and create viable bargaining, for example by using symbols to create win–wins. Leadership communication may provide these functions (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007: 1352).

Leadership research can be categorised into two general perspectives. The first is mainstream leadership research that tends to focus on psychological aspects of leaders and how they treat their followers. Among the most well-known of these are trait theories (Jenkins 1947), behavioural theories (Fleishman and Peters 1962; Halpin 1957), contingency/situational theories (Fiedler 1964; Hersey and Blanchard 1969) and transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio 1990). The second perspective is more critical, focusing on leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon. These two perspectives differ in their ontological underpinnings. All mainstream leadership approaches fall under the umbrella of 'psychological leadership'. They tend to investigate leadership through the lens of

leader-followers and shared goals, referred to by Drath et al. (2008) as 'tripod ontology'. Psychological leadership research seeks to measure and evaluate leadership using various, mainly quantitative, tools such as questionnaires and survey methods. The quantitative nature of psychological leadership research has given rise to criticism. For instance, Lakomski (2005) argues that such studies are unable to differentiate between what respondents really believe about leadership and what they report in questionnaires. Another criticism of leadership psychology is that it tends to investigate and judge individuals, even when the ontological unit of analysis is a leader-member dyad, a group, or the whole organisation (Fairhurst 2007). Moreover, leadership psychology theories, such as trait, situational and contingency theories, take into account the 'essence' of the leader, the context or both, seeking one best way of leadership (Grint 2000). For instance, situational theories of leadership lack consistency regarding 'what counts as a "situation" and what counts as the "appropriate" way of leading in that situation that are interpretive and contestable issues, not issues that can be decided by objective criteria' (Grint 2000: 3). These criticisms have led scholars to take a step back and view the whole phenomenon through the lens of social constructionism. Rather than focusing on traits, behaviours and situations, this perspective focuses on the social construction of reality, and how the construction of self and society leads to traits, behaviours and situations. As Smircich and Morgan (1982: 258) suggest, 'leadership is realized in the process whereby one or more individuals succeeds in attempting to frame and define the reality of others'.

Appreciating leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon is in line with the standpoint of this thesis in two respects. First, there are no assigned leaders in the

Occupy movement; therefore, psychological leadership research cannot be employed. Second, the previously-mentioned ontological limitation of mainstream leadership research prevents the construction of a comprehensive account of leadership. In other words, mainstream approaches ignore the process of making meaning, which is of central importance to this study, given Occupy London's repertoire of protest. Therefore, leadership must be appreciated as a socially-constructed phenomenon.

Both old and new leadership theories still have advocates and have not been set aside with the passing of time, but the social construction of reality has opened up a new path to explore social processes in terms of what people do and how they construct their own realities in their everyday lives. Before examining leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon, the foundations of social constructionism are briefly outlined in the next section.

4.3 Social constructionism in social science

The predominant idea in social sciences, and particularly organisation studies, is that there is a reality 'out there' of which we become conscious and act into as individuals, which forms the basis of mainstream research and knowledge (Cunliffe 2008). The psychological or mainstream leadership research discussed earlier belongs to this category. However, growing disillusionment with many mainstream theories and methodologies has encouraged researchers to seek new ways of describing, analysing and theorising complex processes and practices of interest (Fairhurst and Grant 2010). One such new approach is a turn toward constructionism. Although the basic idea of social construction seems simple, it is actually profound: 'Everything we consider real is socially constructed. Or, more

dramatically, nothing is real unless people agree that it is' (Gergen and Gergen 2004: 10).

According to Hosking and McNamee (2006: 23):

> Social construction is not a theory that proposes particular techniques or methods for practice, but is more of a general orientation or thought style – a way of engaging with the world that centres on dialogue and multiplicity – an orientation that gives new meaning and value to ongoing and open dialogues.

Thus, social construction is the creation of meaning through collaborative activities (Gergen and Gergen 2004), and a central premise is that social realities are social achievements produced by people coordinating their activities. This is very different from the more common (often only implicit) narrative of psychological leadership research that 'reality' is singular, 'out there' and knowable by the individual mind through a combination of sense data and individual mind operations (Hosking and McNamee 2006: 25-26). In other words, 'reality is socially constructed and ... the sociology of knowledge must analyze the process in which this occurs' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 13).

Berger and Luckmann (1991) place the sociologist between the philosopher and the 'man in the street', who differ in their interpretations of the meaning of reality. The man in the street takes the concepts of reality and knowledge for granted and is not concerned about what reality is and what he knows unless asked to do so. On the other hand, philosophers must question taken-for-granted concepts and clarify the man in the street's perspective on reality and knowledge. Moreover, different societies have different concepts of what is 'real'. In other words, what

is real for a Chinese businessman may not be 'real' to a priest in the Vatican. Similarly, the 'knowledge' of a criminal differs from the 'knowledge' of a criminologist. In other words, 'Specific agglomerations of "reality" and "knowledge" pertain to specific social contexts, and … these relationships will have to be included in an adequate sociological analysis of these contexts' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 15). The 'sociology of knowledge' must deal not only with empirical variation in 'knowledge' in human societies, but also with the processes by which any body of 'knowledge' comes to be socially established as 'reality' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 15). Theoretical formulations of reality, whether scientific, philosophical or even mythological, do not exhaust what is 'real' for members of a society (Berger and Luckmann 1991). Therefore, it is important to investigate what people 'know' as 'reality' in their everyday lives in order to make sense of the world. In other words, 'common-sense "knowledge" rather than "ideas" must be the central focus for the sociology of knowledge. It is precisely this "knowledge" that constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 27).

4.3.1 The social construction of everyday life

In explaining the reality of everyday life, Berger and Luckmann (1991) use the first person singular to illustrate ordinary self-consciousness in everyday life: 'The reality of everyday life is organized around the "here" of my body and the "now" of my present. This "here and now" is the focus of my attention to the reality of everyday life' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 36). Ordinary people concentrate on the 'here and now' in their perceptions of everyday life. This 'here and now' encompasses everybody in the world with whom we interact and share experiences. The reality of everyday life would be impossible without constant

interactions with others in the social world. Berger and Luckmann (1991) call this intersubjectivity. People's 'here and now' is subjective, and intersubjectivity highlights the correspondence between different people's meanings of the world that allows the creation of a common sense of reality: 'Common-sense knowledge is the knowledge I share with others in the normal, self-evident routines of everyday life' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 37).

4.3.2 Social interaction in everyday life

People's notions of here and now are interdependent because of the nature of face-to-face interactions in which people are in a continuous interchange of expressivity toward each other, creating a here and now that is common to both individuals in the situation. The reality of everyday life is shared with others: 'the most important experience of others takes place in the face-to-face situation, which is the prototypical case of social interaction. All other cases are derivatives of it' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 43). People also produce objects, and these objects may influence other people: 'Human expressivity is capable of objectification, that is, it manifests itself in products of human activity that are available both to their producers and to other men as elements of a common world' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 49). Berger and Luckmann observe the importance of objectivation in everyday life. They argue that:

> The reality of everyday life is not only filled with objectivations; it is
> only possible because of them. I am constantly surrounded by objects
> that 'proclaim' the subjective intentions of my fellowmen, although I
> may sometimes have difficulty being quite sure just what it is that a
> particular object is 'proclaiming', especially if it was produced by men

whom I have not known well or at all in face-to-face situations (Berger

and Luckmann 1991: 50).

They illustrate this with an example of a knife embedded in the wall above one's

bed, which conveys someone's anger even without seeing the thrower. The knife

communicates the anger of the thrower to the person sleeping in the bed. All

objectivations are prone to be used as signs, even though they may not have been

originally produced with this intention (Berger and Luckmann 1991). According

to Berger and Luckmann (1991), signification, or the human production of signs,

is a special but crucially important case of objectivation: 'A sign may be

distinguished from other objectivations by its explicit intention [sic] to serve as

an index of subjective meanings' (Berger and Luckmann 1991: 50). In this vein,

signs and sign systems are objectivations in the sense of being intersubjectively

available beyond the expression of any one person's subjective 'here and now'

(ibid.). The Occupy movement's repertoire of protest and widespread use of

objects and different modes of generating meaning, especially the use of artefacts

such as Guy Fawkes masks, are particularly relevant to the context of this thesis.

The above discussion relates to Gibson's (1979) concept of agent–situation

interaction. He defines affordances as possibilities of action: potential uses of any

object arise from its perceivable properties in relation to how it is perceived by

an actor's capabilities and interests. For instance, a surface affords support for an

animal if the terrestrial surface is sufficiently flat and extended (depending on the

size of the animal) and if its substance is rigid (depending on the weight of the

animal). By the same token, Norman (2002) assigns affordances to artefacts. He

argues that '[a]ffordances provide strong clues to the operations of things. Plates

are for pushing. Knobs are for turning. Slots are for inserting things into' (Norman, 2002: 9). This argument is developed further in Section 4.4.1.

In summary, Berger and Luckmann (1991) observe three steps involved in the construction of reality, or three moments in which society is understood in terms of an ongoing dialectical process. First, externalisation recognises that society is a human product; second, objectivation views society as an objective reality; and finally, internalisation considers man as a social product. Only if these three moments are understood together can an empirically adequate view of society be maintained (Berger 2011). In other words, the social world is humanly produced in ongoing activity and routines (externalisation), but is nonetheless experienced as being objective, in that it affects our lives on an ongoing basis, and we must go out and learn about it (objectivation). We are socialised in the world as we interpret the meanings of events and others' subjectivities, and in doing so we take on the world, the identity of others and therefore our own place and identity (internalisation; Cunliffe 2008).

The social constructionism of reality has been widely used in organisation studies focusing on interactions between people and meaning making, as discussed in the next section.

4.3.3 Social constructionist approaches to organisation studies

Following the social constructionist approach, organisation studies scholars have adopted various approaches to research. Some scholars examine the objectivation of social reality by focusing on social facts, institutional practices and symbolic products (Jun and Sherwood 2007). Others focus on socially-constructed reality and sensemaking as a cognitive process (Weick 1995). Other approaches focus on

reality as a discursive product that influences its members (Deetz 1992), or consider social constructionism as a power-infused process to understand organisational dynamics (Phillips and Hardy 1997).

At an epistemological level, some focus on the process of construction, or how discourse and language operate to create meaning in practical contexts (Potter 1996). Others focus on social construction at the micro level, considering new ways of thinking about experience and sensemaking with the aid of narrative temporality (Cunliffe et al. 2004). As discussed earlier, this trend has also gained momentum in the leadership research field, with works on the new ontology of leadership (Drath et al. 2008), the negative ontology of leadership (Kelly 2013), relational leadership theory (Uhl-Bien 2006), leadership as a form of life (Kelly 2008), discursive leadership (Fairhurst 2007, 2008) and leadership as a process (Raelin 2011; Wood 2005). These are among various socially-constructed approaches to leadership, some of which relate to the standpoint adopted by this thesis, as elaborated in the next section.

4.4 Leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon

As already discussed, since leadership cannot be abstracted to traits, behaviours or situations, leadership scholars have started to perceive the phenomenon as a socially-constructed reality. In other words, leadership is no longer regarded as a universal truth or individual possession, but as a highly complex and ambiguous process shaped by the interactions and cultural and social norms of particular contexts (Kezar 2008). The limitations of psychological leadership research oblige critical leadership scholars to consider leadership as constructed through language and interactions between people (Smircich and Morgan 1982: 258). In

other words, leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon does not refer specifically or exclusively to the transformational, charismatic or visionary figures of transcendent leaders, nor does it focus entirely on the behaviours of followers; instead, leadership is a movement, an open and dynamic process (Wood 2005). Kerr and Jermier (1978) observe that one of the most profound contemporary trends in the social sciences is their increasing interest in and focus on language. In this sense, leadership can be categorised as co-constructed, a product of socio-historical and collective meaning making, and negotiated on an ongoing basis through a complex interplay between leadership actors (Alvesson and Kärreman 2000). This approach has been widely adopted in recent decades, giving rise to many non-specific definitions, underspecified constructs, and confusing methods, approaches and perspectives. As a result, how people talk about and analyse leadership using a social constructionist lens varies considerably (Fairhurst and Grant 2010).

As discussed earlier, social constructionists argue that taken-for-granted realities are produced from interactions between and among social agents (Fairhurst and Grant 2010). Most social constructionists believe that language does not mirror reality, but actually constitutes it (Astley 1985). In parallel with this, communication becomes more than a simple transmission process; it is a medium through which the negotiation and construction of meaning takes place (ibid.). In this vein, most constructionist leadership approaches concentrate on the abilities of both leaders and followers to make sense of and evaluate their organisational experiences (Fairhurst and Grant 2010).

Given the potential of leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon, Drath et al. (2008) go one step further in criticising psychological leadership research, arguing that a different view of leadership is required. Rather than the widely-accepted ontological view in terms of leaders, followers and shared goals (the 'tripod' ontology), they suggest focusing on a 'direction, alignment, commitment' (DAC) ontology. The essential elements of DAC are three leadership outcomes in a collective: direction entails widespread agreement on overall goals, aims and mission; alignment is the organisation and coordination of knowledge and work; and commitment is the willingness of members to subsume their own interests and benefits within those of the collective (Drath et al. 2008). In the tripod ontology, leadership theory essentially seeks to explain the characteristics of leaders and how they influence followers; whereas in the DAC ontology, leadership theory seeks to explain how people who share work in collectives achieve direction, alignment and commitment (Drath et al. 2008: 635). Uhl-Bien similarly emphasises the need to move away from traditional research on leadership that takes an entity perspective and examines behavioural styles, to an orientation taking a relational perspective, which views leadership and organisations as human social constructions that emanate from the rich connections and interdependencies between organisations and their members (Uhl-Bien, 2006: 655). She argues that the traditional entity orientation considers relationships from the standpoint of individuals as independent, discrete entities (i.e. individual agency), while a relational orientation starts with processes rather than persons, and views people, leadership and other relational realities as being made in processes. The relational perspective views leadership as a social reality, emergent and inseparable from context (Uhl-Bien 2006).

Kelly (2008) observes the multiplicity of language used in leadership and the importance of appreciating leadership as a shared 'form of life', drawing on Wittgenstein's original use of the term. In doing so, he refers to Ryle's (1949) suggestion that there is a tendency in leadership research to commit category mistakes, when things or facts of one kind are presented as if they belong to another: '[T]he logical type or category to which a concept belongs is the set of ways in which it is logically legitimate to operate with it' (Ryle 1949: 8). To illustrate how category mistakes are committed, Ryle uses the example of a foreign visitor arriving at Oxford or Cambridge wishing to see 'the University'. Having been shown some of the colleges, libraries, playing fields, museums, scientific departments and administrative offices, he then asks, 'But where is the University? I have seen where the members of the colleges live, where the Registrar works, where the scientists experiment and the rest. But I have not yet seen the University in which members of the university reside and work.' In other words, a categorical mistake is an ontological error that occurs when things or concepts from different groups are classified into categories that do not belong to those groups. Given Drath et al.'s argument regarding the DAC ontology, viewing leadership in terms of a tripod ontology rather than as a socially-constructed phenomenon is arguably committing a category mistake. Kelly (2008) states that many leadership scholars have committed category mistakes while investigating leadership, arguing that leadership cannot be studied directly. For the leadership researcher, not taking into account the potential multiplicity of language, meanings and actions raises the question, 'What is leadership?' (ibid.). Moreover, in considering leadership as a language game, Kelly (2008) argues that leadership must be explored not just in language use, but from the perspective of those who

use it, or as a 'form of life' in which actions have a reflexive quality. Forms of life constitute and temporarily stabilise the language games that describe them and make them sensible as forms of life (ibid.).

Kelly (2008) argues that if we are not sensitive to this subtle relationship between natural reactions, families of language games and forms of life, we may quickly and easily re-categorise leadership either as a distinct and essential form of language game or as an object existing independently in the world which is simply represented through language. Both moves lead to the category mistake of assigning a particular reality to leadership based on a representational view of language: 'The result is that leadership will continue to occupy that paradoxical space of Ryle's university in which leadership is both potentially real and knowable, but upon closer inspection just manages to slip out of sight' (Kelly 2008: 768).

Therefore, it is important to examine how these games take shape, how they are played, and what forms of life they produce, and in turn are produced and sustained through activity (Kelly 2008: 776). Kelly suggests that:

> Any concern with leadership-in-action, or leadership as an observable
>
> phenomenon, should include an appreciation of the shared forms of life
>
> and subsequent interpretive work that underpins the 'occasioning' of
>
> leadership for both the researcher and research participant. What is
>
> needed, therefore, are not more observational studies, longer periods
>
> in the field, or more detailed descriptions of supposed 'leadership
>
> work', but instead an interpretive approach that is sensitive to the
>
> production of and relationships between language-games. This

demands a serious consideration of the relationship between 'natural reactions', language-games and forms of life in the production of an organizational setting (Kelly 2008: 779).

Although Kelly's work is in line with the standpoint of this thesis, it tells little about how these forms of life are constituted in particular cases and what forms they take. Moreover, he says little or nothing about how these forms of life can be researched. This is a clear gap in the social constructionist approach to leadership research, which is addressed in answering the research questions of this thesis by investigating leadership as a form of life in the context of the Occupy movement. The people participating in the so-called leaderless social protest of the Occupy movement are a form of life, and there are various language games regarding the leadership and leaderlessness of the movement and how members organise themselves, given the movement's repertoire of protest played out through the natural reactions of participants willing to follow the rules of this interaction.

Sutherland et al. (2014) investigate leadership in leaderless movements by considering actors in leadership who manage meaning and define reality in their groups. However, they fail to include non-human actors in the process of making meaning. The Occupy movement's repertoire of protest exhibits several items relating to the form of life and how people cooperate with each other in the movement. There is thus a need to focus on the process of meaning making afforded by all these different material cultures, artefacts and physical and virtual spaces as part of the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest that generate meaning in collective action in different forms and at different times. In other words, it is necessary to examine how people who share work in collectives produce direction, alignment and commitment toward their shared form of life.

Other aspects of making meaning in leadership research must also be considered, such as aesthetics and the use of objects and physical and virtual spaces, as discussed later in this chapter.

Several other modes must be included in making sense of the concept of leadership. Organisational life cannot be evaluated simply by applying rationality (Hansen et al. 2007). People in organisations bring their minds, thoughts, bodies, emotions, feelings and personal experiences to their work, and it is thus possible that, by neglecting emotions and aesthetics in organisations and only taking rationality into account, decision makers may ignore other dimensions, leading them to make wrong decisions. According to Hansen et al. (2007: 549), '[A]esthetics relates to felt meaning generated from sensory perceptions, and involves subjective, tacit knowledge rooted in feeling and emotion. … If we could reduce every decision to a rational model, we would not need leaders at all'. They also highlight the importance of aesthetics in organisations, and especially in leadership, suggesting that:

> instead of attempting to predict objective outcomes of leadership phenomena such as charisma and authenticity, aesthetic leadership focuses on how these phenomena are produced and emerge, and attempts to describe the subjective felt meanings as experienced by leaders and followers (Hansen et al. 2007: 552).

As outlined in the previous chapters, many repertoires of protest use aesthetics to resist power. Moreover, drawing on the concept of forms of life, Winner (2010) refers to the claim that:

the machines, structures and systems of modern material culture can be accurately judged not only for their contributions to efficiency and productivity and their positive and negative environmental side-effects, but also for the ways in which they can embody specific forms of power and authority.

In this vein, Zoller and Fairhurst (2007) refer to:

the dramatic flourishes associated with the speaking of truth to power [that] are often physical or material such as gestures (for example, the peace sign, arms raised, or other expressions of solidarity), chanting that gains in momentum and volume, sloganeering through signage, apparel changes (for example, arm bands, t-shirts, or buttons), and the like (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007: 1349).

These were all used in the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest.

The above discussion reveals an important limitation of leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon – its mono-modality. Although appreciating leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon in general, and as a form of life through the DAC ontology in particular, provides a better understanding of the phenomenon, this scenario leadership research is still mono-modal and cannot offer a comprehensive account of the object of inquiry. Focusing only on language or interactions between people limits the research to just one mode through which leadership is scrutinised, without considering other modes that generate meaning. From the standpoint of this thesis, leadership is appreciated as a form of life embedded in different modes at different times and in different settings. As Pye argues, 'if we have spent so many years in search of the Holy Grail and still not

yet found it, then perhaps we may be searching for the wrong thing' (Pye 2005: 32). This is in line with Fairhurst and Grant's (2009) argument that constructionist leadership researchers must now choose either to focus on mono-modal language or to introduce 'aspects of the material and/or institutional' into explanations of leadership. They argue that, throughout the history of leadership research, the bias has been toward the former, although more recent work is increasingly moving toward the latter. This view has gained in popularity in recent years. For instance, Taylor and Van Every (1999) insist that other actors must be considered apart from human agents in order to gain a coherent account of the object of inquiry. In proceeding with the belief that non-humans never acted or never added anything that was sociologically relevant, one aspect of analysis will automatically be foreclosed (Sayes 2014). Moreover, the social construction of reality is particularly apparent in the influence of nonmaterial concepts on human ways of operating and being in the world (Ladkin 2010). Leadership must thus be considered as a form of life consisting of various natural reactions and language games that generate meaning through the affordance of different modes.

Therefore, there is a need to appreciate more critical approaches to leadership and consider new potentialities for leadership research (Alvesson and Spicer 2012; Kelly 2013). Appreciating leadership as a multimodal phenomenon will help to avoid committing Kelly's (2008) categorical mistake. This is important in the context of this research on the Occupy movement's repertoires of protest, which examines different modes of generating meaning used by Occupiers during their protest.

