Reclaiming Urban Public Spaces

Protest Form as Means and End in Occupy

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Introduction

"We are here to protest the banks. But our aim is also to reclaim this square for ourselves"

Over the past two years, social movements worldwide have turned to the city-centre encampment as a form of protest. Both small and large groups have set up tents in public spaces, often for extended periods of time. Among the many examples are Occupy movements worldwide, Indignados and other anti-austerity movements in Southern Europe, and revolutionaries encamping on Tahrir Square and other places in the Middle East. The occupation of public space is not a new addition to the repertoire of social movements (Tilly 2004); what is new is the dramatic increase of its use in city-centres by a broad range of movements concerned with very different themes of protest.

On the basis of in-depth fieldwork on Occupy Utrecht (OU) in the Netherlands and Occupy Wall Street (OWS) in New York City, this paper explores Occupy's encampment of public space as a protest form. The focus on movements in vastly different cultural and political contexts provides a way to escape methodological nationalism and the dominant focus on world cities in social movement studies. We explore activists' reasons for utilizing the encampment in order to analyze the role of the form of protest in social movements. While Occupy's protest theme of reclaiming the political domain for the '99%' from the influence of corporate business in politics has been the object of much academic debate, its related struggle to reclaim public space for marginalized groups has received little attention. Observation of movement activities and interviews with Occupy participants show the importance of reclaiming public space as a protest theme. The form of protest is both 1) a means to get attention for a cause and a platform to build the movement and 2) an end in itself, as reclaiming public space is an important protest theme for many movement participants.

The political process approach dominant in social movement theory has primarily focused on the protest form as a tactic, frequently blind to the moral and cultural dimensions of protest repertoires. Recent work on the role of emotions in social movements highlights the ways in which the protest form may become an end in itself, often through a blurring of means and ends caused by the emotional satisfactions of participating in a demonstration. Yet recognition of this double role does not mean that the means and ends can never be separated, as participants of these Occupy movements distinguish in meaningful ways between the encampment as a means toward other goals and as an end in itself.

1. Protest Form as Ends and as Means in Social Movement Theory

'For some time the field [of social movement studies] has been roughly divided between a dominant, structural approach that emphasizes economic resources, political structures, formal organizations, and social networks and a cultural or constructivist tradition, drawn partly from symbolic interactionism, which focuses on frames, identities, meanings and emotions' (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004:vii). The dominant tradition, political process theory (PPT), approaches protest form – or 'repertoire of collective action' (Tilly, 1978) - mainly as a means, overlooking the ways in which it may become an end in itself. PPT is mainly concerned with questions of why and how certain social movements and protests emerge at certain points in time and in specific places (McAdam, 1982; Tarrow, 1994). Even though the emergence of protest is related to the reasons for indignation protesters have, PPT theorists tend to pose their questions in ways that make them focus on 'grasped' or 'missed' opportunities, 'successful' or 'failing' strategies (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1996). These are all questions about the tactic as a means; whether the time is ripe for it; whether it is an effective means for the aims protesters have; whether other players get upset about it. Forms of protest – such as a march, petition, blockade, or flyer action – are seen as a means, for instance to get attention for a cause or as an effective way of building the movement and build infrastructures for future protests.

An important weakness of this focus on the protest form as a means to attain external ends is that the aims of a social movement tend to be simplified as stable, fixed abstractions that are similar for all its participants. The study of how collective identities develop and change has not been the strength of political process theory. Moreover, the choice to utilize certain forms of protest is solely considered a matter of efficacy. Tactics follow from political opportunities and resources available to protesters, not from emotional or moral evaluations. Even Charles Tilly's elaborate analysis of reasons for using specific repertoires of collective action mainly considers extrinsic factors as opposed to aspects intrinsic to the protest form (Tilly, 1978).

Studies conducted within the constructivist tradition have been more sensitive to the role of collective identities and the complexity of movement aims. Within this approach the focus has been mostly on activists' goals and the meanings they attach to their protest. Emphasis is put on the creation of collective identities as the aim of social movements (Melucci, 1996) and on social movements as allowing participants to express their moral intuitions and principles (Goodwin, Jasper & Polletta, 2001; Jasper, 1997; 2006). By making the substantive ends and collective identities of a social movement the object of investigation, movement aims are taken as

a result rather than as a starting point of mobilization (Melucci, 1995; 2001; Della Porta, 2012). From this perspective the repertoire of action may more often become an end in itself. Although LGBTQ demonstrations and gay parades are often partly aimed at certain policies or social rules, participation in this form of protest – 'visibility'- is frequently also an aim in itself (Hekma & Duyvendak, 2011).