4.4.1 Leadership as a multimodal concept

O'Halloran and Smith (2012) claim that multimodal studies 'apply existing generalisations (of theory, description, methodology) to the exploration of specific multimodal phenomena, sets of texts or contexts in order to cast new light on those domains'. In other words, multimodality seeks to shed light on 'possibilities for recognizing, analyzing and theorizing the different ways in which people make meaning, and how those meanings are interrelated' (Jewitt 2013). According to Bezemer and Kress (2008: 171), a mode is 'a socially- and culturally-shaped resource for making meaning'. In this context, image, text, layout, speech and moving images are examples of different modes that create meanings. Moreover, with regard to the importance of multimodality in social science, Norris (2004) argues that multimodality 'steps away from the notion that language always plays the central role in interaction, without denying that it often does' (Norris 2004: 3). Multimodality thus considers other modes apart from language that have the potential to contribute to meaning. Each mode has 'different meaning potentials … to realize different kinds of communicative work' (Jewitt 2013).

Jewitt (2013) refers to a designed selection of modes as multimodal ensembles. As she argues, multimodal ensembles draw attention to the agency of the signmaker, who pulls together the ensemble within the social and material constraints of a specific context of meaning making. Therefore, multimodal ensembles can be seen as 'a material outcome or trace of the social context, available modes and modal affordances, the technology available and the agency of an individual' (Price et al. 2013: 255). Modal affordances relate to the potentialities and constraints of different modes (Jewitt 2013):

> ... the term 'affordance' is not a matter of perception, but, rather, is a complex concept connected to both the material *and* the cultural, social and historical use of a mode. Modal affordance is shaped by how a mode has been used, what it has been repeatedly used to mean and do and the social conventions that inform its use in context (Jewitt 2013: 254).

As a result, not only must different modes be taken into account in studying a multimodal ensemble, but also the specific work of each mode and how each mode interacts with and contributes to the others in order to make meaning must be considered. Questions must be answered as to which modes must be included or excluded, the function of each mode, how meanings have been distributed across modes, and so on (Jewitt 2013: 255).

Given the multimodality of leadership, Riley (1988) argues that it must be appreciated with a sense of the aesthetic, which requires 'forms of analysis sensitive to style, to the creation of meaning and to the dramatic edge of leadership'. He argues that to 'use [leadership] terms as mere categories of behaviours runs the risk of stripping them of this power and moving them to the level of the mundane – plain-label symbols' (Riley 1988: 82). In other words, leadership cannot be captured simply in terms of categories of behaviour, as discussed earlier regarding the limitations of leadership psychology and mono-modal studies of leadership. This thesis aims to consider different modes of the leadership ensemble that create shared forms of life, and to examine their affordances as part of the process of meaning making in collective actions where there is claimed to be no leader.

First, the process of meaning making must be considered comprehensively. Given the standpoint of this research that leadership is a socially-constructed phenomenon, an interpretive account must be employed to investigate it. Moreover, as the social construction of leadership stems from the social reality of everyday life (Berger and Luckmann 1991), in order to explore these meanings, sensemaking is used as a more inclusive form of inquiry drawing on 'other crucial elements of everyday life in organisations which are overlooked by much of the leadership literature' (Pye 2005: 37). Since Occupy was a collective action, collective sensemaking must be examined. Sensemaking can be applied to artefacts and socio-material objects in organisational settings, and is thus a useful method to employ in this research, given the Occupy movement's use of physical and virtual spaces and artefacts. Hence, the sensemaking process reveals much more clearly what is going on in organisations, as reflected and discussed in Chapter 5.

Given the previous discussion of the affordance of different modes of leadership and the Occupy movement's use of physical and virtual space as free spaces, as well as the role of space in the process of sensemaking, the next section briefly introduces space and time as socially-constructed phenomena.

4.5 Space, time and leadership

'Space and time are always a primary means of both individuation and social differentiation' (Harvey 1990). Sociologists and geographers have studied the role of space and time in human social behaviour and organisation on different scales varying from individuals to societies (Raper 2000). The definition of spatial units as administrative, legal or accounting entities determines fields of social

action that have wide-ranging impacts on the organisation of social life (ibid.). Thus, 'each social formation constructs objective conceptions of space and time sufficient unto its own needs and purposes of material and social reproduction and organizes its material practices in accordance with those conceptions' (Harvey 1990: 419).

Many studies of space prior to the 1970s were based on positivist principles. This view 'reduced the concept of space to questions of distance and distribution, and the aim of geography to distinguish purely spatial effects on distributions' (Thrift 1983). Human geographers and sociologists subsequently began to consider a social theory of space and time (ibid.). In this vein, social and political scholars, especially those influenced by Marxism and structuralism, started to redefine the concept of space as a socio-political phenomenon. Lefèbvre led with his influential book, *The Production of Space*, in which he argues that 'not so many years ago, the word "space" had a strictly geometrical meaning: the idea it evoked was simply that of an empty area. Therefore, to speak of "social space" would have sounded strange' (Lefèbvre 1991). The strength of Lefèbvre's accounts of social space lies in a refusal to separate materiality, representation and imagination or to privilege one over another (Harvey 1989). To understand space as a social phenomenon, it must be freed from the tendency to regard it as abstract and neutral. In other words, space is more than an abstract and neutral framework filled with objects (Clegg and Kornberger 2006). 'Human and non-human actors constitute the experience of space through their forms of occupation, activity and movement as much as they are constituted through those spaces that enable and restrict certain events' (ibid.). Therefore, 'we constitute space through the countless practices of everyday life as much as we are constituted through them' (Hillier 2007). In this

regard, it might be argued that space is a process (Hernes et al. 2006). A recursive view of space implies seeing space as existing through its production and reproduction (ibid.). Space both shapes and is reshaped by action and interaction.

With regard to the social dimension of space, Smith (2010) argues that 'the relativity of space [is] not a philosophical issue but a product of social and historical practice' (Smith 2010: 107). Harvey explains this in terms of a conversation between an economist and a geologist about the time horizon for optimal exploitation of a mineral resource. The former holds that the appropriate time horizon is set by the interest rate and market price, whereas the latter has a very different conception of time, that it is the obligation of every generation to leave behind a proportion of any resource to the next. There is no logical way to resolve this argument. It is resolved through sheer strength (Harvey 1990). In this regard, Harvey (1990: 421) argues that 'What separates the environmental movement (and what in many respects makes it so special and so interesting) is precisely the conception of time and space which it brings to bear on questions of social reproduction and organization'.

The social construction of space has gained momentum in organisation studies, because of its meaning making and its relationship with power (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). The next section will discuss different dimensions of space in organisation studies relevant to this thesis.

4.5.1 Space and organisation studies

Chanlat (2006) argues that spatiality enters into the world of management as an element of systems of meaning. He summarises organisational space in terms of

seven dimensions: divided, controlled, imposed and hierarchical, productive, personalised, symbolic and social.

On the divided dimension, there is a double division in every organisational space, between internal and external worlds on the one hand, and within the organisation itself on the other. This is less obvious nowadays, especially in virtual organisations, than it was in the past (Chanlat 2006). Each organisational space is to some extent controlled in different ways, such as visual, for example through closed-circuit television, or distant, or electronic, as when a manager remotely controls employees (Chanlat 2006).

The third dimension, organisational space as an imposed and hierarchical space, relates to power in organisations and how the hierarchy can be used. Every organisation is more or less hierarchically divided, and each hierarchy is visible in space. The location of an office, its size, the number of windows, the type of furniture and the decoration generally relate to the status associated with the person (Chanlat 2006). Indeed, this aspect also relates to the culture of the organisation, the nature of the work, the philosophy of management, and the regional or the national cultures (ibid). This may then result in architectural power in civil societies (Muetzelfeldt 2006), where authority is materially manifested through architectural power. Organisational space provides material frames, carries meanings, and supplies resources for organisational players to exercise collegiality without undermining their authority (ibid.). The physical arrangement of a seminar or meeting is an example of architectural power. Such arrangements invite some types of conduct and discourage others. Organisational space and power are therefore mutually related. As Foucault argues, 'Space is

fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power' (Foucault 1984: 252).

The fourth dimension of organisational space as productive space relates to the fact that formal organisations are defined as goal oriented: in an organisational setting, personnel produce goods or services to fulfil their goals. Productive space will differ according to the nature of the organisation, its outputs and objectives (Chanlat 2006).

In terms of organisational space as a personalised place, it may be argued that humans have been territorial beings throughout history. Workers and employees thus invest the workplace with personal meaning, trying both to live in it and transform it (Chanlat 2006). Therefore, Chanlat argues that closing a plant may be difficult not only for socio-economic reasons but also for spatial ones. People may lose their social and personal inscription in a space that simultaneously contributes to the identity that others assume belongs to the people in question (ibid.).

Organisational space as symbolic relates to the culture of an organisation. Chanlat argues that 'the sense of culture feeds the organisational identity, spatial configuration, and aesthetics, which, together, participate to create the symbolic universe of the organisation' (Chanlat 2006: 20). For this reason, the spatial forms, architecture, aesthetics and materials of buildings, offices and plants are full of meaning. The organisational space contributes to the symbolic representation not only of the personnel, but also of the people outside, such as clients, passers-by, competitors and suppliers. Therefore, it may be argued that 'space is an emblem, an icon, which produces the organisation, contributing to the universe of

meanings that encode the organisation' (Chanlat 2006: 20). In other words, representational spaces are dominant (Dobers 2006). They overlay physical space, using it symbolically rather than physically. Representational spaces involve the production of space in interaction with time, which constructs meaning (ibid.).

The last dimension is organisational space as social. Every organisational space is a social milieu (Clegg and Kornberger 2006). The division of labour, organisational culture and other factors such as power relationships between different social actors structure organisational space. Any space therefore reveals something about the sociology and anthropology of the organisation itself, and each organisation can be understood according to a spatial reading. In the context of the above discussion, the meaning of spatiality implies social relations. It develops power, which reveals itself in spatial arrangements.

All of the above dimensions will be reviewed in Chapter 9 to identify different modes of meaning making in the Occupy movement and the form of life that members of the movement adopted in their occupation of physical space. However, given Occupy's repertoire of protest, the use of Internet-based and digital media in virtual space had a major impact in several phases of the movement, from the initiation to the post-latency phases. The next section considers this virtual space.

4.6 Virtual space

The existence of a meaningful public sphere today depends not only on physical space, but also on accessible communication technologies and institutions that create an intermediate space to extend the discourse beyond face-to-face

interaction. Crang et al. (1999) unpack the concept of virtuality into four conceptual dimensions – simulation, complexity, mediazation and spatiality – through which empirical diversity is seen: 'Virtuality, then, is not just something which operates through and across space. It is at its heart a spatial phenomenon' (Crang et al. 1999: 12-13).

Appreciating virtual space as a form of space helps to integrate various communication technologies into current vocabularies and ways of thinking (Markham 1998). We use the real to juxtapose nature and technology, referent and sign, and online and offline, to split our understanding of the world into such categories. However, Markham (1998) argues that everything that is experienced is real, whereas everything that is not experienced is not experienced. Real becomes a double negative: simply put, when experiences are experienced, they cannot be 'not real'. In a broader sense, terms such as 'real', 'not real' and 'virtual' are no longer valid or meaningful as definitions of experiences, because experiences are not easily separated into binary oppositions. Moreover, regarding the current importance of the use of online spaces, Fairhurst and Cooren (2009) observe that it is fascinating how, in the virtual worlds of ubiquitous computer screens, human actors are able to be present in a physical space and at the same time are able to create a sense of physical presence in cyberspace, a sense of 'being there' in a virtual world. Thus, in today's new media literature, the term 'presence' and its derivatives, such as 'telepresence', 'mediated presence' and 'virtual presence', attract considerable attention (ibid.). According to Ropo et al. (2013), materiality is not only objective, but may also be an experienced, imagined or social construction. This relates to Berger and Luckmann's (1991) concept of 'here and now'. The employment of virtual spaces with the aid of digital media can

and has transformed individuals' here and now. In broadening the concept, Kivinen (2006) claims that virtual space relates to Lefèbvre's 'lived spaces of representations' or 'representational space': 'virtual space is a space that is lived by its users, it is material and real, and yet it does offer a challenge to the imagination. This virtual space is not out there for us to find, but it is constructed by technology and social practices in action' (Kivinen 2006: 167). She asserts that 'the Internet is a space, which is different every time we enter it as we are co-constructing the space as we log on to the net' (Kivinen 2006: 164).

Thus, 'the three theoretical streams of public – the spatial, the media and networked – can be brought together in a reconsideration of contemporary publicness' (Tierney 2013: 37). As a result of the shared aspect of production, digital media cannot be understood as something separate from everyday physical space. Online publics are mutually constituted as an embedded feature of everyday social practices in the physical world. Therefore, space is neither permanent nor fixed. As space is reflexive and relational and a socially-constructed phenomenon (Smith 2010), human operations are not limited, but always have the potential to recreate and redefine a pre-existing spatial order. Social media are a 'mutual process in which structural media and human actions coproduce each other' (Tierney 2013); a chain of circumstance connects the two. In other words, 'the existence of a meaningful public sphere today depends not only on physical space but also on accessible communication technologies and institutions that create an intermediate space to extend the discourse beyond face-to-face interaction' (ibid.). In this regard, social media platforms give individuals agency to use social media as a public space (Tierney 2013):

> A Facebook page may emerge as a simple discussion forum, but as members begin to discuss events and their implications, as opinions are voiced and heard, a consensus of thought develops online. Plans and organizational efforts follow. People leave the confines of their screens, offices, schools, and homes and move into the streets to make their voices heard and presence known (Tierney 2013: 19).

The development of sensor and display technology moves telecommunication technology toward a tighter coupling of the body to the interface. The body is becoming present in both physical space and cyberspace. Therefore, both body and interface are in the process of adapting to each other continuously, a process of 'progressive embodiment' (Biocca 1997).

In this regard, given the now ubiquitous use of the Internet, Biocca (1997) introduces the idea of the cyborg. A cyborg is the interface of a physical body with technology. It can be combined with the progressive embodiment found in advanced forms of virtual environment technology as a form of cyborg coupling, or the body coupled with technological extensions. Use of cyborgs is increasing over time and is becoming more integrated into everyday life. For instance, miniaturisation, ubiquitous computing and wearable computing or smartphones are some examples of such coupling. Biocca (1997) calls this coupling 'the cyborg's dilemma': as digital interfaces become more human in adapting to the human body and mind, the more adaptive the interface, the more humans embrace it, thus becoming more unnaturally human or cyborg in nature (Fairhurst and Cooren 2009). Biocca's paper was published in 1997, since which time there has been a revolution in new media aided by digital technology. The genesis of smartphones and tablets, and ease of access to the Internet have all

occurred in the new millennium, which has also led to the emergence of new media such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr, extending Biocca's argument. Progressive embodiment may be part of a larger pattern, 'the cultural evolution of humans and communication artifacts towards a mutual integration' (Biocca 1997: 1). Moreover, because cyberspace has been presented as a qualitatively new space, it is seen as providing new opportunities to reshape society and culture. This cultural evolution can be seen among those who seek to achieve personal integration using the Internet and new media platforms or blogs. This integration with the Internet using various means of connectivity has been a salient issue in social movements' recent repertoires of protest, as elaborated in Chapter 2. This is a potential mode for consideration in investigating leadership, as it has agency and affordances in generating meaning. The affordances of digital media will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has outlined ways in which research questions relating to the 'leaderless' properties of contemporary social movements can be viewed through an interpretative lens. It has highlighted the need for research showing specific ways in which protesters coordinate their meanings, using space (mediated through symbols), time (mediated through social processes) and artefacts and materials (non-human objects) as resources for their sensemaking. Building on Sutherland et al. (2014), the chapter has also argued that the London Occupy movement can be understood as an ensemble of symbolic meanings and communicative political actions that allowed activists to mobilise and develop a 'multimodal' repertoire of protest.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters, and particularly Chapter 2, highlighted the need for a new approach to leadership research, leading to a proposal that one of the best approaches to tackle the research questions is to appreciate leadership as a form of life. This demands consideration of leadership as a multimodal concept in order to provide a comprehensive account of it, given the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest. This section outlines and evaluates the research design for this thesis.

As discussed in Chapter 4, considering leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon and researching it as a form of life demands an interpretivist approach. This is because considering leadership as a form of life allows the researcher to examine processes of meaning making and interaction among leadership actors in their everyday lives as they socially construct reality among themselves. Moreover, in order to gain a comprehensive account of leadership, it must be considered as a multimodal phenomenon, in light of the Occupy movement's repertoires of protest that enabled people to make meaning through objectivation (Berger and Luckmann 1991).

The research questions of this thesis are:

Q1: How is 'leadership' understood and enacted within leaderless groups? How is leadership performed in the absence of individual leaders?

Q2: How do members of the Occupy movement coordinate without leaders?

Q3: What form do coordination and organisation take in the Occupy movement?

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to address the gaps identified in previous chapters. It begins by outlining the ontological and epistemological standpoints of the thesis. The chosen methodology, research design and research methods are then discussed, and the method of analysis is justified. Finally, given the nature of the research, a section on reflexivity is included, acknowledging the impact of the researcher on the research process and resulting findings.

5.2 Ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the research

According to Morgan and Smircich (1980), the first step in selecting a methodological approach is to clarify fundamental assumptions regarding ontology, epistemology and human nature. These assumptions provide the grounds for social theorisation, captured metaphorically in ways that define different epistemological and methodological positions (Morgan and Smircich 1980). Social scientists hold various views about human beings and their world along an objectivist–subjectivist continuum (ibid.). Objectivist assumptions perceive reality as a concrete given, external to individual behaviour, and knowledge as similarly 'real', in the sense of having observable and measurable regularities, laws and patterns that feed into the positivist epistemology (Cunliffe 2011). In contrast, subjectivist assumptions view reality as a product of the human mind. Subjectivists believe that humans are autonomous, give meanings to their surroundings and are creative; that knowledge is personal and experiential; and therefore that research must explore individual understandings and subjective experiences of the world, feeding into an interpretivist epistemology (Cunliffe 2011). Researchers must choose between objectivist approaches focusing on structures, actions, behaviours, systems and/or

processes *per se*, and subjectivist approaches focusing on how people give meaning to, interact with and construct their world. Such choices influence whether a quantitative or qualitative, positivist or interpretive, structure or agency focus is adopted.

As discussed in Chapter 4, this thesis appreciates leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon, seeking to make sense of the different modes of generating meaning within the Occupy movement that enable other forms of cooperation and organisation within it. This enacted process of sensemaking is a product of the subjective and intersubjective experiences of members of the movement who cooperate with each other to create and sustain the movement. Therefore, in the context of the social construction of leadership, this thesis adopts an interpretivist paradigm with a subjective ontology and interpretivist epistemology, as discussed briefly above.

5.3 Research design

To address the research questions, a case study research design was adopted to explore how members of the Occupy movement coordinate without leaders, and to identify forms of coordination and organisation in the movement. The Occupy London movement was chosen as a case study for this thesis. The case study approach is popular and widely used in business and management research (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). A case may be a single study, such as Born's study of managerial discourse in the BBC (Born 2003), a single location, such as Weick's (1993) study of the Mann Gulch fire, a person, such as Sharma and Grant's (2011) study of Steve jobs as charismatic leader of Apple, or a single event, such as the NASA space shuttle disaster (Marx et al. 1987). The most common use of

the term associates the case with a geographical location, such as a workplace or organisation (Bryman and Bell 2015). The difference between a case study and other research designs is that it focuses on a bounded situation or system, an entity with a purpose and functioning parts. The case is an object of interest in its own right, and the researcher aims to provide an in-depth explanation of it (Bryman and Bell 2015).

There are three types of case study (Stake 1995): intrinsic case studies, which are undertaken primarily to gain insight into a situation under study; instrumental case studies, which focus on using the case as a means of understanding a broader issue or allowing generalisations to be challenged (Stake 1995); and multiple or collective case studies undertaken jointly to explore a general phenomenon. However, the boundaries between these three types are often blurred (Stake 2005). This thesis uses an intrinsic case study to examine the research questions. However, as secondary data are drawn from the Occupy Wall Street movement, and as there are similarities in the repertoires of protest adopted by the so-called leaderless movements of 2011, there are also elements of an instrumental case study, broadening this study's contribution to knowledge.

5.3.1 Researching leadership as a multimodal concept

The aim of this research is to appreciate leadership as a form of life and consider the multimodality of the leadership phenomenon in order to provide a more comprehensive account of leadership. Appreciating leadership as a multimodal concept requires consideration of means of generating meaning other than interactions between people, such as the use of space, the body, clothing and technology (Fairhurst and Grant 2010). In order to grasp the multimodality of

leadership, as many modes as possible must be included in investigating leadership.

Before discussing the methodologies used in this research, the relevance of Sutherland et al.'s (2014) study of leaderless social movements should be highlighted. Their study emphasises leadership as a meaning-making phenomenon that must be studied with regard to the actors of leadership. However, they focus only on human actors and fail to consider non-human actors, or what Berger and Luckmann (1991) call 'objectivation'. Therefore, the aim of this study is to consider not only the human actors and their interactions, but also to take into account other modes of generating meaning that influence the leadership process. This relates to Fairhurst and Cooren's (2009) claim that a combined emphasis on human and non-human actors is needed to make sense of leadership research, as well as to the earlier argument that organisational processes are unlikely to be fully understood without examining the human/non-human interface and their hybrid relationship. Leadership is not limited to just one mode as, according to Kelly (2008), this would be committing a category mistake. Consequently, in order to gain a comprehensive view of the leadership ensemble, all constituent modes of the phenomenon that afford meaning must be taken into account. As discussed in Chapter 4, 'Modes are created through social processes, fluid and subject to change – not autonomous and fixed' (Jewitt 2013: 253). Therefore, in order to investigate a mode's affordance, the researcher must build on the notion of meaning as choice and the concept of meta-functions, or the functions of that mode in particular settings rather than only the functions that it is assigned to do, in order to map the meaning potentials of the mode. As Jewitt (2013) argues, this enables the mapping of the potential of modal resources to

articulate content, interpersonal and textual or organisational meanings in an artefact or interaction.

Norris (2014) defines interaction from the point of view of multimodal analysis. In her view, the term 'interaction' refers to any action that an actor performs to communicate a message. She introduces two notions, 'modal density' and 'modal configuration'. The former relates to the intensity with which higher-level actions are constructed. Norris (2004) suggests that in multimodal interaction analysis, the obvious must be questioned. In other words, every time we know what is going on, we ask why and how. This concept helps the researcher to investigate the construction of simultaneous higher-level actions. The second notion, modal configuration, refers to hierarchical, equal or connected relationships between modes that are at play in a given moment of a higher-level action. This notion enables the researcher to investigate the hierarchical positioning of various modes within a higher-level action and to compare these with other higher-level actions. In other words, modal configuration is a concept that investigates how interacting modes are structured in relation to each other (Norris 2014).

In order to investigate leadership in the Occupy movement while taking into account its multimodality, it is necessary to identify the various modes of the leadership ensemble that make meaning in the movement, especially when there is no assigned leader. These modes will be grasped by focusing not just on the movement as whole, but on the movement's repertoire of protest in different phases. This also relates to Jewitt's (2013) claim that, in multimodal studies, all modes play a partial role in making meaning. Identifying different phases in the chronology of the Occupy movement will enable different modes to be taken into

account in studying the leadership ensemble, as well as the specific work of each mode and how each mode interacts with and contributes to the others. As indicated in Chapter 4, sensemaking was chosen as an appropriate method to identify modes and investigate the process of sensemaking in these modes. This method enables the researcher 'to construct, filter, frame, create facticity, and render the subjective into something more tangible' (Weick 1995: 14).

Allard-Poesi (2005) suggests two alternative approaches to sensemaking. The postmodern approach invites researchers to engage against their own sensemaking process to uncover the precarious, undecidable character of sensemaking in organisations, while the pragmatist/participative approach encourages researchers to engage in sensemaking with members of the organisation under study and thus fully recognise socially-constructed aspects of sensemaking activities. In line with the adopted paradigm of this thesis, and the interpretevist epistemology of this research, the latter approach was chosen.

Other leadership scholars have also employed sensemaking in their studies. For instance, Patriotta (2003) uses sensemaking to investigate the 'life world' of organisations and capture the taken-for-granted stream of everyday routines, interactions and events that constitute both individual and social practices in a pressing plant at Fiat Auto in Italy. Watson and Bargiela-Chiappini (1998) use sensemaking to investigate the tensions and dilemmas associated with the managerial roles of British and Italian personnel management magazines. Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991) employ sensemaking in a process of strategic change in a large public university to examine how the CEO's primary role in instigating the strategic change process might best be understood in terms of the emergent

concepts of 'sensemaking' and 'sensegiving'. In another study, Geppert (2003) compares sensemaking processes in multinational corporations (MNCs) to shed light on the contextual dimension (institutions, culture and politics) of the sensemaking process. These examples illustrate how sensemaking can be employed to analyse the vocabularies and narratives of leadership actors as sensemaking accounts, in which meanings are generated for the environments they enact, the identities and relationships they manage and the changes they foster (Fairhurst and Grant 2010).

The use of sensemaking in this research is also in line with other studies of social movements, bearing in mind Davis et al.'s (2005) contention that SMOs and organisational studies are twins separated at birth. Social movements actively make meaning, and at the same time defy established meanings. Social movements may be a particularly favourable site to privilege meaning making, because their activities 'foreground resistance to the dominant norms and institutions of society' (Kurzman 2008: 6).

The next section will focus briefly on sensemaking in organisations and collective sensemaking in the context of the research questions relating to leaderless forms of coordination of Occupy's members. This will clarify the rationale for choosing sensemaking to examine meaning making in the Occupy movement, considering not only the language and narrative roles in the sensemaking process, but also the artefacts and non-human agents in the movement's repertoire of protest.

5.4 Sensemaking in organisations

Berger and Luckmann (1991) challenge the notion of objective reality and instead emphasise the social construction of reality, paving the way for sensemaking-

related research. According to Maitlis and Christianson (2014: 57), 'Sensemaking is the process through which people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some other way violate expectations.' Vivid words draw attention to new possibilities, so organisations with access to more varied images will engage in more adaptive sensemaking than others with more limited vocabulary (Weick 1995). Sensemaking is more than interpretation, as it involves investigating events and employing frameworks to understand interactions between people (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). Weick (1995) argues that interpretation is like reading, in which one word is explained by another, whereas sensemaking is about authoring as well as reading, and about creation as well as discovery. In other words, sensemaking is about an activity or process, whereas interpretation may be about a process but is just as likely to describe a product. Other definitions position sensemaking as a social process that occurs between people, as meaning is negotiated, contested and mutually co-constructed (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). In this regard, Maitlis (2005) argues that sensemaking in organisations is 'a fundamentally social process' whereby 'organization members interpret their environment in and through interactions with each other, constructing accounts that allow them to comprehend the world and act collectively' (Maitlis 2005: 21). This is in line with the aim of this thesis to examine how meaning is generated by interactions between people, as well as between people and non-human objects such as artefacts and space.

Weick (1995) proposes seven properties of sensemaking, referred to as the 'sensemaking framework' (Mills et al. 2006). These are identity, retrospect, enactment, social contact, ongoing events, cues and plausibility. Weick (1995: 55) summarises these as follows:

Once people begin to act (enactment), they generate tangible outcomes (cues) in some context (social), and this helps them discover (retrospect) what is occurring (ongoing), what needs to be explained (plausibility), and what should be done next (identity enhancement).

Maitlis and Christianson (2014: 58) set these seven properties into the organisational cycle:

When organizational members encounter moments of ambiguity or uncertainty, they seek to clarify what is going on by extracting and interpreting cues from their environment, using these as the basis for a plausible account that provides order and 'makes sense' of what has occurred, and through which they continue to enact the environment.

In other words, sensemaking 'is triggered by cues such as issues, events or situations for which the meaning is ambiguous and/or outcomes are uncertain' (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). However, scholars have recently tried to use sensemaking as a tool for analysis and interpretation to diagnose and explain phenomena in ordinary situations (Paull et al. 2013).

5.4.1 Collective sensemaking

According to Boyce (1995: 109), 'Collective sense-making can be understood as the process whereby groups interactively create social reality, which becomes the organizational reality'. Much human activity in organisations is thus concerned with collective efforts to make sense. In this regard, 'when sensemaking is regarded as unfolding between individuals, intersubjective meaning is constructed through a more mutually co-constituted process, as members jointly engage with an issue and build their understanding of it together' (Maitlis and

Christianson 2014). For example, a jazz orchestra provides a perfect example of mutually-constructed meaning: 'members must listen closely to each other, take turns leading and following, and respond together in real-time to novel or unexpected performance' (Maitlis and Christianson 2014: 78).

Although some scholars have tended to emphasise the cognitive element of sensemaking, similarly to leadership research, more recently, organisational sensemaking is more often understood mono-modally as fundamentally concerned with language (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). However, understanding collective sensemaking in purely linguistic terms may provide only a partial account of the process (Stigliani and Ravasi 2012). This thesis recognises the need to investigate other modes of generating meaning apart from language in order to provide a comprehensive account of the object of inquiry.

With regard to appreciating other modes in the sensemaking process, in recent years, the study of metaphor has captured scholars' attention (Cornelissen 2005; Cornelissen et al. 2008), as has the use of symbols and signs and, more broadly, artefacts and emotion. This approach relates directly to the use of signs in the social construction of reality, and to the multimodality of meaning making in organisations, as discussed in Chapter 4.

In terms of the use of artefacts in the sensemaking process, scholars observe the importance of physical artefacts as cues in the social and physical environment of everyday interactions (Cornelissen et al. 2008; Gioia et al. 1994). Given Weick's (1995: 47) comment that 'emotion is what happens when an expected sequence of action is interrupted', artefacts may also fall into this category when considering an encounter with an artefact as a form of interruption to a previous

sequence of events. In this regard, Whiteman and Cooper (2011: 905) argue that 'material objects shape human interpretation and action, and this is a reciprocal process'. Physical artefacts express organisational values and influence constituent behaviour (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004). Artefacts arouse emotions and therefore have an impact on people's behaviour (Bitner 1992). Sensemaking of organisational artefacts may thus be expected to evoke emotion toward both the artefact and the organisation (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004).

Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) argue that emotions and artefacts are interconnected in sensemaking on three dimensions: instrumentality, aesthetics and symbolism: 'Instrumentality relates to the tasks the artefact helps accomplish, aesthetics is the sensory reaction to the artifact, and symbolism regards associations the artifact elicits' (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004: 671). Symbolism communicates a rich set of messages and may facilitate efforts to create brand names and images (ibid.). Organisational identity may also be constructed using the symbolism of artefacts as an element of corporate image (Bromley 1993; Fombrun 1996). Interpretations of artefacts may involve any or all of these three dimensions; they are complementary, so considering only one dimension would provide an incomplete understanding of how an artefact may be interpreted (Rafaeli and Pratt 2013).

Another recent tenet of sensemaking research is sociomateriality in the roles of place and space. This is particularly relevant to this thesis, given the role of physical space in the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest. Several studies have dealt with the importance of space and settings in ceremonies (Anand and Jones 2008) and other field-configuring events (Oliver and Montgomery 2008). In

this regard, Ornstein (1986) argues that symbols are a salient source of information used by people in forming their impressions of the psychological climate; in other words, the physical layout of an organisation arouses certain associations (Rafaeli and Pratt 2013). More fundamentally, Kellogg (2009) highlights the role of 'free spaces' (discussed in detail in Chapter 2) as small-scale settings that allow for interaction among reformers outside their daily work in the process of organisational change. She borrows the idea of free spaces from social movement theories, making sense of institutional change to explain processes that account for differences in the outcomes of two teaching hospitals. She also uses the term 'relational spaces', as a sub-set of 'free spaces', which covers not only isolation and interaction but also the inclusion and cross-positional collective building that occurs in such spaces as 'relational mobilisation' (Kellogg 2009).

Several scholars observe that the physical environment can be viewed as a sensemaking resource for both storing and distributing sense. For instance, in their study of the waterborne evacuation of Lower Manhattan on September 11, Kendra and Wachtendorf (2006) conclude that sensemaking was distributed across substantial geographic and organisational space. Other research focuses on ecological sensemaking, arguing that 'landscapes can impose material constraints on human action, and ecological processes unfold independent of humanity's social constructions' (Whiteman and Cooper 2011: 889). Thus, some leadership scholars appreciate the role of physical spaces (material places) in leadership research. For instance, Ropo et al. (2013) promote the idea of the embodiment of leadership through material places. They concentrate on the aesthetics and sensemaking process of material places in terms of leadership, and argue that considering such aesthetics in terms of sensemaking and embodied

experiences enables the researcher to understand the material nature of leadership embodied in material places. The relevance of this view to the current thesis is that it allows the leadership researcher to examine other modes of generating meaning, such as material places.

5.5 Choice of method

Sensemaking in organisations has been studied using established methods such as case studies, ethnographies and textual analysis with rich qualitative data, including interviews, observations and archival data, to illustrate the process of sensemaking (Maitlis and Christianson 2014). Participant observations also provide first-hand stories of researchers' own sensemaking experiences, as well as the observed sensemaking of others (Bechky 2006).

Interviews were chosen as the main method for gathering data for this research. This method should be preceded by the collection and analysis of historical documents to establish the chronology and identify key individuals and transition points in the process (Koivunen 2007). Therefore, semi-structured interviews were chosen to gather data from Occupy London's members, while secondary data were gathered from online platforms relating to the Occupy Wall Street and Occupy London movements.

5.6 Rationale for conducting interviews

According to Kvale (2007), interviews are a specific form of conversation in which knowledge is produced through interaction between researcher and interviewee. The underlying assumption of this method is that people have essential and specific knowledge about the social world that can be articulated through verbal messages (Liamputtong 2009). Qualitative interviews provide 'opportunities for

mutual discovery, understanding, reflection, and explanation via a path that is organic, adaptive, and oftentimes energizing', and enable researchers to explore complex but hidden or unseen phenomena (Tracy 2012: 132).

According to Kvale (2007), semi-structured interviews seek to understand themes in the lived daily world from the subjects' own perspectives. They help researchers to capture interviewees' thoughts, perceptions, feelings and experiences in the interviewees' own words (Taylor 2005). This method also helps researchers to make sense of the multiple meanings and interpretations of a specific action, occasion, particular location or cultural practice (Liamputtong 2009). In light of this, semi-structured interviews were chosen as a method to elicit understandings of the perceptions and feelings of members of the Occupy movement in the context of the research questions. This method would allow the application of these data to the lifecycle of the Occupy movement in order to identify any modes in the leadership ensemble, as transcripts of semi-structured interviews provide data on how 'ordinary people construct meaning in relation to a particular topic' (Willig 2013: 131). The choice of data source should also be informed by the research questions and the analytical approach (Willig 2013), which in this case helped triangulate the data from the semi-structured interviews with phases of Occupy's lifecycle. These data were then used to identify different modes that made meaning in different phases of the movement, and consequently their affordances in leadership.

The next section will discuss the practical issues faced during the interviews, which led to a change in the data-gathering strategy.

5.7 Practical (methodological) issues regarding interviews

Permission had been secured to conduct interviews with members of the London Occupy movement. However, for a variety of reasons explained below, attempts to conduct these interviews were not entirely successful. As discussed above, the first strategy for gathering data was to interview people from the Occupy movement. However, unfortunately, most Occupiers from the London Occupy movement refused to take part in the fieldwork for numerous reasons, some of which were explicitly stated, and others of which were only appreciated later.

A technical issue faced at that time was a two-month delay in securing ethical approval for the research due to administrative issues, such as considering the nature of the work in terms of the safety of both the research participants and the researcher. This meant that several opportunities to gain access to the Occupiers were lost. By the time access was gained to the field, the Occupy movement was in its latency phase, so many of the movement's actions were missed.

A more serious issue was the impression that, even if ethical approval had been received earlier, there would have been no opportunity to talk to most prospective interviewees. One reason they gave was that they were worried that the interview results might misrepresent their movement. This concern resulted from their previous experiences with mainstream media, making them reluctant to take part in the interviews as, in their view, the research would betray them. Not wanting to be interviewed, in itself, provided rich data on how the participants thought of their outside worlds, and indicated their impressions of the mainstream media, as discussed later in this thesis. They were assured that they would have the right to withdraw from the interview process whenever they

wanted to, and to review and disagree with any part of the transcribed interviews, and that those parts would consequently be removed from the transcriptions. However, this clarification was insufficient to persuade them to change their minds, and they insisted that they did not want to be interviewed.

The other reason they gave related directly to the research topics on leadership. Some Occupiers did not want to comment on, or even question, the leadership of their movement. It transpired that some of them hated the word 'leadership'. Several Occupiers were approached for interview, and most initially agreed, but once they knew that the research was about leadership, they immediately refused to take part.

Furthermore, when the Occupy members learned of the research focus on leaderlessness, they kept referring to the 'facilitators' of the movement as suitable interviewees to talk about the movement's leaderlessness and how they organised themselves without a leader. Predictably, when they were approached for interview, they also refused. Even when ethics and data protection issues, as well as their right to withdraw from the interview at any time and remove any parts of the transcriptions, had been clearly explained to them, they insisted that they did not want to be interviewed. Some said that it was not the first time a PhD student had wanted to conduct interviews. For instance, one Occupier said that several students 'came to Occupy just to have their data in one go and never look back again and then talk shit about Occupy'. Despite the researcher sharing his own interest and experiences, they were unconvinced that the interviews would not be harmful to the movement.

The final reason, deduced subsequently, related to interviews conducted with seven of the Occupiers. Once ethical approval had been received from the university, the fieldwork commenced immediately at the general assembly held in London, at the end of which the researcher approached people and talked with them about the research. Surprisingly, all 20 people approached agreed to be interviewed. Contact details were exchanged, and the interviews began the following week, with three participants on three different days. A further interview was conducted the week after, and three more were conducted in the first week of January 2012.

The procedure for all these interviews was the same. Participants were first contacted by phone, email or text message, depending on their previously expressed preference, and dates and meeting points for the interviews were agreed. All the interviews were conducted in London, as most Occupy London members were located in the capital. After the first seven interviews had been conducted, none of the others who had previously agreed were willing to be interviewed. It appeared that they were unhappy with the questions asked during the interviews, and they had decided in their meetings that no more interviews should be carried out. They remained unconvinced even after the ethical issues and right to redact the transcriptions had been explained to them. Other members of the movement were then invited to participate in the research, but no positive replies were received. It became clear that, in view of their claimed leaderlessness, they did not want to be interviewed about the leadership since they thought it was obvious that, as it was leaderless, there could be no need to examine the issue further. This will be discussed in greater detail later in this thesis.

A change of plan was thus required. Concerns and difficulties in obtaining data were discussed with the research supervisors, and a new plan was implemented to become involved in the Occupy movement's activities and meetings. The idea was to engage with their programmes and meetings, such as general assemblies, as the movement was open to everybody to comment and have their say on the topic under discussion. Windows of opportunity would then be sought to talk to members regarding the research questions, through informal conversational interviews. This turned out to be an effective strategy, as it enabled further data to be obtained for this research.

Spradley (1980) calls informal conversational interviews 'ethnographic interviews', suggesting that such interviews are emergent and spontaneous. This kind of interview is also referred to as 'creative interviewing' (Douglas 1976) or 'postmodern interviewing' (Fontana and Prokos 2007). Douglas (1976) states that unstructured interviews take place in the largely situational everyday world of members of society. Tracy (2012) recommends conducting informal interviews on occasions such as when people are waiting in a queue for coffee or during a lunch break, when they might welcome being interviewed to pass the time. This strategy was implemented in this research, talking to members of the movement while sharing lunch or queuing to get a cup of coffee. This was not easy to begin with, as most of the members were aware of the research and did not want to talk to the researcher, so in order to gain acceptance, it was necessary to earn their trust (Douglas 1976) by offering glimpses into the researcher's own life and interest in the Occupy movement. This was not difficult, as the initiation and the questions for this research resulted from personal interest in social movements and socio-political environments. In 1979, the researcher's own country had

witnessed a revolution that affected the lives of everybody in the region, sparking an interest in finding out what had led to the revolution, which led to a tense atmosphere followed by eight years of war with Iraq. In 2011, the Middle East witnessed uprisings in several Arab countries, now known as the Arab Spring. The researcher is from a Middle Eastern country and was aware of the history of that region, but the Arab Spring appeared strange due to its leaderlessness. There did not appear to have been any previous social movement without a leader in the history and culture of the region.

The Occupy Wall Street movement was subsequently inspired by the Arab Spring (see Chapter 2), and within weeks, it spread across the world, including to London. Once the Occupiers knew the researcher's story, they were better able to understand the motive for the research. However, this led to shared empathy rather than a willingness to be interviewed, justifying the strategy of becoming involved in their activities and meetings rather than asking them for interviews.

In addition to building trust among members of the movement, the researcher regularly took part in their seminars and workshops. For instance, in one of their economic group meetings, a facilitator talked about organising a Global Skills Exchange workshop in solidarity with other activists who were protesting against the upcoming G8 Summit in Dublin. She invited everybody to take part in this two-day workshop and to share their experiences and skills with other activists. The themes of this workshop were real democracy, assemblies and horizontal organising, economic, social, and political alternatives, strategies of resistance and action, and online platforms/resources/tools. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the researcher made a proposal to the workshop organisers to

present a history of leaderless movements, which was accepted and duly delivered. Following a successful presentation, the participants talked to the researcher during subsequent coffee and lunch breaks, especially at lunchtimes when they were supposed to share their lunch with others and create a friendly atmosphere to welcome even passers-by who happened to be around the green area. This strategy contributed significantly to their acceptance of the researcher's presence, enabling him to talk to them indirectly about the research questions during everyday conversations, rather than through structured interviews. This relates to Lofland et al.'s (2006) suggestion that an ethnographer's job is not only to observe participants in specific contexts and record field notes, but also to make use of informal and formal interviews. This strategy resulted in talks with 22 Occupy members in London, during which questions were asked indirectly so that they did not feel they were being interviewed or fear they might be undermining their movement.

In addition to the Global Skills Exchange seminar, other activities included participating in various sub-groups of the Occupy movement, such as an economic sub-group which focused on economic issues in the UK and around the world, as well as attending the movement's health and the safety group.

The data gathered from informal conversations and participation in their events exceeded expectations. Although it began as the only option, it proved to be successful, and richer data were gathered than would have been obtained simply from formal interviews.

5.8 Participants in the research

As previously mentioned, the interviewees were all based in London and were active in the Occupy London movement. Of the seven interviewed, three were facilitators of meetings and general assemblies, and four were members of the movement. A further 22 informal, conversation-based interviews were conducted with Occupiers during coffee breaks, lunchtimes and other free times. These lasted between 15 minutes and half an hour, and some conversations were continued in subsequent breaks. This allowed the participants to feel comfortable, and made the recording of data easier, allowing time to note down what they said. Among the people interviewed, some had university degrees, some were teachers, and some had a fairly good knowledge of economics. Others were students and artists who had been inspired by the Occupy movement, or veteran activists who had participated in several previous social actions.

This was thus a purposive sample that included people from different backgrounds with differing opinions, ensuring that the data were comprehensive and covered the opinions of most Occupy movement members. The sample's characteristics provided a relevant, broad and informative case to address the research questions (Gerson and Horowitz 2002) and were in line with Guest et al.'s suggestion that participants should be selected according to 'predetermined criteria relevant to a particular research objective' (2006: 61). For this research, participants were selected because they were part of the Occupy movement and remained active even after the eviction of the Occupy London movement.

5.8.1 Sample size considerations

There has been extensive debate regarding appropriate sample sizes for qualitative research projects (Guest et al. 2006). As mentioned earlier in this

chapter, the initial fieldwork did not go to plan, so a back-up plan was implemented. After the first seven interviews, a revised plan was implemented to gain people's trust and acceptance into the group. Participants were then asked indirect questions until the point at which the same answers had been given several times. According to Guest et al. (2006), this stage in data gathering is known as 'saturation', which occurs when the researcher reaches a point when further data add no new insights and no longer make any difference to the analysis. Morse (1994) argues that saturation is key to excellent qualitative work, as it directs researchers to finalise their sample numbers. Thus, in this case, saturation was reached when a sufficient number of answers to the research questions had been received to justify that the arguments were well grounded in the data.

5.9 Taking field notes

Field notes emerging from the researcher's own experiences and conversations with 22 Occupiers became the main source of data. Field notes became particularly important because the Occupy movement's members were wary of the project, preventing the use of any voice recording facilities to record conversations with them. Lagalisse (2010) observes that one challenge in researching social movements, especially more radical movements such as anti-capitalist ones, is 'a wariness among them that recordings and photographs evidencing their participation may be used against them if they were to fall into the wrong hands' (Lagalisse 2010: 22). This was exactly what happened in the current research, as the participants of the research were also talked about the conspiracies theory and their fear that the movement is watched or controlled by intelligence agencies, which led to a change in strategy. Notes were taken about

what the participants had said immediately after the conversations had finished, or sometimes during the conversations by writing down a few key words from the conversation to aid memory. The note taking involved a three-step process. First, key words were jotted down as a reminder of important parts of the conversation. Emerson et al. (2011) calls such keywords 'headnotes', and they enable the researcher to focus on 'what is significant or unexpected' (Emerson et al. 2011: 24) in order to document key events or incidents in a particular social world or setting. On some occasions, recording headnotes was insufficient, and it was necessary to record jottings, or a brief record of events and impressions captured in key words as quickly as possible (Emerson et al. 2011).

The second step was to write down most of the conversations shortly after the interviews, usually during the one-and-a half to two-hour journey home, expanding on the key words already jotted down in the first step of note taking. As many of the exact words of the day's conversations were recorded as possible. This step focused on recalling the conversations, using the headnotes and jottings, and setting the scene for the final step.

In the third and final step, the notes were reviewed the following morning to ensure that everything was in the right order and nothing was missing from the field note data. As jottings can be used to record emotions and experiences as well as general impressions and feelings, they were used to make sense of the data in a more contextualised way (Emerson et al. 2011).

Putting field notes into a written format requires considerable time, since the researcher tries to recall exactly who did and said what and in what order, and aims to put it all into words and coherent paragraphs (Emerson et al. 2011). The

three steps in writing up the field notes required almost six hours for each hour of conversation. As Emerson et al. (2011) state, writing up field notes also involves reading them and taking in the entire record of the field experience as it evolves over time. During this time, the researcher 'begins to elaborate and refine earlier insights and hunches by subjecting this broader collection of field notes to close, intensive reflection and analysis' (Emerson et al. 2011: 142).

5.10 Making sense of the data

According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), data analysis is the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations: 'Analysis entails classifying, comparing, weighing and combining material to extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns, or to stitch together descriptions of event into a coherent narrative' (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 201). In other words, data analysis 'involves taking constructions gathered from the context and reconstructing them into meaningful wholes' (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 333).

The first step in the process is to transcribe the data. A transcript is the result of the activity of transcribing by one or several persons (Kowal 2014). According to Green et al. (1997), transcription is a social, interpretive and political act; transcripts are partial representations, and the ways in which data are represented influence the range of meanings and interpretations possible.

Voice recognition software (Dragon Naturally Speaking) was used to transcribe the data gathered in this research, as transcribing the data manually would have been very time-consuming (Tilley 2003). As the software is not 100 per cent accurate, all interviews were listened to again to check the transcribed file and ensure that everything had been included without any misspelling or errors. This

re-listening process provided greater familiarity with the data, enabling thought and reflection on what had been gathered.

Coding is the first step in organising and making sense of the data following transcription. According to Charmaz (2006), coding is 'the process of defining what the data are about' (Charmaz 2006: 43), while Saldaña (2012: 3) states that 'A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data'. The data for this research consisted of interview transcripts, participant observation field notes, and secondary data from online platforms.

Coding is an interpretive task. It depends on the researcher's academic discipline, ontological and epistemological orientations, theoretical and conceptual framework, and even the choice of coding method itself. Liamputtong (2009) suggests that coding is an interaction between the researcher and the data, which leads researchers to ask different questions about their data, as a result of which they may be taken into unforeseen areas, or even raise new research questions. Moreover, Adler and Adler (1987) claim that researchers' level of personal involvement as participant observers, i.e. as active members during fieldwork, filters how they perceive, document and thus code their data. In addition, other issues must be taken into account, such as the types of interview questions and answers (Rubin and Rubin 2012) and the detail and structuring of field notes (Emerson et al. 2011), as well as the gender and ethnicity of participants and researcher (Behar and Gordon 1995), all of which may affect the coding procedure.

5.10.1 Codes and themes

In interpreting data, qualitative researchers code it and then conduct thematic analysis, clustering the data according to recurring themes and patterns (Paull et al. 2013). Once this phase of analysis is complete, researchers seek to interpret the data and build theory based on evidence. Themes emerge when a repeated pattern of meaning is found in the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). A theme is an outcome of coding, categorisation and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded (Saldaña 2012). Rossman and Rallis (2003) elaborate on the differences between codes and themes: a category is 'a word or phrase describing some segment of your data that is explicit, whereas a theme is a phrase or sentence describing more subtle and tacit processes' (Rossman and Rallis 2003: 282). The outcome of coding is to achieve a set of codes that help answer the research questions. Hence, the researcher's role is to employ coding to deconstruct, code and find links in the data (Liamputtong 2009).

5.10.2 Coding methods

The researcher must choose a coding method that suits the theoretical commitments of the research, which is a subjective issue. According to Patton (2002: 433), 'Because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach used will be unique'. Moreover, as the coding task is subjective, no one can claim final authority on the 'best' way to code qualitative data, because, in view of the aforementioned factors that affect coding, interpretations of the data will differ depending on which factors have been considered (Saldaña 2012).

An 'initial coding' method was chosen for this study, which allowed the qualitative data to be broken down into discrete parts and themes, examined closely, and compared to identify similarities and differences (Strauss and Corbin 1998). This

method can be used for almost all qualitative studies with a wide variety of data forms (Saldaña 2012). As Charmaz (2006) comments, the goal of initial coding is to remain open to all possible theoretical directions indicated by reading the research data. Some argue that this method is more suitable for interview transcripts than for researcher-generated field notes (Charmaz 2006), but Clarke (2003) stresses the need to examine non-human material elements of the social world, which will be found in field notes and artefacts and can be clarified using initial coding. This relates directly to the current research and its standpoint of appreciating leadership as a multimodal ensemble.

The next section discusses the ethics of this research and reflects on the decision to use leadership research to investigate a leaderless movement.

5.11 Ethics and reflexivity

Ethics are always a major issue in academic research because of the many abusive events in the history of research (Liamputtong 2009). Ethics can be defined as a set of moral principles that aim to prevent participants in the research from suffering negative consequences due to the actions of the researcher or the research process (Israel and Hay 2006). Ethics exist in actions and ways of doing and participating in research: 'Ethics are integral to the way we think about rigor and are intertwined in our approach to research, in the way we ask questions, how we respond to answers, and the way we reflect on the material' (Davies and Dodd 2002: 281). Christians (2011) argues that four ethical principles must be considered prior to and during qualitative research: informed consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy. Informed consent gives research subjects the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of

experiments in which they are involved. In other words, informed consent is defined as 'the provision of information to participants, about the purpose of the research, its procedures, potential risks, benefits, and alternatives, so that the individual understands this information and can make a voluntary decision whether to enrol and continue to participate' (Emanuel et al. 2000: 2703). Informed consent reduces the chance of deception in qualitative research, and participants are given assurance that the data will not be used against them.

The ethical principles of privacy and safeguarding emphasise the need to ensure the anonymity of participants (Christians 2011). In this regard, all personal data must be secured or concealed, and made public only behind a shield of anonymity (ibid.). The last principle, accuracy, focuses on ensuring that the data are accurate, as fabrications, fraudulent material, omissions and contrivances are both non-scientific and unethical (Christians 2011). All these principles help guarantee the wellbeing of participants in qualitative research and ensure that they are not harmed in any way. It is researchers' responsibility to ensure that participants are protected since it is they who ask the participants to take part in their research and intrude into their lives (Liamputtong 2009).

In light of these principles, it was crucial to obtain ethical approval from Essex Business School (EBS) for this research. This approval was sought and granted prior to conducting the field work. In the process of obtaining approval, an 'informed consent form' (Appendix 1) and a 'participant information sheet' (Appendix 2) were designed in order to secure participants' agreement to the research, assuring them that their opinions and views were in safe hands and that the data would not be used against them or against their will. The participant

information sheet was designed to share the research purpose with participants, using very simple English to make it easily understandable and self-explanatory. The information sheet clarified what the participants needed to do if they wanted to be interviewed, and what they would gain from the interview. Contact details were included at the end of the form so that, if they wanted to be interviewed, they could make contact to arrange an appointment. It also made clear the researcher's willingness to share the findings with them if they wished, and highlighted their right to withdraw from the research at any stage. If they wished to be interviewed, they were required to sign the 'informed consent form', indicating that they were aware of the purpose of the research and had chosen to participate.

The University is concerned not only with ethical considerations affecting participants, but also with the safety of its researchers in the field. Therefore, the risks of joining the Occupy London movement had to be stated, with an undertaking to minimise any such risks or dangerous situations. For instance, the fact that the Occupiers were protesting on the streets meant there was a possibility of being involved in police raids or disputes, so it was necessary to ensure that a safe distance was maintained so as not to endanger oneself. However, as Christians (2011) argues, ethics in qualitative research is not simply an internal matter. For instance, during the research process, the 'ethics of care' was considered, as suggested by Spicer et al. (2009), who emphasise that the position and account of the interviewees must be respected.

After receiving the ethical approval form, work began to conduct the interviews and implement other strategies that emerged during the fieldwork. However, as previously mentioned, problems with securing interviews with members of the

movement led a change in the data collection strategy. The fact that some people who had already agreed to take part in the research suddenly refused to do so raised awareness of political issues among the movement's members and the research topic made them wary of talking, leading them in some instances to state rudely that the research would ruin the Occupy movement for them. Direct participation in the group, as discussed earlier, gained the trust of participants over time through complex interactions.

It may appear contradictory to employ the concept of leadership to make sense of collective sensemaking processes amongst people who reject the term 'leadership'. As previously mentioned, leadership research has been used previously to investigate collective action (Zoller and Fairhurst 2007). However, the fact that the members of the movement rejected the term leader and claimed that their movement was leaderless made it more interesting to find out what was happening in place of leadership, what forms of coordination they adopted and how they organised themselves. Three different sets of participant data were triangulated, together with secondary data, to try to make sense of what people were saying they were doing, and what they were thinking they were doing, as well as what other data and observations suggested they were doing. This relates to Weick's question in relation to analysing the sensemaking process: 'How can I know what I think until I see what I say?' (Weick 1995: 18). This research relied not just on what people said to make sense of their sayings, but on putting together what people said and did, and using a sensemaking process to make sense of data gathered using other resources, such as secondary data and literature reviews. In other words, how the researcher was positioned in this study affected the sensemaking process. Addressing the researcher's positionality

is vital because 'it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases just as we denounce the power structures that surround our subjects' (Madison 2011: 8). In other words, the researcher was accountable for his own research paradigm, position of authority and moral responsibility relative to representation and interpretation (Madison 2011). For instance, as mentioned earlier, secondary data were used in addition to participant observation to supplement the data obtained from semi structured and informal interviews. Hence, the account of sensemaking is the researcher's account, not that of the participants. In other words, the researcher's understanding of what was happening was based on various data, such as the literature review, semi-structured interview data, informal interviews, observations, the historical context and secondary data. The researcher imposed his own critical understanding on the phenomenon being studied, which differs from the research participants' own understanding that is taken as the basis of analysis. When the researcher's stance differs from that of the participants, it is because the researcher's positionality is to be critical and follow his own sensemaking process, using other sources that provide different perspectives and insights into the object of inquiry. Hence, the study documents the researcher's own sensemaking as well as that of the participants.

5.12 Summary

The previous chapters located the Occupy movement historically within the social movements of the mid-twentieth century onwards, because of their similarities in terms of goals, orientations and repertoires of protest. This set the scene to answer the following research questions:

Q1: How is 'leadership' understood and enacted within leaderless groups? How is leadership performed in the absence of individual leaders?

Q2: How do members of the Occupy movement coordinate without leaders?

Q3: What form do coordination and organisation take in the Occupy movement?

In Chapter 2, the standpoint of the thesis was clarified in terms of leadership research, outlining the need for a comprehensive account of leadership research in order to answer the research questions. This standpoint is to appreciate leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon exercised among people as a form of life. It was also argued that other modes of generating meaning must be taken into account in investigating leadership, making it a multimodal concept.

This chapter has focused on the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the research. An interpretivist ontological and epistemological position was adopted, given the nature of the study in terms of leadership as a socially-constructed phenomenon and shared form of life (Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Kelly 2008). The choice of methods for gathering data and the change of plan arising from the difficulty of securing participants for interview have also been explained. Sensemaking was chosen as the method for data analysis because collective sensemaking has been widely used to make sense of collective actions in movements. In addition, collective sensemaking serves as a proxy for understanding agency in the meaning-making process of different modes. Considering collective sensemaking and its orientation to artefacts as modes of generating meaning fits well with the multimodality of leadership. As outlined so far, due to the significant role of objectivation in constructing everyday reality (Berger and Luckmann 1991), it is important to include other modes such as

artefacts and aesthetics in the process of sensemaking, not only as an organisational theme among others but as a legitimate form of understanding organisational life (Strati 1992).

This chapter has also reflected on the choice of leadership research to investigate a so-called leaderless movement. As this study is a critical sensemaking study, the emphasis was on providing a comprehensive account of the object of inquiry using the researcher's own account of sensemaking, rather than what is common in classical sensemaking studies. In other words, the researcher had an epistemic privilege as a result of access to other data. This position required the researcher to use his own political and philosophical commitments, which impacted on the data analysis and evaluation.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 will present the data gathered from semi-structured and informal interviews and participant observations, as well as secondary data from online resources. The process of coding data will be outlined, leading to a discussion of the themes extracted from the data. These data presentation chapters will be followed by a discussion in Chapter 9 and conclusions in Chapter 10.

Chapter 6: Occupied Space – Keep Calm and Occupy London!

Figure 3. Photograph from Occupy London
Source: Adapted from http://www.kristianbuus.com/index

6.1 Introduction

This and the next two chapters will present the data gathered from fieldwork and online secondary data to answer the research questions. From the interview transcriptions and field notes gathered from observations and conversations with Occupy members, three major themes were extracted: 'space', 'new media', and 'non-leaders, artefacts and material culture'. This chapter will outline the first theme, space, beginning with data relating to physical space before moving to virtual space. As discussed earlier, virtual and physical space are interwoven and must be appreciated in this context.

The research questions to which these findings relate are:

Q1: How is 'leadership' understood and enacted within leaderless groups? How is leadership performed in the absence of individual leaders?

Q2: How do members of the Occupy movement coordinate without leaders?

Q3: What form do coordination and organisation take in the Occupy movement?

As discussed in Chapter 5, a multilevel framework was employed to investigate leadership in so-called leaderless groups and to answer these research questions. This multilevel framework consisted of dividing the chronology of the Occupy movement into phases, which were then combined with the semi-structured interview data, informal conversations and observations of the Occupiers during the fieldwork. Secondary data were also obtained from online platforms regarding both Occupy Wall Street and Occupy London movements. Data from the fieldwork were categorised into the three themes emerging from the data. These three themes also formed the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest and were therefore interlinked in the different phases of the Occupy movement's chronology. Some of these themes emerged prior to the data analysis during the process of data collection. Several codes relate to the first theme, 'space', including camp, encampment, environment, village, steps, library, tents and space.

Before examining the first theme of the data, some terms used later to illustrate the data must be clarified. Quotations are labelled 'interviewee' where they are direct and exact quotations from interviewees, whereas the term 'participant' denotes that quotations are from notes taken when recalling conversations and are paraphrased from conversations with the movement's members.

The next section examines the first theme extracted from the data, namely physical space.

6.2 Space and settings

The first theme, space, is very important because it was mentioned in all conversations and interviews with Occupy members. Their eyes always lit up when talking about the space and their excitement was obvious. The space was clearly vital to them and they missed it after they were evicted. Interestingly, space appears to have been less important to members of the movement until they were evicted from St Paul's steps, whereupon they realised the importance of that particular space. Although the movement took its name from occupying St Paul's steps, its impact was not clear to the occupiers until the police evicted them. For instance, one Occupier said that they really missed the space they had occupied for months:

> Yeah! We miss it! Whenever, we talk about like what we need to do is;
> we need space (laughing); it was traumatic. We didn't notice it that
> much until, you know, after a month (Participant 3).

Here, the role of space is highlighted as having been taken for granted by the Occupiers. They missed the space because it had become part of their identity. The movement descended into latency and gradually disappeared because there was no space for them to occupy, and therefore no identity for them to claim. Also, the fact that the movement took its name and identity from occupying a physical space reveals the importance of the occupied physical space to the Occupiers.

6.2.1 Space as an identity

In a conversation with an Occupier about a forthcoming event, the focus was on the topic of St Paul's steps and the physical space they had occupied. Of particular interest was that he indicated that what they now had as a movement was all a

result of the identity they had gained from occupying St Paul's steps. He commented:

> The identity we gained from occupying St Paul's was enormous. There was a clear space that brought us together, and suddenly it wasn't there anymore, and Occupy isn't fine. And then there was this question, 'OK! What is Occupy?', and suddenly there was a lot of tension because everyone sort of has different ideas (Participant 18).

The Occupiers took the space at St Paul's steps for granted because they did not think of space as something separate, but rather as something there, as an empty signifier. Only when it had gone did they realise the power of the space. Thus, this occupied space was important not only because of the identity that it gave to the movement, but also because of its role in convergence, as mentioned several times in conversations with the movement's members.

6.2.2 Space as a support and convergence

Occupy gained its name by literally occupying a physical space, so members of the movement had a kind of prejudice about St Paul's steps. During conversations, one participant said:

> When I am talking about the space, I talk about the physical space. I think that was really the change; because we have had activism online, but it was bringing people that were acting online to one physical space, because that brings in not only, you know, getting to know each other as well, but, like, collaboration and support, emotional support, physical support, which you don't have in the same way online (Interviewee 4).

This indicates that they perceived the physical space not only as a venue for gathering and occupying, but also as a space for collaboration and various kinds of support, such as physical and emotional support.

One participant spoke about the importance of the physical space in terms of convergence, which helped them significantly to get back together, communicate more easily and quickly, and broaden their radius of acquaintances:

> When we had the occupation in St Paul's, what was very useful about the occupation of this area was everybody was together. It is not happening this much now. It enables the different groups to report back to general assembly more easily. The occupation of an area actually facilitates, makes easier the interconnection of the groups, of the general assembly (Participant 6).

The power of the space was also highlighted in another conversation with a participant.

> I think we didn't realise how powerful it actually was to have a fixed space, because first of all, it became our home for days, you know! We started building tents, and we started using it in different ways, but then people always knew that we were there, so they could always come back (Participant 22).

This quotation reveals several aspects of the occupied space. By occupying the physical space and making that space their home by erecting tents, they created a social space. This social space acted as a sort of identity and a symbol of the movement, where people knew where to come and find each other. In other

words, the occupied physical space became a convergence spot for new recruits and a collective identity for the movement.

This also relates to the quotation cited earlier from Interviewee 4, who talked about the collaboration and support that had been made available through the space, and the construction of culture through interactions between people in the occupied space as a pillar of the movement's repertoire of protest. Moreover, according to Participant 6 (cited earlier), the space in which all these different groups converged acted in special way, creating a collective identity. The significance of space in identity building and the cultural integration of the various groups will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.

Apart from identity building through the aid of space and gaining support and convergence from the physical space, the occupied space also played a role as a representational space for the Occupiers, representing the society they aspired to build, in contrast to the existing dysfunctional capitalist system.

6.2.3 Representational space

The impact of the physical space on the Occupiers appears to have arisen gradually, which was why one Occupier went to see Zuccotti Park after the eviction. Indeed, his experience underlines the impact of the physical space. He said that he had never been to the US before, but just went to see Zuccotti Park with his own eyes. He was in his fifties, and this had been his only trip abroad in years, simply to visit Zuccotti Park:

> I have been in America for the first time in my life back in March 2011 and my only trip abroad for years just to see Zuccotti Park and visit Wall Street (Participant 14).

It was fascinating that someone would travel across the Atlantic just to see the physical space that had hosted and represented the Occupy Wall Street movement for several months. This participant's action conveyed the importance not only of the movement itself, but also of the space they had occupied.

The Occupiers had also tried to transform the physical place they had occupied into their imagined alternative society to neoliberal capitalism. They built first-aid tents, a recycling area for their rubbish, a cinema tent, a university tent, a library tent, a food donation counter, and so on within the first day of occupation in order to adhere to their alternative society. Some of the tents are shown in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4. An outdoor cinema on the steps of St Paul's
Source: Adapted from http://www.edwardthompson.co.uk/occupy.html

Figure 5. Books donated to the Occupy London movement's library
Source: Adapted from http://www.edwardthompson.co.uk/occupy.html

The importance of building an alternative society was underlined on another occasion by a group of three Occupiers, when asked what St Paul's steps meant to them now, after the eviction. One replied that it had everything they needed to live in a civilised way. Indeed, he called it a 'small village'. He also expressed his sadness that there was no longer any physical space:

> Within a few days, there was this entire village, hundreds of people, black and white, pink and blue, old and young, and children and hippies and suits, scholars. We had some people who came and gave us lectures from the academic community day after day. It was amazing. Many of us are still sad, you know, that we have no camp anymore (Participant 17).

This quotation indicates the Occupiers' aspiration to establish their own utopia in which everybody had equal rights in society. The occupied physical space was an alternative to the neoliberal capitalism against which they were protesting. Other

participants also talked about collaboration and cooperation among the Occupiers, which enabled the entire camp to be established within 36 hours:

> By Monday, it was an entire encampment: hundreds of people, camps everywhere, kitchens, tents, music, piano, Tent City University, all in 36 hours. It was unbelievable (Participant 18).

The third member of that particular group also commented on the importance of physical space in terms of decision making, as they used to hold general assemblies in that space: 'We used to have general assemblies every single day. After the eviction, we had chaos for a while' (Participant 15). This quotation indicates the importance of the space not only for convergence, but also for organising the movement and, more importantly, its existence. The physical space became a decision-making arena for the Occupy members, who exercised participatory democracy in their general assemblies while at St Paul's steps.

Figure 6. Inside of the City Tent University
Source: Adapted from Ben Roberts project: Occupied spaces (http://www.benrobertsphotography.com/work/occupied-spaces/#4713)

Figure 6 illustrates the inside of the Tent City University and Figure 7 illustrates the first-aid tent at St Paul's steps that was designed to give necessary primary medical care to the Occupiers.

Figure 7. First aid tent at St Paul's steps
Source: Adapted from Edward Thompson's Twitter account (https://twitter.com/_EdThompson)

6.2.4 The occupied space as home

How Occupy members referred to the physical space as their home was also discussed in conversations. Obviously, it had become home for those who had spent most of their time there, including sleeping at the camp. However, some referred to that physical space as their home even though, for a variety of reasons, they spent nights in their own accommodation rather than at St Paul's steps:

> When we had St Paul's steps, that was my home, even if I didn't sleep there overnight because I needed to wash myself, and also my daughter who is only six. So I was there every day; it was my real home (Participant 2).

Figures 8 to 10 illustrate the inside of three Occupy London tents.

Figure 8. Interior of Occupy London tent
Source: Adapted from Ben Roberts project: Occupied spaces
(http://www.benrobertsphotography.com/work/occupied-spaces/#4713)

Figure 9. Interior of Occupy London tent
Source: Adapted from Ben Roberts project: Occupied spaces
(http://www.benrobertsphotography.com/work/occupied-spaces/#4713)

Figure 10. Interior of Occupy London tent
Source: Adapted from Ben Roberts project: Occupied spaces (http://www.benrobertsphotography.com/work/occupied-spaces/#4713)

These three pictures illustrate a fairly reasonable bedroom, a work desk and a piano. These were the Occupiers' living spaces, which they furnished as they moved into their new home. They brought everything they needed, including their piano, and even a couch for people to sit and enjoy the music. In other words, they came to stay in their new home and their new society.

6.2.5 Room layout

When meeting the Occupiers, particular attention was paid to the layout of their rooms. This was in order to be aware of all aspects of the leadership ensemble as, according to the standpoint of this thesis and its contribution to leadership research, interactions between people and things (non-human actors) must be considered.

Space seemed to be important to the Occupy members' everyday lives, even regarding the layout of meeting rooms, which they always wanted to reflect their

leaderlessness. For instance, one meeting was about theatre techniques and how they could use public theatre to draw people's attention to important issues in everyday life. On entering the room, the layout was like a round-table discussion, with the chairs in a circle in the centre. However, the host of the event then changed the layout from the usual round layout, where everybody could see each other, to a square layout, where all the chairs were placed against the walls. He told us that this was in order to make the most of the space, as he was going to demonstrate some theatre techniques, which required space. Everyone helped him to change the layout of the room and then sat and waited for him to start. At that moment, one of the Occupiers entered the room and saw that the layout had been changed. His face expressed his confusion. He found a spare chair and sat on it and listened to the tutor's talk. He was leaning forward in order to see everybody's faces as they commented on and discussed the ideas. However, he was unable to see some people's faces when he was talking in the group, as was the case for most of the others. Therefore, he raised his hand and waited for the facilitator's permission to express his opinion on the discussion, but instead of commenting on that issue, he stated how furious he had been when he saw the room's layout:

> It is like what's happening in the prisons and you want to control us! The layout is unusual and peculiar. We always use the round table layout, so we can see each other's faces, but now I can't see some of the faces in this room. I won't stay in this room anymore!

He then stormed out of the meeting room. The reactions of others after he left were also interesting. They all agreed that the layout in their meetings must be round table, so that nobody seemed to have power over the rest of the group.

However, they also agreed that the changed layout was only for the purpose of that session, and there had been no intention to try to control them or be a leader.

That individual's behaviour indicates the power of space, even in the layout of a room, where people could feel threatened by how the chairs were positioned. This relates to Foucault's argument that space and power are interrelated in everyday life (Foucault 1984).

6.2.6 Summary

This chapter has presented several aspects of the theme of space extracted from the data relating to physical space. The findings reveal how physical space interacted with the Occupy members, not only as a place of gathering, but also as a space for collaboration, support and convergence. The movement gained identity from the space to such an extent that, according to one participant, the disappearance of the space plunged the movement into chaos. The data also indicate how the Occupiers used the physical space as a representational space to create the society to which they aspired, an egalitarian society, with its own university, first-aid area, kitchen, and even recycling area. Furthermore, they demonstrate how the Occupiers attempted to create a utopia for themselves on St Paul's steps by bringing their own belongings into the occupied space and transforming it into their own home.

The relationship between space and power has also been outlined, with the example of room layout exerting architectural power, conveying a specific meaning to the people in that particular space.

All these interesting implications of space will be discussed in detail in Chapter 9. The next section will elaborate on virtual space as part of the space theme.

6.3 Virtual space

Virtual space is another important sub-theme extracted from data. As mentioned in previous chapters, the movement's initiation phase began on the Internet, it gained momentum during the occupation phase with the aid of the Internet, and it also tried to survive the latency and post-latency phases with the help of the Internet. There was an occasion at one meeting when one individual was constantly checking his phone. He was updating his newsfeed on his Facebook page every two to three minutes, as well as checking his Twitter and email accounts. In a conversation regarding his enthusiasm for online platforms, he said:

> Everything nowadays is about the Internet. I do think that online spaces
>
> are important. And we do have mailing lists, for example, where there
>
> are a lot of discussions, websites. We have Facebook pages, and so on,
>
> so that connects (Participant 4).

A fascinating aspect of the topic of virtual space was that the Occupiers were using online open-source software, such as Mumble (Appendix 3), to replicate the physical space they had had at St Paul's steps. They had even created signs in this online environment to replicate the hand signals they had used to negotiate consensus in the general assembly during the occupation of St Pauls steps:

> The main thing for communication is email, because it is easy to use and
>
> everybody knows how to use it, so… And also we use Mumble, so I'll be
>
> posting about our meeting. And what I find interesting is when we find
>
> platforms that sort of replicate the kind of environment we create in the
>
> real space, and that is a platform that was set up by people who play

> video games, and they can communicate online, and it is divided by
> rooms, but the rooms are open, so anyone can join the rooms, and you
> can have conversations there. And we replicate what we were doing in
> the assembly; so you have the facilitator, you have like symbols to say,
> like, you like things or you don't (Interviewee 6).

The use of Mumble and other online platforms was not exclusive to the eviction, latency or post-latency phases. Even during the occupation phase, the Occupiers established a Mumble server to help facilitate online communications between workgroups and camps involved in the movement. However, the use of online platforms surged after the eviction phase because they became the only means of communication in the movement.

In addition to using Mumble, they also used other online platforms such as PiratePad (Appendix 4) and TitanPad (Appendix 5) to create discussion forums for members to engage in discussion whenever and from wherever they wanted:

> We use PiratePad, so I'll be sending things, so there is a link, and there
> is a Word document that people can modify, and you can see according
> to the colour who modified that, and the discussion goes on and on from
> that point. And we use that for making – so when we have meetings
> online, we take the minutes there, and we make the minutes
> collaboratively so each person could write their bit, and I think it is very
> useful. It seems simple, but it is a very useful platform (Interviewee 6).

The use of these sorts of online platforms enabled the Occupiers to extend the idea of space and time to their own comfort zone. In other words, they might have an online meeting in the morning while having breakfast, or they might have an

online discussion regarding an important issue at two in the morning. Thus, these online platforms offered huge flexibility, which the Occupiers enjoyed not only after the eviction phase but also during the occupation phase. In other words, they were using what they called a virtual space to replicate the physical space, as well as to enhance the impact of the physical space and the movement. Virtual space is therefore categorised under the general theme of 'space' because virtual and physical space are interrelated, as discussed in the previous chapters.

During one meeting, one of the Occupiers was unable to stay until the end, so he informed the group that, while he could not stay for the meeting, he would participate on Mumble, and they could then discuss the meeting's outcome. As discussed earlier, the meeting outcomes were published on PiratePad and people could read and comment on them. Some people would say goodbye to each other but say 'See you on Facebook!' because, for them, this was like a meeting point where they used to log on, see each other and have a coffee, for instance, but in front of their device screens rather than in person.

Another important factor was the diverse use of different online platforms in the Occupy movement. Several participants talked about a system that consisted of social networking sites as well as other Internet tools, such as the websites used to communicate and to get help:

> We had a system, you know, diary and posters everywhere, Facebook, all social media, everywhere possible. Then we started to unite with outside. You know, the Salvation Army was helping us, community service, churches, everybody was (Participant 22).

This quotation indicates how the virtual space afforded a means of spreading the word outside the movement. Different online platforms were used to advertise what was going on in the occupied physical space, and also to attract attention to the Occupy movement. When asked whether he thought that Facebook and Twitter had become more important since the eviction, one Occupy member gave the following response:

> I wouldn't say Facebook and Twitter. I think the website, Occupy London website, because before if you wanted to find out, you would turn up in the camp, but now if you want to found out what Occupy is … what it is doing and so on, you visit the website (Participant 20).

6.4 Summary

As has been illustrated, the movement's use of online platforms was not limited to social networking sites, but extended to other online platforms. It is therefore important to consider the different affordances of the various online platforms that impacted on the Occupy movement internally and externally. For instance, the Occupiers used a Tumblr mini-blog platform to humanise their movement. The Internet was used not only as a means of communicating, but also as a virtual space to replicate the physical space that the members used to occupy, to communicate, to arrange meetings and circulate news, and so on.

These issues require careful consideration in the context of the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest. The next chapter considers another affordance of the Internet used by the Occupiers: 'new media'.

Chapter 7: New media: 'Organise online – Occupy offline'
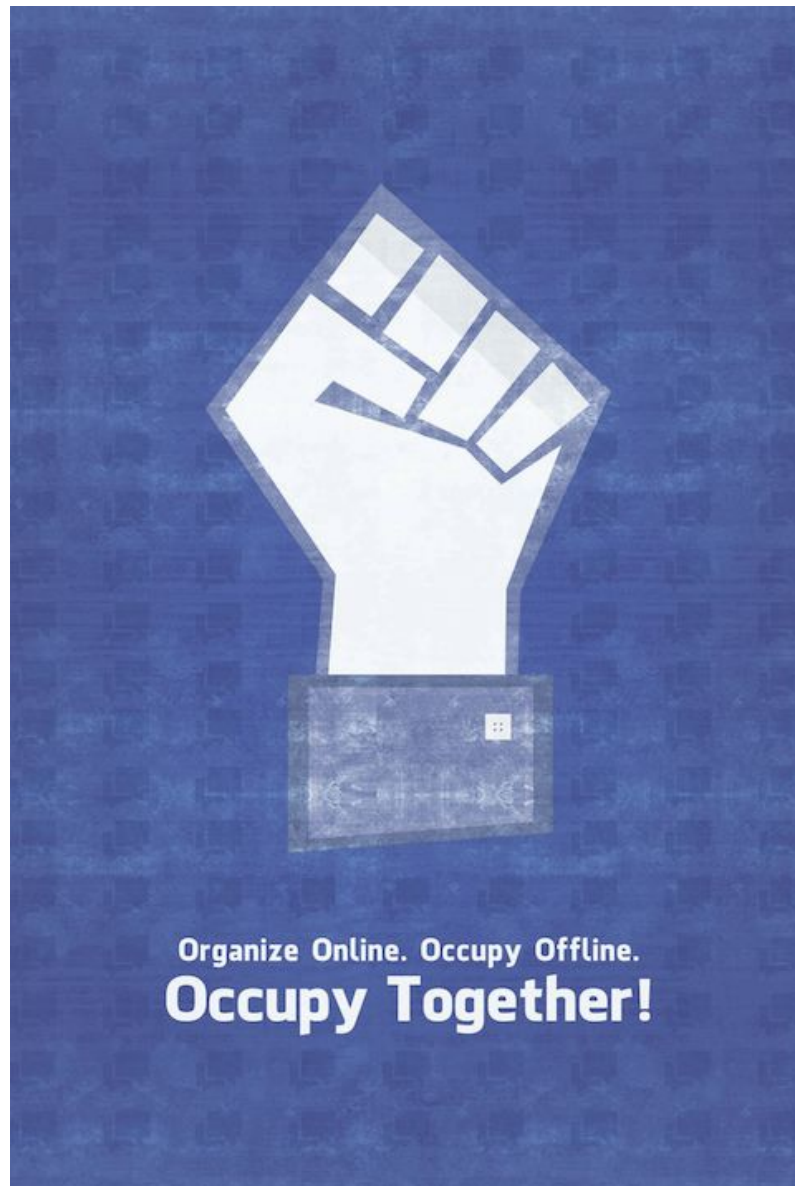
Figure 11. 'Organize online – Occupy offline' poster
Source: Adapted from http://www.visualnews.com/2011/12/02/occupy-movement-leverages-open-source-art

7.1 Introduction

New media, which is the next theme extracted from the data, were discussed in

Chapter 2 in terms of their significant role in the movement's repertoire of protest.

The importance of the 'new media' theme was also highlighted in Chapter 6 in

terms of the different affordances of virtual space to members of the movement.

This chapter examines the 'new media' theme in order to explore the different

affordances of new or digital media outlined by participants in their conversations. 'New media' comprise emails, social media, online platforms, Facebook, Twitter, live streaming, websites, the Internet, email lists and digital activism.

7.2 Internet

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Occupy movement was initiated on the Internet, when *Adbusters* magazine called for people to gather in Wall Street to protest against the capitalist system using the #occupywallstreet hashtag. Online activists circulated this hashtag around their existing networks and on social media, which led to the occupation phase of the movement, on 17 September in New York City and on 15 October in London. In the case of Occupy London, it started with the circulation of the #occupyLSX (Occupy London Stock Exchange) hashtag on Facebook and Twitter, in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement, a week before the Occupiers marched toward the London Stock Exchange and then St Paul's steps.

When asked how they had been informed about occupying the London Stock Exchange, almost all Occupiers responded that it had been through some means of Internet communication. For example, 'I have been aware of Occupy Wall Street only on the Internet. It wasn't covered in the press for the first sort of week or two in my perception' (Participant 13).

One Occupier was asked where she had first heard about Occupy, and she responded that it was an invitation from a Facebook page:

> Participant: It might have been Facebook actually.
>
> Researcher: So was it from your friends, or some other pages?

Participant: No, no, no, it was just a caller. It was just ... you know ...

come to the London Stock Exchange to demonstrate the global takeover

of the banks, corruption (Participant 7).

Others said they had been informed by email, as they subscribed to several online activist mailing lists. As discussed in Chapter 2, social movements use previous ties and networks to recruit new members, and to communicate more broadly with the outside world. The Occupy movement was no exception, as one participant indicated:

I was on many lists, many radical activist lists, so I probably – I don't

remember exactly – but I probably received several emails from

different lists regarding Occupy London (Participant 2).

Similarly, others referred to other radical activist websites to which they subscribed or that they checked regularly:

Basically, I picked it up on the 'UK UNCUT' website. I had been to a few

of their events, and I had got on their mailing lists, and the mailing list

said that, look there is this event on 15th October outside St Paul's

mimicking Occupy Wall Street (Participant 19).

This quotation also indicates the circulation of the #occupyLSX hashtag on Twitter and Facebook. 'UK UNCUT' also used this to announce the occupation that was to take place in front of the London Stock Exchange, and invited its followers to join the people in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street. This illustrates the importance of activists' existing networks, which was discernible in the 'movement of movements' case discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6. Diani (1997) calls this the social capital of the movement, whereby ties are based on mutual

trust and recognition between the actors involved in the relationship, while not necessarily implying the presence of a collective identity.

Similarly, another interviewee indicated the existence of such ties and emphasised the number of emails she had received from email lists to which she subscribed:

> I get informed about events on Facebook and emails; I probably get hundreds of emails a day about Occupy – hundreds! So many things, many events, I am informed about through Occupy, through Occupy emails, different groups, different people (Interviewee 2).

Several participants mentioned in conversation that they had initially categorised themselves as online activists and then, as a result of the Occupy movement, had an opportunity to express their feelings and emotions in a physical space:

> A lot of the activities I am involved in are being notified through a variety of lists I have been subscribed to and even emails I get from those. I don't even know the identity of them on the Internet, so it's quite interesting to be activist-driven. I am an activist driven by my beliefs, but also what enables me to sort of focus on issues is the information I receive – an action here, an action there, or the meeting here, the meeting there – that generally comes through the Internet (Interviewee 3).

The impact of digital media was apparent to the Occupiers themselves, even those who had not used digital media or online platforms before. For instance, some online activists said that, even though they were not very capable of using technology, they had overcome this problem because of the need they felt and the

ability that the Internet gave them to participate in some way in social activities through the Internet:

> In terms of an Internet activist, I receive a lot of messages from the Internet. Well, I am personally not a techno-capable person, but I've always tried to be good at it! Probably most my adult life I have been an activist in some way. But I think since about 2006, I became more focused and interactive as a political social activist on the Internet (Participant 6).

This willingness to learn to use the Internet illustrates its importance to the movement. It encouraged Occupiers with no interest in the Internet and related technologies and platforms to learn to use it continuously in the movement.

Interestingly, people in the movement realised the impact of the Internet and digital media on both the movement itself and on their lives as activists. On one occasion, a participant related that he was fascinated with the impact of the Internet in enabling people to connect with each other, to meet each other and become online activists:

> It is quite curious, the way that the Internet enables people in terms of meetings, convergence of social and activist interests and political interests (Participant 3).

The role of the Internet as a place where people converged and met, or discussed political and social issues, made it a key tool for social activists, even turning them into digital activists, as they spent much of their time online rather than offline due to its convenience and user-friendliness.

On another occasion, the swiftness of digital media was observed, as Internet-based media were used to disseminate messages as quickly as possible. For instance, some facilitators highlighted their roles as online activists, and the effectiveness of that role in the Occupy movement in terms of mobilising and organising people:

> I spent my whole life online; I spent the whole time pulling people, making sure they were safe, making sure they were not in front of the police. I tried everything – tweeting, texting, calling – to let people know that something was going on (Participant 16).

This again illustrates the impact of digital media in terms of mobilising and organising people. The above quotation elucidates how people used digital media to disseminate information on police raids or decisions requiring action from followers as quickly as possible. The importance of digital activism emerged earlier when discussing aspects such as convergence and support. The participants' responses also relate to the discussion in Chapter 2 on the popularity of digital networking in social movements dating back to the 1990s. The results of a survey of Occupy Wall Street activists demonstrate the same trend. A 2012 survey asked respondents to mention their most common activities within a 24-hour period. The results indicate that 74 per cent of respondents were posting on Facebook and 72.7 per cent were holding face-to-face conversations.[14]

The aforementioned affordances of digital media and the ubiquitous use of the Internet by people from all generations and across the world have made digital

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[14] http://occupyresearch.net/category/survey/

activism a universal trend. This is because digital media are rapidly changing the information and communication dynamics of society. As a result of digital media, people are able to share their opinions in real time, expose shared interests and attract the attention of global and local communities. In this regard, one interviewee in the Occupy movement's media group told of her enthusiasm for recent social movements across the world, and how eager she was that someday they could do the same in Europe:

> I had been following since, you know, the Arab Spring, 15M, Occupy New York, Occupy Wall Street and everything happening in the States, so I had been observing what was happening, and I remember strong frustration, that saying like why is this happening in these countries and why is it not happening in my country, so Italy and the UK? While I was listening to Italian radio, this Italian radio was saying that there has been a call for the 15th of October all over the world; there would be protest, occupation, and so on. And so I looked it up on the Internet to find out where it was happening in London, and I think I found the website, not the Facebook page (Interviewee 1).

This quotation demonstrates the importance of the Internet among Occupiers for disseminating the movement's messages. The role of new media was extremely significant in terms of its usage, as illustrated in the next section.

7.3 New media as alternative media

Conversations and interviews with the participants conveyed the impression that mainstream media had not covered the Occupy movement adequately, so members of the movement had used their own Internet-based media to

communicate with the outside world, as happened in the case of the Seattle protest when Indymedia was born (see Chapter 3).

Another reason for the Occupiers' heavy reliance on their own media, such as social media, webpages and websites, was not only the lack of coverage but also their lack of trust in mainstream media. The Occupiers, like the protestors in the Seattle movement, rightly believed that mainstream media are profit-driven organisations belonging to multi-billionaires, whom they believed would not cover the whole story of the Occupy movement because the Occupiers were protesting against their system. Coleman (2014) highlights this anger among social activists, especially among a group called 'Anonymous', which posted a video online to protest against Fox News's policy of calling these activists 'the Internet Hate Machine' (Coleman 2014: 1).

This was reflected in an issue relating to the data gathering procedure for this research, explaining why people refused to take part in the interviews. As mentioned in Chapter 5, there was an impression among the Occupiers that any interview would end up misrepresenting the Occupy image, as this was something the mainstream media had done previously. Moreover, one Occupier related a similar story that had happened to her when she unintentionally talked to a reporter. She said that the reporter had deceived her and she had become a victim in that story:

> One day, I was just, you know, doing my jobs in camp near the right-hand side of the cathedral, and I ended up in a conversation with a guy who was in the press – turned out to be working for the *Evening Standard*. Yeah, so, before I knew, I already told him a few things, so it

was too late to kind of backtrack. So, anyway, he said, 'I understand that the City of London have brought you at the camp some special bins to put dirty needles in', and I said, 'I don't know anything about that. I personally bought some from the local pharmacy, because I think it is responsible to do for the healthcare of people who are suffering from addiction, AIDS, blah blah.' Anyway, the next day: 'Junkie health hazard at St Paul's Cathedral', front page of the *Evening Standard* (Participant 5).

What she was recalling was an article published in the *Evening Standard* on 23 November 2011, which claimed that 'Escalating drug use at the St Paul's tent city has forced the local authority to install containers for the safe disposal of syringe needles' (see Figure 12).[15]

Figure 12. *Evening Standard* **front page, 23 November 2011**
Source: *Evening Standard*, 23 November 2011

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[15] http://www.standard.co.uk/news/needle-bins-at-st-pauls-camp-to-beat-junkie-health-hazard-6371049.html

Furthermore, the tabloid papers started to undermine the Occupy London movement on a daily basis, which affected members' perceptions of the mainstream media. One participant said that the tabloids had tried to reduce the Occupy members to 'nobodies' or 'a bunch of hippies':

> In the media, in the tabloids, in the *Daily Telegraph*, in *The Times*, etc., Occupy is often depicted as a bunch of dropouts, as a bunch of hippies, as a bunch of unemployable people, drug addicts. It's not like that (Interviewee 5).

These and several similar stories from other movements, such as the Seattle movement, convinced the Occupiers to devote efforts to their own media, and to try to circulate and disseminate their messages using their own digital media.

However, these new media platforms had shortcomings. For example, decisions on who should have the passwords for the Occupy London movement's Facebook and Twitter accounts were strongly contested. It was the same with every online platform created by the Occupy movement, indicating their importance, as well as the power struggles among the Occupiers. As discussed earlier, people in the movement realised how digital media could be used to make an impact. For instance, they recognised that by posting one tweet, thousands of people could be mobilised toward a specific issue. They saw how powerful the new media platforms were.

Another shortcoming related to the contents of the accounts, given the leaderless structure of the movement. What should be put up on the website and who should have access to it was also linked to the password problem. All such issues arose from the leaderlessness of the movement. In other leaderless social movements,

such as the Movement for New Society (MNS) and the women's liberation movement, the emphasis on a decentralised structure and the fetishisation of consensus decision making led to their disappearance (Cornell 2011). The issue of the impact of digital media, and consequently the passwords, was indicated by one participant who played a facilitator role in the movement:

> So Facebook and Twitter in all of these movements, what for me is very interesting to learn from Spain and America and what has happened in them as well, so there were resources – these are like money, food, whatever – and there were very powerful resources, because what was incredible in all those movements is that suddenly, you know, within a week or two weeks, you had thousands and thousands of followers. And what we underestimated was the power of who had access to these platforms, in the sense of who had the passwords... Or, you know, for Twitter, you can only have one person has the password – only very trusted people – and in a group who don't know each other, how do you deal with that? You know, you can't just give a password to people that you don't know! And then, so, they caused big problems, and they really caused, like, a lot of internal conflicts, both for who would use them and how they would use them (Participant 4).

This quotation reveals that, even among themselves, the Occupiers had realised the power of social media platforms and the influence they had on the movement, so they asked for passwords to these sites in order to share that power. This also indicates that whoever had the password had the power to steer the masses and the direction of the movement. Members realised this potential and, as a leaderless movement, they wanted to be included in the power to mobilise and

influence the masses through online platforms. People who had dedicated more time or energy to the movement also thought that it was their right to have the password, not people who had just walked in or had spent less time in the movement. Therefore, they were not happy simply to hand over the password to others. As indicated in previous chapters, power struggles and leadership claims in the movement were placed on the agenda by people who had put more effort (time, energy, money, education, and so on) into the movement. The Occupiers tried to solve the problem by using hashtags and the retweet facility of the Twitter account to tweet and be seen on Twitter:[16]

> We tried to overcome this problem using hashtags. So, just by adding #, for example, I had my Twitter account connected, and then when I added a hashtag, it automatically came up as Occupy London. So that helped a lot, so you didn't have to get the password to everyone, but you just activated the account for them (Participant 4).

This power struggle also went to the next level when, according to the Occupy Wall Street website, one of the founders of its Twitter account hijacked the password.[17] Justin Wedes, who had been involved with the movement since the outset, attempted to stop the group from using the word 'genocide' in describing the recent deaths of Palestinians in Gaza. [18] He then re-tweeted a personal message, stating that he was going to shut down that account for a while and

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[16] https://support.twitter.com/articles/77606

[17] http://occupywallstreet.net/story/wolf-occupy-wall-street-statement-justin-wedess-hijacking-occupywallstnyc

[18] http://www.dailydot.com/politics/occupy-wall-street-nyc-twitter-wolf-ows-justin-wedes/

would hand it over to responsible stewards later.[19] This caused a negative reaction from the followers and forced Occupy Wall Street to make a statement in which Wedes was dubbed 'the wolf of Occupy Wall Street'. In this statement, the Occupy Wall Street movement members declared that 'Occupy Wall Street has no owners, no single founder and no official singular leader. OWS is an organic body made up of concerned citizens of the world who work towards wresting power from the ruling elites and putting it back into the hands of the People'.[20] The statement also claimed that 'Justin Wedes has taken advantage of his access to the 174,000 follower strong Twitter account, @OccupyWallStNYC to build support for various pet projects over the years and make a name for himself'. It then stated:

> Justin has violated our basic principles of organizing within Occupy, and betrayed our basic sense of integrity and decency. We disavow any connection between this individual and the movement at large. We believe he means to dominate the media presence of Occupy to build his personal brand and reputation at the expense of people's movements wherever they spontaneously arise, from NYC to Detroit to Tunisia to Egypt to Turkey and beyond.

However, this was not the only example of this type of power struggle among the Occupiers. On another occasion, Justine Tunney, founder (or co-founder) of one of Occupy Wall Street's Twitter accounts, @occupywallst, as well as of the

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[19] http://www.dailydot.com/politics/occupy-wall-street-nyc-twitter-wolf-ows-justin-wedes/
[20] http://occupywallstreet.net/story/wolf-occupy-wall-street-statement-justin-wedess-hijacking-occupywallstnyc

occupywallst.org website and other online platforms relating to the Occupy Wall Street movement, hijacked the account's password. She then told followers: 'This Twitter handle is now back under the management of its founder: @JustineTunney. Let's start a revolution.'[21] She insisted that she was leader, even though everybody advocated the leaderlessness of the movement. She tried to justify her action by expressing that she had felt unappreciated and disrespected from the very beginning: 'I've felt that way at times. It's a common experience in activism.' [22] As previously discussed in this and previous chapters, feeling unappreciated is a problem in leaderless groups for people who put their efforts into the group and end up feeling unacknowledged. Tunney decided to take over the account's password and become the only one who could communicate with thousands of followers. Following this incident, she agreed to be interviewed for this research, but she cancelled the interview at the last minute. She had already asked about the interview questions and the impact of the research on the Occupy movement; nevertheless, she changed her mind, probably because of the huge pressure she was under to nominate herself as leader of a leaderless group.

Returning to the issue of controlling Internet-based media, the impact of such media in daily lives generally and in the Occupy movement specifically must be considered. According to Kreutz (2009), Facebook is by far the most popular online social networking site, making it a logical place to begin to investigate the patterns, causes and consequences of the social processes associated with online social networking sites' usage (Wilson et al. 2012). A simple search on social

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[21] https://twitter.com/OccupyWallSt
[22] ibid.

networking sites reveals that Occupy London has active accounts on both major social networking sites, Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, two pages relate to Occupy London, with about 96,000 fans altogether, while on Twitter, almost 46,600 follow the Occupy London account. This is a very impressive number of supporters for the movement in virtual space. This is also the case for Occupy Wall Street: the webpage states, as a point of strength, that the movement has 174,000 Twitter account followers.

A search of the archive of the 'We are the 99 percent' Tumblr page reveals that hundreds of both Occupiers and non-Occupiers who marched under the slogan of 'We are the 99 per cent' have visited the webpage. People posted their photographs on that page, with a note stating why they thought they belonged to the 99 per cent and what they, the 99 per cent, needed to do in order to change the situation.[23] All the above statistics on the number of followers reveal the importance of digital media in terms of influencing others, and how people among these followers are struggling to take control of Internet-based media.

Digital media also have other impacts, as elicited from observations of and conversations with the research participants. The Occupiers used other Internet-based applications on their smartphones, tablets and laptops to live-stream their meetings and events.

7.4 Live-streaming

An interesting feature of Occupy London's meetings was their live-streaming. Almost all meetings were live-streamed so that people who could not attend were

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[23] http://wearethe99percent.tumblr.com/

able to participate online. One participant spoke about live-streaming from the beginning of Occupy, and how important she thought it was in terms of disseminating the Occupy message: 'So we went home, and I immediately looked on the Internet to see what was happening because they live-stream everything.'

Interestingly, in all meetings and events, someone was in charge of live-streaming and put all his efforts into ensuring that all the talks and discussions were being live-streamed to people who were interested in finding out about the Occupy movement and what was going on in their events and meetings. When asked why he was doing this every single day, he responded: 'This is my job, you know; everybody has the right to be part of the meeting, even if they can't attend' (Participant 16).

He then explained how it worked. All that was needed was to install the Bambuser application on a smartphone, and it would be ready to use. This led to consideration of the use of smartphones and other devices that enabled Occupiers to connect through the Internet. Observations indicated that most Occupiers had some sort of portable device, such as a smartphone, tablet or laptop, to connect to the Internet and broadcast whatever they wanted, as well as to see others' live-streams. As a result, the single requirement for every meeting was for the venue to have a wi-fi connection. This was essential because the meetings had to be live-streamed to those who could not attend in person. Use of the Internet, and especially Internet-enabled devices, was evident from the beginning of the Occupy movement. For instance, Coleman states that 'on that first day of Occupy, many of us were hooked to our phones even as we were present at the square. Every half hour or so, I would fetch my phone from my pocket and skim through my Twitter

feed' (Coleman 2014: 318). On many occasions in London, people were constantly updating their social media account feeds to see what was going on.

The impact of the Internet and digital media also arose on other occasions, emphasising their power in the Occupy movement, both internally and externally. For instance, during one interview, the interviewee was asked whether she could think of anything related to the Occupy London movement, and she pointed at her smartphone.

> This [her smartphone] is definitely Occupy-related because I would never have this without Occupy. I would never. I doubt very much whether I'd have had a smartphone – this [is] almost four months old, by the way – but the reason I bought this was because one of the men in Occupy who works full-time in a shop, mechanical shop, he was doing all the streaming by himself. I was so impressed. He was just every day, every meeting streaming, streaming, streaming. I told him, 'Look, I must help you. This is ridiculous.' And also I could learn something and ask him what phone I should get, and he told me. So I got this phone, and it took me six weeks to learn, so now I am a big filmmaker [laughing], yeah. So, yeah, filming, photographs, calling everyone, sending messages about the meetings, everything (Interviewee 7).

On another occasion, during a conversation with an Occupy member, she took out her iPad, which had a broken screen. She said it had happened during their encampment on St Paul's steps. She said she was very proud of her iPad because she could do live-streaming with it, as well as using it to check emails and social media platforms, and particularly to go online for constant updates on the Occupy

movement. She stated that, since the occupation had started, she had had it with her as if it were her credit card; she kept it close to her, and it now formed part of her life. Hers was not the only case, as many people were interested in using Internet-based devices to help the Occupy movement, either by livestreaming, posting on Facebook, tweeting or re-tweeting about Occupy-related events, or other similar activities. From observations and conversations with Occupy members, it was apparent that the use of smartphones and other devices such as tablets and laptops among Occupiers was extensive.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has presented data on new media, revealing various impacts of digital media on the Occupy movement and its members. Several aspects have been discussed. The role of various digital media and online platforms has been discussed in terms of their different affordances, such as disseminating the movement's message, recruiting people, and mobilising and organising members. During conversations with participants, the power struggle amongst Occupiers to access the social media account passwords was discussed. Members of the movement realised the significant impact of online platforms, and therefore wanted access to the passwords in order to share the power of these new media.

The chapter has also discussed other affordances of digital media in terms of live-streaming. Live-streaming enabled people to watch the Occupy movement's events and debates without being in a particular place. All these interesting data will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Another interesting theme extracted from the data is the theme of the 'non-leader', as participants shared their feelings and understanding regarding the

leaderlessness of the movement. The next chapter will elaborate on the 'non-leaders, artefacts and material culture' theme relating to different codes in relation to leadership questions.

Chapter 8: Non-leaders, artefacts and material cultures

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines leadership-related codes in the data. It discusses the differing opinions of the Occupiers regarding the leadership of the movement, which varied from a completely leaderless movement to a completely led, or even manipulated, movement. The focus then shifts to the use of artefacts, and especially the Guy Fawkes mask, as part of Occupy London's repertoire of protest.

8.2 Non-leaders

Leadership and the leaderlessness of the movement was at the core of most conversations with members, who gave contradictory accounts of the leaderlessness of the movement. Thus, 'non-leaders' was identified as a theme, consisting of codes such as leaderlessness, hierarchy, non-hierarchy, structure, heterarchy, facilitator, thinker, star, initiator, unleaders, leaderful, structureless, class differences and network theory.

As all participants were aware of the research, in conversation they sometimes commented on leadership issues, even if not asked to do so. The non-leaders theme encompasses several different leadership positions. Some respondents suggested that the movement was completely leaderless, others believed it was leaderless-ish, and some argued that there *were* leaders in the movement. For instance, some participants stated that the movement had no leaders, but only facilitators and organisers. Interestingly, those taking this stance were also facilitators or organisers in the movement.

8.3 Thinker or initiator – a star maybe? But definitely not a leader!

Interestingly, when members who called themselves facilitators or initiators were asked direct questions about their leadership role, they always avoided the word 'leadership' and tried to come up with other words to clarify their role in the movement:

> Initiator! What was the other thing that I defined myself? Connector. So something that I do a lot of, like, also because I was working a lot on online platforms, especially at the beginning. So I was working on the website and making sure that information was coming in and was working at the info tent as well at the beginning. I was making sure that the working groups were sharing the information. I was connected to many different groups so was able to say, like, 'Oh, OK. You are working on this, and that group is working on that and you can work together' (Interviewee 2).

Some Occupiers used other words in place of 'leader'. For instance, another respondent highlighted his role in the movement as follows:

> I am just a thinker – a person who has ideas, who suggests the way forward, how to harmonise, you feel like a policy, how to balance a certain ideology. This is me. I am not a copycat. I don't copy other people, what they do (Participant 12).

On another occasion, one participant claimed that he was a star in the network of the Occupy movement, in which there was no hierarchy. During conversations, he took *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age* from his bag, a book by Duncan Watts on network theory, and said:

> I am one of the stars of the network! Think of a three-dimensional connected network, and some of those links are stronger and some of them are weaker. I think most of the people who get things done in Occupy London are aware of my existence, and also I think the economic working group has a degree of respect (Interviewee 7).

Apart from labelling themselves with creative adjectives, on some occasions, the participants discussed the amount of time they had dedicated to the movement. For instance, some pointed out how long they had spent in the movement, and expected the researcher to have heard of them. One participant, in the first conversation, said: 'You might have heard so many things about me before, because I am very famous in Occupy' (Participant 21). He also said that it was 'OK' to use his real name in the research, as he believed that people knew him anyway and were aware of his viewpoint on the Occupy movement.

8.4 Leaderless-ish

However, not all organisers and facilitators of the movement were keen to be interviewed. The justifications for this unwillingness were similar; and because they already knew about the topic of the research, they always emphasised that the movement was leaderless. One said: 'You won't find a leader here, so why do you want to ruin this?' (Participant 18).

Although they were told that the research was not seeking to identify a leader but to establish how things happened in the movement without a leader, they always reacted very negatively to the term 'leader' and would not listen to any clarifications, in case they were considered to be leaders themselves. Their decision not to be interviewed and their emphasis that they were leaderless, while

being unwilling to enter into any discussions, indicated their strong opinions about the terms 'leader' and 'leadership' and demonstrated their prejudice regarding the movement. This was the case with Justine Tunney, who refused to be interviewed at the last minute, as previously mentioned.

However, every opportunity was taken to talk about the leaderlessness of the movement with the Occupiers. On one occasion, in a conversation during a coffee break, one advocator of leaderlessness was unable to convince two other people that the movement was completely leaderless. Therefore, he concluded: 'Occupy is a leaderless-ish movement!' (Participant 14).

Participant 8 continued the discussion:

> Even though it is not leaderless, it is still actually managing to create change, positive change. It's a battle. It's a battle between the dark forces of multinationals and people, and this is a measure of the difficulty. Occupy is the measure of the great difficulty of battling multinationals who are selfish (Participant 8).

A woman who, until that moment, had just been listening, added: 'I think it is more like a family now' (Participant 16).

Even when discussions became more heated, the focus of argument always returned to the philosophy of the movement, and how important it was to have such a movement to fight capitalism and multinational corporations, rather than putting energy into examining whether or not the movement had a leader.

Apart from the facilitators or, as they called themselves, 'thinkers', 'initiators', 'connectors' or 'stars' of the movement, other Occupiers suggested that it was not just one person who was leading the movement, but a group of people:

> There is something called the process group, the process working party, which used to sort of work out the agenda for general assembly several days ahead. Because we used to have a general assembly once or twice a day at the beginning of Occupy, and things must be in order to be discussed (Participant 3).

One interviewee also gave the same account. When asked whether she thought there were leaders in the movement, she identified two men whom she thought performed the leadership role:

> There were a couple of guys who took control of very much what was happening. I mean, those were committed human beings. This was not part-timers, you know; these were 24/7 committed activists … they break into buildings to set up another occupation or, you know, put up another bank account, looking after funds, setting up kitchens, process, organising. You know, organising such a big community is not easy. I mean, even though there are hundreds of people to do the soldiers' work, it has to be organised; but having said that, it really happened organically. There is no way, either, that they planned it from before, which I don't know (Interviewee 2).

This again indicates that people who put more time and energy into the movement assumed more responsibility and leadership roles from the movement in return, whether or not they wanted them. In this regard, another interviewee said that the leadership role might emerge for various reasons, such as the ability of the person to afford not to work full-time, or have a house and not pay rent. It also depended on their level of expertise, and on the amount of time they dedicated to the movement:

People can become leaders; they can lead for various reasons – their expertise, their time. So time has been a big thing, so people who have, you know, either squatters or people who don't need to pay rent, or so they can dedicate more time to it. So there are privileged people, you know, and there are people that maybe have social skills that may allow them to connect and meet many people. So there are all these things, and it is really important that those people share those things, so if they have expertise or they have connection and so on, they share them as much as possible. But I have noticed what often is missing is that people don't have maybe the expertise and so on; they don't realise how important it is for them to try again. So it is very often complaining that they can't do this and that, but they don't do something to change it. I mean, that is one of the reasons for me that skill sharing is fundamental, because if you want a horizontal group, you have to make sure that everyone can have the same competence in doing things (Interviewee 1).

This quotation reveals that, although people wanted the movement to be leaderless, the time that specific people dedicated to the movement, and also their involvement, indicated that things must be checked with them before the go-ahead was granted. Moreover, people with greater activist experience and more involvement were automatically given more responsibility, and consequently more power.

Another reason given was the level of education of certain people in the movement, which made their arguments more convincing than others. In other words, people with less education and money would relinquish the leadership

positions or steering group and facilitator roles to those with more education, money or expertise:

> But in the end, you know, if you have better education, more education, you're never deprived. You know, everybody has a different childhood, and – you understand what I am saying? – some people came from poverty, some people were aristocrats, some people were artists, everybody was different. So even if they really wanted to be, and they were democratic, there would always be a small group … smallish – fifty people – who would take responsibility for most of the activities, which is fine. In the end, though, you could actually see that this was the best alternative to capitalism I have ever seen, yeah, because actually, the truth is that everybody participated one way or another (Participant 9).

Moreover, some people completely disagreed with the leaderlessness of the movement:

> The idea of the leaderlessness of Occupy is not true! I have to accept that, because the Occupy movement is a mirror of the state of society, and it is also the greatest, it has the greatest potential for positive changes. So it is complicated (Participant 12).

The previous two quotations imply the existence of prefigurative politics in the Occupy London movement, as will be discussed in Chapter 9. However, the above quotations regarding people with higher education or more resources, such as money or time, brings class differences to the fore. The 'class issue' was also a debated subject for the Occupiers. Some members claimed that people with better

education, greater wealth, a better childhood or more competence were potential leaders of the movement:

> They say that we have no leadership, we do everything by participative democracy. And I said, 'Well, what does that mean?' In the end, there are always stronger women and men and children who have to take leadership. Because we are human; this is what happens, you know. And they said, 'No, no, we discuss everything; everything must be discussed.' And it is true; they always try to have these discussions, it is absolutely true. But in the end, you know, if you have better education, more education, you're never disappointed (Participant 8).

Members' competence was another factor that was discussed. One participant said that he believed that people with more competence, in terms of getting things done, performed organising or facilitating roles in the movement:

> Basically, you get authority in terms of business school, business theory, not by having been... I mean, you've probably done Weber's typologies of, you know, position of authority and, you know, some people get it from role, some people get it from charisma, and some people just get it from competence. They're getting up and doing something that seems plausible so that people go with it, and I would say it's more of the latter within Occupy. Yeah, it's a form of anarchy, and it can work surprisingly well. I mean, the way that camp actually physically structured itself and reconfigured itself several times during the four months that it was out there on the ground, it does show that

you don't need a head honcho at the top to make things work. I know

some people are very sceptical about this (Interviewee 4).

Some participants argued that alternative words, such as facilitator, organiser and

so on, were used simply because the leaders wanted to detach themselves from

the title of 'leader'. For instance, one participant said that there were leaders who

just did not admit their role, but they existed.

8.5 Unleaders

Some people thought that the movement actually had leaders and had

experienced this themselves:

There were really leaders, but they didn't like the title, yeah. So I am just

saying to them, 'Look! Just own up. It's OK. I mean, I love leaders,

nothing wrong with leaders, but don't tell me that you are not a leader

when you are a leader, because I see with my eyes how you behave'

(Participant 1).

On another occasion, a participant said:

But, you know, there are some people who would say all the time, 'We

are not leaders! We are just other Occupiers.' But you can see that they

have more influence (Participant 5).

It was evident from the above discussion that such individuals felt that they had

more influence and a degree of respect, but they did not want the title. In response

to their denial, one Occupier called them 'unleaders': 'I used to say [laughing], I

used to call them the "unleaders" in Occupy. Because they say they don't act like

leaders, but they are leaders!' (Participant 8).

Although some argued that this prefiguration of the Occupy movement was the best alternative going forward, they also admitted that it had shortcomings. For instance, some discussed why, from their experience of exercising leaderlessness in the movement, being leaderless would not work:

> Sometimes, when we had the camp, we had the general assembly where we decided together what we wanted to do, and then we brought that forward. Actually, that doesn't work [laughing] all the time! So, for example, what happened last June, let's say, we decided collectively to organise the mobilisation in October, which was called 'globalnoise'. And I remember being in that assembly, and people were saying, 'Oh yeah, we should do it, we should do it!' and I was, like, quite critically, 'OK! Who is gonna do it?' You know, one thing is decided, that we should do it, but who should do it? 'Oh yeah, we should do it, we should do it.' And then, in October, we ended up four or five people working on it. So I think what I am learning is that how the project starts and the decision-making process that we use to decide we're gonna do something is fundamental also, and then the actual outcome of that (Interviewee 5).

Inherited leaderlessness and structureless group issues were also apparent in the Occupy London movement, as one participant argued:

> Sometimes we think of the problems of leaderless groups; we think these problems are related to the fact that they are leaderless. But I think these are like more structureless groups or open groups, so there are other elements. One of the problems of leaderless groups is that

sometimes people don't feel that they can act because they feel that, 'OK, I want to make sure that everyone's happy with what I am doing', so sometimes it inhibits action, and people don't want to be leader (Participant 18).

These quotations indicate that people who dedicated more time and effort to the movement demanded higher positions, as they were those who, in the end, needed to finish the job.

The structurelessness of the Occupy movement was also a point of discussion in conversations with participants. During these chats, it became apparent that most of the movement's members were talking about the non-hierarchy and structurelessness of the movement. This appears also to relate to leadership, as they argued about the role of stars in networks, rather than leaders and followers:

I don't know if you've come across the word 'heterarchy'. I mean, I see things in terms of network theory, and certainly not hierarchical. Have you come across Duncan Watts at all? He writes some interesting stuff. … If you don't have hierarchies, at least you have stars who are more connected with everybody else. I used to think of myself, as I am a bit too introverted [to be a] star. I tend to have a handful, relatively speaking, of, you know, people that know me and I interact with, but my strategy has always been to identify a handful of stars who know me and can use me and can link me up effectively, even though I don't know the first names of dozens of people (Interviewee 7).

This interviewee also argued that, within this network, there were several clusters that could be used as a starting point to gain more recognition and respect:

> As you know, if you've got a network of people, the number of possible links you know increases by roughly half the square of the number of people there … So you need to diminish some links, and clumping and clustering. I mean. I have focused on my little clump, which is the economic working group, sustaining and facilitating that (Interviewee 7).

The structurelessness of the movement and its network-based structure gained momentum when it took advantage of digital media, as discussed in Chapter 7. Some members also expressed strong support for their network-based 'heterarchy': 'You look at communications through networks. A hierarchy is great for running an army; it is no good for running a guerrilla war, is it?' (Participant 19).

Other members of the movement contended that not having a hierarchy was impractical:

> Let me just make it clear. The situation is not 100 per cent black and white. I would say Occupy in England, in London, claims to be non-hierarchical; it is not really non-hierarchical. It tries to appear non-hierarchical. It actually wouldn't be possible, or even safe, for it to be non-hierarchical. … So that, in a way, it wouldn't be a good idea, actually, for it to be non-hierarchical. It needs to be put this way: Occupy as a movement needs to be directed, needs to be steered like a ship by

people who are concerned about the future of the world and the safety

of the world (Participant 10).

This quotation neatly summarises the contention that the movement was not completely leaderless, but had a group of people with different titles, such as facilitators, initiators, stars, thinkers, connectors and organisers, who dedicated most of their time and energy to Occupy in order to keep it running. This is central to the research questions of this thesis regarding how this was done and what forms of coordination in which the movement engaged in order to keep going.

However, others believed that, in essence, leadership terms were not a good fit for the argument. In other words, some members were confused about whether or not using the word 'leadership' was appropriate in that context, as they were not quite sure what leadership actually is:

So, there is a level at which everybody has leadership and no leadership. All I am trying to suggest is that, in the end, for me, I am not really sure what leadership is or isn't! Do you understand what I mean? I don't really know what they're trying to say, actually. Because nothing happens without somebody taking responsibility. Maybe the word is not 'leadership' but 'responsibility'; maybe it is as simple as that (Participant 11).

This confusion about the meaning of 'leadership' was explicit among most members. One said that he was not quite sure of the term 'leader', but that there were people who made things happen: 'There are people who are taking responsibility in a very sort of backroom fashion, yeah, but they made things happen' (Participant 14).

These quotations demonstrate that people did understand that there were people with more responsibility than others, who obtained more resources to distribute and who had access to digital media passwords to mobilise. However, they did not call them 'leaders', but 'people with responsibilities'.

8.6 Power dynamics are inevitable

In conversations, some Occupiers explained the dynamics of power and hierarchy, even within a leaderless movement:

> A leaderless group? I think that whatever structure you have, even if you think it is structureless, there'll always be power dynamics and there'll always be hierarchy. So I think in Occupy, there has been an attempt for horizontality and so on, but there have been people that have to lead more. What Occupy has is, it observes and is very conscious about it and tries to change things so these things don't happen. But at the same time, I think a lot of people don't realise the effort (Interviewee 2).

However, some participants were pessimistic, believing that everything was orchestrated.

8.7 Conspiracy theory

Some participants also believed in a conspiracy theory, claiming not only that the movement was not leaderless, but that several governments were leading it:

> We are not talking about one leader; we are talking about probably a collection of people here in the UK, many of them who probably worked for the government, or in some way worked with the government … and also other governments, Spanish government, Portugal, Greece, other

> European governments. Occupy, this democratic movement, has to be managed; otherwise, they become a stampede in a football stadium, where people get crushed (Participant 3).

With regard to the conspiracy theory, some members privately intimated that they thought that foreign members of the Occupy movement had not obtained their prime positions in the movement spontaneously:

> I met a lot of people in Occupy. I have known quite a lot of participants whom I have seen week in and week out for well over a year now. It looks to me that there is a collection of people in this country who are involved in the main, if you like, steersmanship of Occupy here. But also, it's not British UK occupiers; quite often, foreign people from Spain, or people from Greece or other places like Hong Kong and other places in the world seem to turn up and instantly occupy, if you like, prime positions of direction within the movement. It looks quite curious because it doesn't look spontaneous; it looks manufactured to me. But you have to remember, I've been involved thoroughly for quite a long time, and everybody would possibly perceive what is going on in a different way (Participant 8).

Although this claim may seem harsh, it is important to state here that, in some cases, the claim of a conspiracy may have been true. For instance, Coleman refers to the role among activists of Stratfor, an intelligence company, which sent an employee, 'self-described in an email as "U/C" (undercover)', to infiltrate the local Occupy group in Austin, Texas, with the goal of gathering organisational intelligence by tracking the Occupiers' movements and identifying possible ties

with environmental activists (Coleman 2014: 351). This indicates that, in some cases, the Occupiers' claims may not have been as improbable as they sound.

The data reveal various views on the leaderlessness of the movement. Some considered it to be a completely leaderless movement, whereas others thought it was a leaderless-ish movement. Some believed in network theory and stars in the movement, whereas others believed that the movement had a leader or group of leaders. As implied in the previous two quotes, some also believed in a conspiracy theory. All these contradictory views will be discussed in Chapter 9 in relation to the research questions.

8.8 The Guy Fawkes mask

Figure 13. Guy Fawkes masks
Source: Adapted from Kristian Buus's website. (http://www.kristianbuus.com/index)

Apart from the data gathered from members of the movement, other data needed to be considered, given the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest. As discussed in Chapter 3, the use of Guy Fawkes masks was one pillar of this repertoire of protest, promoting recognition of the Occupy movement, as well as its leaderlessness. Figure 13 depicts Occupiers on St Paul's steps during the occupation phase.

The masks also attracted mainstream media and public attention, as a mass of people all wore the mask, undermining individuality within the movement. As discussed earlier, use of masks spread to other movements, such as the 'Million Masks March', as a symbol of protest against the system. The mask may give the impression that the masses are homogeneous and there is no distinction between individuals. This use of the mask in the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest gained momentum from its initiation phase toward the occupation phase, as stated in the draft declaration of the assembly in Zuccotti Park. The declaration reads:

> As one people, formerly divided by the color of our skin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or lack thereof, political party and cultural background, we acknowledge the reality: that there is only one race, the human race, and our survival requires the cooperation of its members (Comer 2015: 74).

Reasons why the Occupiers wore masks will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.

8.9 Summary

The data presented in this and the two previous chapters suggest that answering the research questions is not straightforward. This is because the terms 'leader' and 'leadership' were interpreted in various ways. The findings reveal various assertions regarding leadership of the movement, ranging from pure leaderlessness to leaderless-ish, as claimed by facilitators and organisers of the movement, and from hierarchy to heterarchy, and from leaders to unleaders, as claimed by ordinary members of the movement. The Occupiers always advocated

the leaderlessness of the movement, even in cases where the layout of a room seemed peculiar to them, suggesting that someone was seeking to control them.

However, some people attempted implicitly, or in some cases explicitly, to put themselves in leadership positions because of the time and energy they had dedicated to the movement. Some discussed networks and stars in network theory, and how the Occupiers used network theory to connect with each other to undermine the hierarchy. In this regard, the findings indicate that use of the Internet and online resources had a massive impact on Occupy's activities and was a pillar of the movement's repertoire of protest.

The physical and virtual spaces used by Occupiers were raised in conversation with the movement's members. As argued in Chapter 3, physical and virtual space played a significant role in the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest. According to the data, the physical space that had been occupied for months gave the Occupiers an identity and power, but they did not realise this until it had gone. This physical space was used not only to communicate messages to the world, but also to gain identity, respect, support and power, and as a point of convergence for members of the movement. As mentioned in Chapter 3, and also in this chapter, the movement started on the Internet, continued its existence in both physical and virtual space until the eviction, and has since moved to the Internet.

Digital media were also a repeated topic of conversation. They were highlighted not only as a tool to counter mainstream media coverage, but also as a means to provide unity and support, whether emotional or technical, for members of the movement. Members recreated the physical space in virtual space using various online platforms, which enabled them to exercise the rituals of the movement in

virtual space. To this end, they even created symbols resembling the hand signals that had been used in general assemblies in the physical space.

The space and new media themes extracted from the data suggest that they were used in ways other than their ordinary use. In other words, these themes provided affordances other than those for which they were originally assigned. It is not new for social movements to invent new tools and technology in their repertoires of protest, or to use old technologies in new ways, as discussed in Chapter 2. These interesting and rich findings will be discussed in Chapter 9 in examining possible explanations and potential implications of the findings and to answer the research questions and conclude the thesis.

Chapter 9: Discussion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter relates the data presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 to selected aspects of the literature on social movements (see Chapters 2 and 3) and to theoretical debates on leadership (Chapter 4). The discussion begins by drawing on the interview data to consider how participants in the research related to the question of how a leaderless social movement could be coordinated and sustained by its members. The chapter emphasises the socially-constructed nature of leadership and, building on the earlier discussion of Kelly (2008) presented in Chapter 2, argues that the analysis should focus on the 'forms of life' and 'practical accomplishments' of the London Occupy movement, rather than on detailed empirical accounts of 'leaderlessness'. Drawing on Iedema (2007), it is also argued that the London Occupy movement can be understood as an ensemble of symbolic meanings, practical accomplishments and communicative political actions that allowed activists to mobilise and develop a broad-ranging repertoire of protest. The chapter considers how a complex of divergent but interrelated modalities – occupation of physical and virtual space, appropriation of both 'new' and 'old' media and dramaturgical use of physical artefacts (most notably the Guy Fawkes mask) – were deployed in ways that instantiated a series of highly-charged political 'spectacles' that challenged the dominance of the capitalist economic order. The discussion ends by considering the claim that the Occupy movement represents a new template for twenty-first-century political activism. Whilst the movement can be seen as distinctively new in the sense that it operates 'virtually' and without a fixed political programme or formal structure, the final part of the chapter argues that the political actions described in this research have

their origins not just in the protest movements of the 1960s, but also in a much earlier tradition of dissent and insurrectionary struggle that predates the social movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

9.2 A leaderless movement?

This thesis has investigated some of the specific ways in which the London Occupy movement was coordinated and controlled by its members. The data presented in Chapter 8 suggest that participants in the research viewed the question of leadership in a variety of ways. Some argued that the movement was completely leaderless (e.g. Participant 18), whilst others argued that the movement was quasi-leaderless (e.g. Participant 14, Interviewee 1, Interviewee 4). Several participants (e.g. Participant 19, Interviewee 7) emphatically denied the presence of hierarchy within London Occupy, claiming that the movement was entirely structureless. Two participants (Participants 5 and 8) argued that the movement included groups and individuals who may implicitly or explicitly have influenced others. Participant 3 believed that the movement was not, in fact, self-directed and that it had been subverted by an unspecified conspiracy of hidden control. Some of these quotations were responses to a direct question about 'leadership', while others were from participants freely offering opinions. In either case, the interview material suggests that participants held a range of divergent and often mutually contradictory standpoints on the question of how the movement was coordinated and controlled. One participant stated that she did not know what 'leadership' meant and suggested that perhaps the best term to use would be 'responsibility' rather than 'leadership' (Participant 11). Some participants focused on facilitator roles in the movement, emphatically rejecting the term

'leader' and preferring to distinguish particular roles, such as those of initiator, connector or thinker (Interviewee 2, Participant 12).

Chapter 2 indicated that, in previous movements, fear of being labelled as someone seeking to 'take charge' or dominate others had prevented some individuals from developing particular talents and skills (Cornell 2011). Occupy protester, Justine Tunney stated that she felt unappreciated, despite having made a substantial contribution to the movement. Freeman (1972) argues that an anti-leadership consensus made some activists very critical of those who even attempted to provide guidance or direction for the movement (Buechler 1990).

As discussed in Chapter 2, the case of the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp offers some useful insights into these issues. At Greenham, campers faced difficulties in determining how to balance issues of inclusivity, safety and wellbeing, and some elements of hierarchy emerged within the encampment (Feigenbaum et al. 2013). Protesters who devoted time to the movement became experienced camp organisers, developed relevant knowledge and gained control of resources (e.g. finances, accounts or equipment), thus placing them in *de facto* leadership positions. These features were apparent in the accounts provided by several participants interviewed for this study (e.g. Participant 21, Interviewee 1). Whilst protesters working in horizontal networks may not wish to become leaders or present themselves as such, they may possess 'leadership' qualities without the title. Gerbaudo (2012) argues that leaders or core organisers continue to exist in all 'leaderless' movements. Arguably, these roles will continue to exist within radically decentralised, structureless movements whose dynamic mobilisation necessarily implies the presence of imbalances and irregularities.

Nunes (2014) suggests that contemporary leaderless movements may be understood as distributed network systems that are subject to continuous internal differentiation and distributed forms of localised agency, in which all participants may engage. This recalls Sutherland et al.'s (2014) argument (discussed in Chapter 4) that analysis should focus on how leaderless movements function as systems of meaning in which the binary opposition of 'leader' and 'follower' is largely abandoned. Whilst the interview data presented in Chapter 8 provide empirical evidence that such hard-and-fast distinctions were undermined or eliminated in the case of London Occupy (see, for example, Participants 11 and 12), this distracts from the task of elucidating how the broader political project can be understood in relation to the practical accomplishments and 'forms of life' enacted by its members.

These points have a strong bearing on earlier discussions of leadership theory (Kelly 2008, 2013), and also resonate with Iedema's (2007) argument that particular conjunctions of social action, discourse and material culture inhere in highly specific, historically situated 'forms of life'. Scholars of social movements should, from this perspective, avoid the 'category mistake' of pursuing exhaustive empirical programmes of researching leaderlessness (Kelly 2008). As previously noted, Sutherland et al. (2014) cogently argue the need for further examination of ways in which leaderless movements work as systems and processes of meaning making. However, their work does not capture the broader ways in which the ability to generate both meaning and collective action is realised 'multimodally'; that is, through a heterogeneous ensemble of elements that might, for example, combine occupation of physical space and close engagement with technology-

based affordances that create opportunities for new forms of communication and representation.

The next part of the discussion draws on the earlier empirical chapters to show how the London Occupy movement can be understood as an ensemble of symbolic meanings and political deployments directed against the existing capitalist order. The movement sustained and reproduced a broad repertoire of protest and communicative political action, the modalities of which included:

i)   A politically-effective occupation of physical space in London's financial district and the symbolically-charged creation of an encampment that appropriated a well-known religious site

ii)   Use of internet technology to create alignments and coordinate agents on the ground

iii)   Use of social media to create radical alternatives to mainstream media

iv)   A series of politically-charged 'spectacles' that appropriated the news agendas of established broadcast and print media

v)   Use of the Guy Fawkes mask to create strong dramaturgical effects and an icon of insurgence that symbolised the movement.

9.3 London Occupy: The symbolic and political occupation of urban space

Securing symbolic and political control of urban spaces, particularly those close to the centres of financial power, featured centrally in the political repertoires of the Occupy movements in New York, London and elsewhere. London Occupy differed from more traditional forms of protest, in that it enabled a series of embodied meanings to accrue around the steps of St Paul's Cathedral. St Paul's is a nationally renowned religious space. Positioning the encampment on the

cathedral steps provided the protesters with an opportunity for politically-inspired remoralisation of what had become an officially sanctioned tourist destination. Figures 4 to 10 show the communal facilities of the encampment, including a 'university' tent providing teaching facilities, a library, a kitchen, a cinema and a first-aid tent. Following Lefèbvre's (1991: 94) account of space as 'a social morphology', the camp can be understood as a site of ongoing social interaction rather than a mere backdrop for these actions (Elden 2004). The participants spoke about ways in which the encampment worked as a participatory community – a physical space for socialising as the society that they sought to build, where people could access free education, free health services and free food in the community. Some participants (e.g. Participant 3) spoke about the sense of ownership that pervaded the site. This was apparent even amongst those who did not sleep overnight in the camp (e.g. Participants 2 and 22). The Occupiers converted a public space (empty space) into a political commons that functioned as a site for open discussion and debate (Harvey 2012). The occupied space can be seen as a prefigurative free space (Polletta 1999) in which the Occupiers attempted to prefigure and build and exercise their own desired society. The Occupiers were enabled to act with dignity, independence and vision (Evans and Boyte 1986). Participants in the research constantly talked about the encampment and St Paul's steps as their utopia, a place that made many things possible for them, such as friendship, unity and mutual support (e.g. Interviewee 4). The protesters felt empowered by the sense of unity that occupation of the physical space had given them (Participant 22). The occupied space provided an opportunity to show how participative democracy could develop around alternative social forms in the very heart of London's financial district.

9.3.1 Virtual space

The above analysis indicates that the encampment at St Paul's provided a symbolic and political focus for protesters occupying an urban space, the religious significance of which had been overlain by its official status as part of the corporation of London. As discussed in Chapter 2, the advent of new information and communications technologies has raised complex conceptual and substantive questions for scholars of social movements. Some commentators have focused on specific ways in which densely interconnected digital infrastructures provide affordances that enable particular forms of social action (Bennett 2003; Bennett and Segerberg 2011; Tufekci and Wilson 2012). Adami and Kress (2010: 185) observe that: 'The media we use and the affordances they offer – what they facilitate, what they hinder and inhibit – influences how we make meaning and hence how we come to shape our identity in this respect.'

Collective engagement with Internet-based technologies may extend communicative political action and vocabularies of protest into the virtual sphere (Jones 2005; Markham 1998). Following Ropo et al. (2013), Chapter 4 underscored the idea that the physical act of occupation can be experienced and enacted as a socially-constructed 'imagined community'. The 'wearethe99percent' page provided a consciousness-raising space for New York Occupy and also functioned as a call to action for new members. The fieldwork carried out for this study suggests that technological affordances also provided the means whereby political deployments that were played out in physical space could also be rendered in the virtual sphere (as with the live-streaming of particular protest actions and events), thus providing a structure of opportunities to create particular alignments and coordinative possibilities.

Chapter 7 presented evidence on internal dissent and 'power struggles' (Participant 4) over collective control of passwords (see also Participants 7, 13 and 19 and Interviewee 2). These were resolved using Twitter's retweet facility (Participant 4). A more significant point in the discussion of London Occupy as an ensemble of meaning is that the use of digital platforms such as Facebook (with 96,000 followers of two pages) PiratePad, Mumble and Twitter (with 46,000 followers of the London Occupy account) featured centrally in the creation of particular political alignments, coordinated actions and vocabularies of protest. The fieldwork revealed participants logging on to PiratePads, Twitter or Mumble, and the researcher often heard protesters saying 'see you on Facebook' prior to engaging in online debate. Hence, by using hashtags such as #occupyLSX and #occupyLondon, the protestors circulated the vocabularies of protest such as 'we are the 99%' and 'no to capitalism' to the outside world.

Whilst the above analysis of London Occupy corroborates Adami and Kress's (2010:185) argument that social movements may engage with new technologies in ways that generate meaning, it should also be noted that broader repertoires of protest can be understood multimodally; that is, as a heterogeneous assemblage of disparate elements. Thus, London Occupy was defined not simply by its encampment but also by its politically-directed use of technological affordances. Such multimodality may manifest itself in unexpected and 'multidirectional' ways. This can be illustrated by focusing on how the protest was able to engage not just with new media, but also with the mainstream political narratives offered by established broadcast media. This is discussed below.

9.4 New and old media

In Chapter 2, it was noted that social movements have a long history of creating alternative media. (see discussions of the Greenham peace movement and Indymedia in Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.6). The Occupy London website was created to play the same role in the Occupy London movement (Participant 20). London Occupy protesters were thus able to use new media to provide radical alternatives to mainstream news and information services, challenging the dominant representations and narratives promulgated by these media (see Feigenbaum et al. 2013: 224 for parallel examples of new media usage in a variety of protest camps). Research shows that these media have a particular resonance with younger citizens whose engagement with 'old' print and broadcast media has waned rapidly with the rapid growth in internet usage (e.g. Lim 2012; Wilson and Hayhurst 2009).

This thesis has shown that occupation of the St Paul's site received widespread coverage in established UK print and broadcast media (see Chapter 3). As noted in Section 7.3, protesters resented the mendacity of the UK tabloid press. However, relations betwen the protest and established centres of media power were complex and multidirectional. Print media coverage of Zuccotti Park by *The New York Times, Time Magazine* and other established newspapers was often positive, and was instrumental in communicating a powerful message to citizens who were concerned about economic inequality, joblessness and corporate corruption, as well as raising consciousness of the dominance of a newly globalised capitalist class (Chomsky 2012: 17). The Occupy message resonated with global news audiences, ringing out from the tented encampments to capture editorial discussion and political discourse in civil society. Despite the cogency of

the political arguments, the visual impact of the Occupy movement on global TV audiences can be equated with Debord's (1967) *Society of the Spectacle*. Occupation of St Paul's provided a salient example of this. Whilst the occupation was relatively short-lived (four months), the interaction of protesters with police, religious leaders and officials from the City of London Corporation provided a compelling source of interest for news editors. Whilst it has been shown that the site functioned as a platform for civic participation and engagement with the political issues just noted, one of the most resonant spectacles was provided by the eviction that occurred on 28 February 2012**.** Interviews with participants show the lived experience of the encampment as a participatory space that offered mutuality and support (Interviewee 4), identity (Participant 18) and a conduit for symbolic communication with the outside world (Participants 6 and 22). Protesters experienced a corresponding sense of loss in the aftermath of the eviction, although the apparent 'defeat' that followed from the removal of the protestors produced a potent and politically resonant visual spectacle, as police units clashed with protesters. TV coverage also showed the police taking particular care to remove all physical traces of the encampment. The eviction had real and significant political consequences that went beyond the media spectacle. Church leaders were critical of the Corporation of London and were divided on the question of how they should react to the continued presence of the encampment.

9.5 The Guy Fawkes mask

The discussion so far has sought to show how the occupation of St Paul's can be understood as a series of political engagements or deployments (both 'real' and virtual), and as a means of generating shared meanings. This thesis has provided

an interpretivist account of how protesters coordinated these meanings, using space (mediated through symbols), time (mediated through social processes) and artefacts (non-human objects) as resources for their sensemaking. The earlier discussion of multimodality suggested that disparate material, political and symbolic elements of the London Occupy movement were brought together in a complex, heterogeneous ensemble of meanings. A key point made by anarchist commentator, Lewis Call (2008) is that representations can themselves be understood as key elements in the broader repertoire of protest. As Call (2008: 163) argues:

> If power in the postmodern world is based largely upon illusion and the creative manipulation of reality, then revolutionaries have a clear and effective strategy available to them. They need only seize the engines of simulation, puncture the veil of illusion, and replace the official discourse with a radical alternative narrative.

One especially potent symbol that pervaded the London and New York movements was the Guy Fawkes mask. Call argues further that: 'The face of Fawkes stands ready to engage capital and the state in the place where they are weakest, the terrain of representation' (Call 2008: 157).

Whilst it is clear that the Guy Fawkes mask functioned as a representational challenge to the established order, it also functioned as a sensemaking device. As noted in Chapter 5, Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004) identify three main dimensions of sensemaking that help to elucidate the significance of physical artefacts for collective sensemaking: instrumental, aesthetic and symbolic (Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz 2004: 671). The case of London Occupy corroborates

the idea that masks provide an instrumentally effective and collectively empowering means of maintaining anonymity in situations where individual protesters are exposed to the gaze of police observers and surveillance cameras. However, repertoires of protest cannot be seen in purely instrumental terms; they need to be understood as reflections of particular social values, orientations and aims pursued by activist groups (Byrne 2013). Here, the Guy Fawkes mask can be understood not simply as a concealment device, but also as an iconic representation of a movement whose identity and unity of purpose cohered around horizontality, radically decentralised rapid deployments (Kaulingfreks and Kaulingfreks 2013) and anonymity (Olson 2013). The mask functioned in ways that promoted the idea of 'collective horizontality', or what Werbner (2014) calls 'hierarchy reversal', thus challenging the existing order (Shrivastava and Ivanova 2015).

With regard to the aesthetic dimension, the Guy Fawkes mask featured prominently in high-profile actions that received extensive coverage by national and world media. This created strongly dramaturgical effects, as TV images of masked protesters generated an immediate and compelling sense of insurrectionary political theatre. The aesthetics of the mask's design communicate anonymity and facelessness. Whilst this facelessness creates an absence that removes the visage of the individual protester from the immediate context of action, it also functions at a level where meaning itself is destabilised, with the mask emanating a sense of inscrutability, menace or glee, depending on the viewpoint of the observer. Furthermore, the mask functions relationally; that is, as part of a wider ensemble of meanings. The power to superimpose a subversive iconography of political theatre on TV news broadcasts worked

reciprocally with the occupation of physical space and with the use of online media. The main features of this ensemble are summarised at the end of this chapter.

9.6 Historical embeddedness of the London Occupy movement

Chapter 2 traced in broad outline the history of twentieth-century protest. As noted, much of the commentary on the Occupy protests characterises the movement as a new template for social activists, emphasising the radically decentred ways in which mobile telephony and internet technology have underpinned the coordination of particular tactical or strategic deployments (Rossiter and Zehle 2014).

So how novel was the London Occupy movement? And how can it be located historically? Whilst the movement can be seen as distinctively new, in the sense that it operates 'virtually' without fixed political programmes or formal structures, recall Iedema's (2007) argument that particular modes of meaning co-emerge within highly specific, historically situated 'forms of life' (Iedema 2007:931). The Occupy movement can, in this sense, be understood as a distinctively 'new' social movement rooted in the historical past. As noted in Chapters 2 and 3, the politics and tactics of occupation featured prominently in a long line of 'post-scarcity' protests from the 1960s (e.g. radical students, women's, anti-war and ecological movements). The media spectacles of Zuccotti Park and St Paul's can be traced back to French situationist accounts of how established electronic media were co-opted by political campaigners during the 1960s (Debord 1967). Contemporary discussions of the Guy Fawkes mask act as a

reminder that masks and revolutionary headgear have long been a central feature in the iconography of revolt (Call 2008; Kohns 2013).

Finally, the major focus of both the New York and London Occupy movements was the capitalist world order. Chomsky's account of the movement argues that 'Occupy can be seen as the first major public response to thirty years of class war' (Chomsky 2012: 54). This suggests historical roots in the struggles that made their first appearance in the 'old' industrial societies of the mid- to late 1800s.

9.7 London Occupy as an ensemble of meaning

The foregoing discussion of the London Occupy movement has related the data presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 to selected aspects of the literature on social movements (see Chapter 2) and to recent theoretical debate on the nature of 'leadership' presented in Chapter 4. The discussion has considered how participants viewed the question of how a 'leaderless' social movement could be coordinated and sustained by its members. It has emphasised the socially-constructed nature of leadership and has argued that analysis should focus on the 'forms of life' and 'practical accomplishments' of the London Occupy movement, rather than on empirical accounts of 'leaderlessness'. This chapter has argued that the London Occupy movement can be understood multimodally; that is, as an ensemble of symbolic meanings and political deployments directed against the existing capitalist order. The movement sustained and reproduced a broad repertoire of protest and communicative political action, the modalities of which included:

i)   The occupation of a symbolically significant urban space;

ii)   Use of internet technology to create political alignments and vocabularies of protest for agents on the ground;

iii)   Use of social media to create radical alternatives to mainstream media;

iv)   Creation of a visually compelling and politically charged 'spectacle' that appropriated the news agendas of established broadcast and print media;

v)   Adoption of the Guy Fawkes mask as an icon of 'leaderless' insurgence that symbolised the movement.

These disparate but closely intertwined modalities provided the movement with particular forms of direction, alignment and commitment (see earlier sources and discussion of the DAC framework in Section 4.4). Occupation of the St Paul's site provided the protesters with a focal point for the identity of the struggle and a space that could be inscribed with the prefigurative politics of the movement. Use of digital technology (including internet, mobile telephony and new media) provided particular forms of political alignment and coordination. Commitment to the movement cohered around the physical act of creating an encampment that was both transitory and a potent symbol of occupation. The movement evinced a highly committed political alternative to the capitalist order: the idea that these alternatives could be articulated and enacted by a leaderless movement that could be controlled and coordinated 'from below', given the London Occupy movement's *modus operandi* and compelling political identity.

Whilst the fieldwork reveals some evidence of internal power struggles, most notably over the issue of access to, and control over, the London Occupy Twitter account, the evidence presented in this research suggests that the protesters succeeded in the practical accomplishment of creating a new grammar of political

activism, and new forms of civic participation that emerged 'from below'. The evidence suggests, moreover, that the protestors' occupation of and subsequent eviction from the steps of St Paul's raised real and significant consequences, leading many to question the legitimacy of the civic and religious authorities who were nominally in control of the site. In other words, the Occupy movement managed to create a 'crack' (Holloway 2010) in the capitalist system. The problem, then, is not whether or not the movement has leaders, but how they will be able to overcome the shortcomings (lack of skill sharing among the members and issue of practicality of the participative democracy in large scale masses as discussed earlier) of their experienced brilliant movement in the future, as the Occupy movement's network is in place and is awaiting a trigger to start a new action. This network's focus is on helping to build power through connecting and coordinating the massive, spontaneous and transformative energy that has erupted since the advent of the Occupy movement (http://interoccupy.net). This movement has shown this affordance of influencing people through its existing networks in its post-latency phase, as discussed in Chapter 3. The examples of Occupy Sandy and the Rolling Jubilee are among the most well-known incidences. Therefore, the Occupy movement is not only resonant of peasant insurrectionary movements, but also illustrates the pervasive, mobile, agile forces that can deploy highly effective sudden movements against conventional forces.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This study has investigated how the London Occupy movement co-ordinated its actions without leaders. The thesis has examined ways in which particular forms of social action occurred in time and space, with particular reference to the artefacts and materials used in the movement. The research was framed by social constructionist work on how people make meanings together, and how these meanings become institutionalised. This allowed the development of an interpretivist account of how protesters coordinated their meanings, using space (mediated through symbols), time (mediated through social processes) and artefacts or materials (non-human objects) that functioned as resources for collective sensemaking.

10.1 Contribution

The thesis contributes to academic studies of social movements, drawing on Tilly's 'repertoire of collective action' or repertoire of protest (Tilly 1978; Goodwin and Jasper 2015) to examine the organising capacities and characteristics of a contemporary social movement. It has reviewed the literature on these movements and situated London Occupy historically, showing how distinctively new elements in the protest 'repertoire' of London Occupy were foregrounded by some key elements of historical continuity.

The thesis has also addressed the debate on 'leaderless' social movements as alternative forms of organisation (Parker et al. 2014a; Sutherland et al. 2014). The London Occupy movement was characterised by highly decentralised modes of action, extensive use of digital media and an apparent lack of 'leadership' or formal structure. Findings on the various perceptions of leadership amongst the

St Paul's protesters corroborate Kelly's (2008) arguments about the semantic and epistemological instability of the term 'leadership', suggesting that there are clear empirical and conceptual limits to what is thought of as 'leadership' in the study of social movements.

The thesis also contributes to the growing field of leadership studies, especially critical leadership studies. As discussed in the literature review section, relatively little research has been conducted on leadership within SMOs; the majority of the studies cited in this thesis have tended to draw on mainstream perspectives and the 'tripod ontology' (Drath et al, 2008). Moreover, the critical leadership research has also concentrated on formal organisational forms; decentralised and horizontal organisational forms are therefore relatively neglected as the focus of critical research. This thesis on the other hand, is concerned largely with the construction and performance of leadership in horizontal, decentralised forms of organisation in SMOs.

As illustrated in this thesis, the various perceptions of leadership amongst the St Paul's protesters corroborate Kelly's (2008) arguments about the semantic and epistemological instability of the term 'leadership', suggesting that there are clear empirical and conceptual limits to what is thought of as 'leadership' in the study of SMOs.

As noted in Chapter Eight, the fieldwork carried out at St Paul's shows that de facto coordinating roles emerged in the day-to-day running of the encampment. Whilst the research presented here highlights the value of engaging closely with protesters 'on the ground', empirical investigation of 'leadership' roles in leaderless movements is of limited value in understanding how symbolic

meanings and collective sense-making are instantiated in particular ensembles of meaning or repertoires of protest. In other words, the prefigurative politics of the Occupy movement, i.e. its members' commitment to the means rather than ends, created an environment that mobilised the movement's members. Therefore, drawing on the earlier argument of the thesis that leadership is a process of meaning making among actors, the thesis has contributed to the critical leadership research by emphasizing that studying leadership should not be limited to human actors and their role (Sutherland et al. 2014); critical accounts of the term 'leadership' need to include other modes of making meaning, i.e. in this case the Occupy movement's repertoire of protest as its pillar of prefigurative politics.

The central contribution that the thesis makes to critical leadership research is to build on Fairhurst and Grant's (2010) argument that constructionist leadership researchers must let go of the established focus on mono-modal language in investigating leadership and focus instead on introducing 'aspects of the material and/or institutional' into explanations of leadership and, in doing so, consider leadership multimodally.

10.2 Limitations

Chapter 5 provided detail on how the interview material was analysed, and on the number and duration of the events attended. As discussed in that chapter, data collection began just as the Occupy protesters were being evicted from the St Paul's site on 28 February 2012. On reflection, it would have been useful to have taken a more engaged approach from the outset, and the aims of the project might have been explained more clearly to participants. More time could also have been

spent in the field with those who participated in the project, which may have secured more extensive access to meetings and provided more scope for participant observation in the field.

10.3 Academic implications and future research directions

As Parker et al. (2014b) argue, social movements can be understood as shape-shifting alternative organisational forms that 'negotiate their own boundaries vis-à-vis the status quo' (Parker et al. 2014b: 361). This suggests that there is ample scope for further conceptual and empirical work on how these organisations will evolve in future.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interviewee informed consent form

Participant's name:

I consent to participate in this study. I am satisfied with the instructions I have been given so far and I expect to have any further information requested regarding the study supplied to me at the end of the research.

I have been informed that the confidentiality of the data I provide will be safeguarded. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the participant information sheet.

• This project is about Occupy Movement in London which is being conducted by Amir Elmi Keshtiban at the University of Essex for a PhD research project.

• All data will be treated as personal under the 1998 Data Protection Act, and will be stored securely in researcher's personal notebook which is password protected and nobody except the researcher has access to its password. Also technical methods such as the removal of identifiers and the use of pseudonyms and so on will be used for breaking the link between data and identifiable individuals unless the participant does not want to be anonymous.

• Interviews will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher and the anonymity and confidentiality of the data is guaranteed by the researcher.

• A copy of your interview transcript will be provided, free of charge, on request. You will have a right to reply or veto any part of the transcript that has been provided to you.

• Data collected may be processed manually and with the aid of computer software that in both case the anonymity and confidentiality of your data is guaranteed.

• You have a right to withdraw at any time without prejudice and without providing a reason, all the data which has been provided already will be used if you agree with that.

Following are the contact details of the researcher;

Email: aelmik@essex.ac.uk

Mobile: 07403072810

Name of participant (print)…………………………..Signed……………….. Date…………

Name of researcher (print)…………………………Signed……………….. Date…………

Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study about Occupy Movement. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please feel free to ask about anything you do not understand or you would like to know more about it.

This study is related to recent social movements which claim that do not possess any leader(s) such as Arab Spring and Occupy Movements around the world.

The reason I am interested in this type of social movement is because I am from Iran and have a sustained interest in recent political events in Middle East. One interesting aspect of what has happened in the Middle East is the rise of people without leader(s) which was inconceivable because the cultural norm of political leadership has historically been central to these kinds of social movements. But in recent social movements, also called the Arab Spring, there was no leader to front the movements and people accomplished a revolution without a visible leader.

Overall, I am passionate about the revolutionary uprising which has been happened in my home country – Iran's Revolution, 1979 - and it is happening in the most Arab countries in Middle East, however, because I am away from the Middle East and also I cannot speak Arabic, my focus has been turned on Occupy Movements specially Occupy Movement in London which I believe that has the

same characteristics as Arab Spring in terms of leaderlessness! That is why I am starting studying Occupy movements in order to investigate how these leaderless movements work and how things have done among the members of the group.

So, as an Occupy member, if you would like to take part in this research, please bring along a photograph, an object or a footage which you think represents Occupy Movement for you – however, it is not compulsory and it is completely up to you to bring the mentioned items or not. The images or footages could be the one you have taken yourself or the one that have been taken by your friends or something in the media that you have found interesting which has positive or negative meaning regarding to Occupy movement.

I would be more than happy to share with you my key findings as a pamphlet in order to thank you for your time that you kindly spend for my research.

I hope that you feel able to help me with this study. It is noteworthy to state that all results will be anonymised and it will not be possible to identify individual participant's data unless you don't want to. By the way, if at any time you decide that you do not want to continue to take part in the study, you are free to withdraw.

Yours sincerely,

Amir Elmi Keshtiban

aelmik@essex.ac.uk,   Mobile: 07403072810

Appendix 3: Screenshot of Mumble
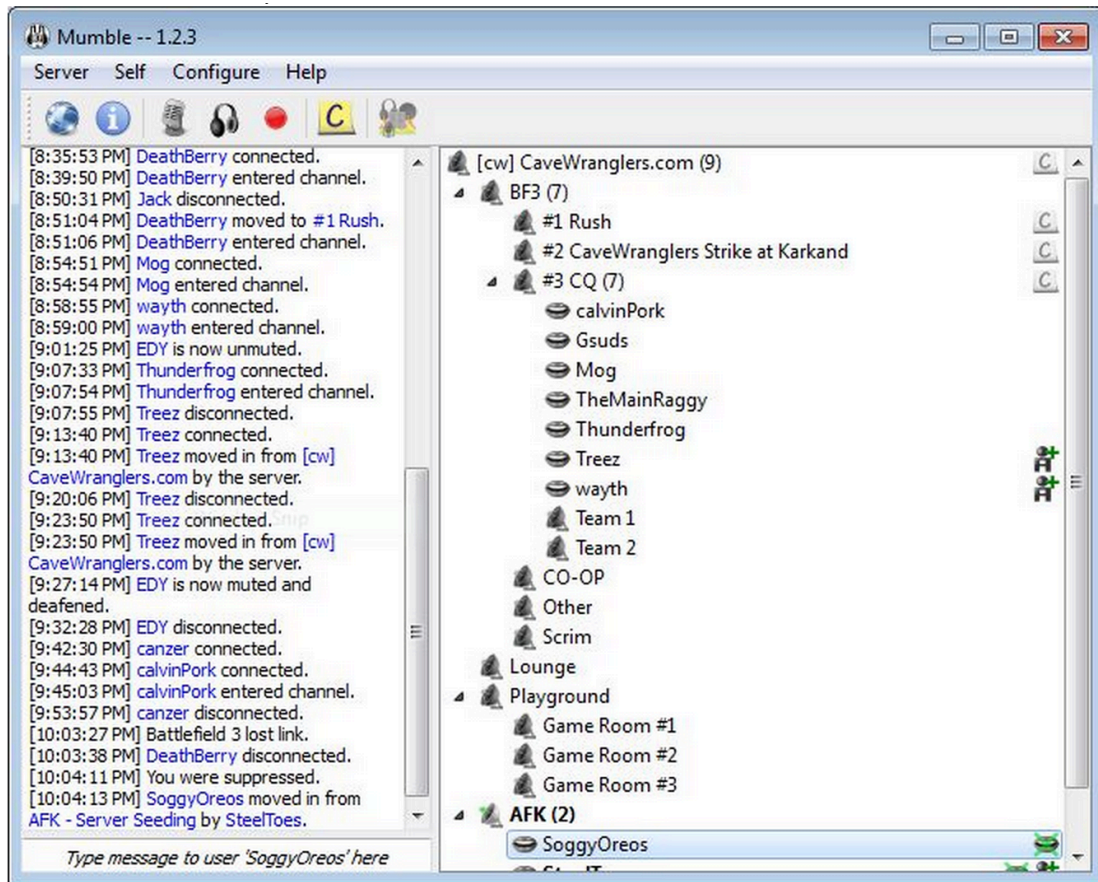
Appendix 4: Screenshot of online PiratePad

Appendix 5: Screenshot of TitanPad