Recent work on the role of emotions in protest has pointed at ways in which the distinction between aims and means may blur. The expanding body of literature on emotions and social movements highlights the mix of emotional and cognitive motivations to engage in protest (Polletta et al., 2011; Jasper, 2011). People engage in protest not just out of purely instrumental motivations to gain attention for a specific issue or to build a movement infrastructure, but also because they find it enjoyable or because they are emotionally charged in participating. They have 'tastes in tactics' (Jasper, 1997:229-250). Activists' 'emotional liberation' (Flam, 2005) is just as important as their 'cognitive liberation' (McAdam, 1982). When activists enjoy participating in a march or other forms of protest, the act of protest in itself may become something they become emotionally attached to (Polletta, 2006). 'The satisfactions of action, from the joy of fusion to the assertion of dignity – become a motivation every bit as important as a movement's stated goals. […] Means become goals, and goals - once attained - become the means for further action. Means and ends often fuse' (Jasper, 2011:12). Collective identification with a group is a strong emotion that may make keeping the movement alive an aim in itself for many participants. When participants derive emotional satisfaction from use of the protest form itself, the notion of a repertoire of action as purely instrumental becomes problematic. Moreover, these emotional dynamics may make it difficult to distinguish between aims and means as such (Gould, 2009). Challenging the opposition between emotion and rationality provides ground to argue that a social movement's choice for a specific timing and form of protest follows not only from strategic considerations but also from ideological and political passions.

While recognizing the important contributions made in work on the role of emotions in social movements, we argue here that claiming that means and ends always blur does not do justice to the subtle differences in motivations protesters have for utilizing a specific tactic. By engaging in detail with the reasons participants of OU and OWS state for making use of the encampment, we present a case in which the protest form is used both a means and as an end in itself. What makes these Occupy movements interesting cases to think about the notion of protest form is the emphasis participants put on the importance of reclaiming public spaces for groups that feel

increasingly excluded from them. Because of this central protest theme, the double role of the encampment as a protest form cannot be thought of as a simple blurring of means and ends. Participants themselves distinguish between reasons for utilizing the encampment as a means and reasons for treating it as an end in itself, and these two motivations may clash in discussions about courses of action for the movement. Arguments both about means and about ends relate to internally and externally oriented goals, thus the double role cannot be reduced to this distinction either. Therewith we challenge 1) the view of protest form as merely a means dominant in the political process tradition and 2) the idea that it is never possible to distinguish means from ends as argued by many emotion scholars.

Interestingly, earlier academic work on Occupy and other occupation movements has hinted at the dual role of the encampment as a protest form, although it has to our knowledge not been clearly articulated yet. 'Occupations' are interpreted as ironic critiques of military occupations, both in the context of Israel's tent protests (Gordon, 2012) and that of OWS (Lubin, 2012). In this sense, the protest form has ideological meaning in itself. Still, even in research on the encampment, the study of daily activities and activist's strategies (Liboiron, 2012; Piven, 2013; Schein, 2012) is often separated from that about the protest message and whether a movement like Occupy provides a viable alternative way of thinking and organizing society (Appadurai, 2012; Gitlin, 2012; Rushkoff, 2013). Academic work on Occupy and other occupation movements has to a large degree approached the encampment mainly as a means towards ‘real’, more ‘fundamental’ ends, giving less attention to protesters goals of reclaiming public space itself.

2. Methodology and Research Design

2.1. Cases

This comparative case study uses a most-different research design (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Claims about Occupy movements, and perhaps about social movements in general, are often based on their manifestation in metropolitan cities. But different Occupy movements often seem to take on distinctive local forms and center on context-specific issues. Therefore this research compares a movement in a world city (OWS) with one in a provincial town (OU). Both in terms of its size (8.3 million inhabitants) and its material and symbolic significance for the world economy, New York is one of the leading cities in the world (GaWC, 2012; Sassen, 1991). When looking at the history of protest, New York is a city where many significant protests occurred and major social movements emerged. The race riots in Harlem during the 1960’s were a major event for the civil rights

movement, and the 1969 Stonewall Riots in Greenwich are often thought of as the first major gay-rights demonstration.

In these respects the context of Utrecht is contrary to that of New York. With a population of 320.000 it is the fourth city in the Netherlands, and neither a symbolic nor a material center of the global economy. The exact location of the 'Occupy'd' square is even less symbolic for global capitalism, since there is no bank or financial institution in the neighborhood. Historically, the town has not played a very important role in (national) protest and resistance (movements), which have centered mainly around Amsterdam. Comparing the same movement in a provincial town and in a world city in different countries is both a way to overcome methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2003:1006) as well as the exclusive focus on movements in metropolitan cities. A comparison of New York with Amsterdam cannot move beyond a view from global cities, while a comparison of New York with, say, Wichita, cannot go beyond a USA perspective. Utilizing such a research design may be of help in trying to move beyond methodological nationalism towards approaches that are more sensitive to the transnational character of the social world. These movements were chosen because, next to being active at the time of research, the different cultural background and urban character was expected to provide a more diverse view of Occupy movements.

To illuminate how the abstract ideological protest of OWS concretizes in the struggle over the materiality of public space we build on two case studies conducted by the first author through mostly qualitative fieldwork. The cases and therewith the fieldwork sites were demarcated not with reference to a category or group of people, but by mapping out a geographical space (Low, 2000). By not taking the social movement but the geographical space as unit of analysis, our study of Occupy movements embeds them in a social field that also involves other players. As such, strictly speaking the cases are not 'Occupy Wall Street' and 'Occupy Utrecht', but 'Zuccotti Park' and the 'Ganzenmarkt' as strategic arenas in and over which the movements struggle with other players making claims on and uses of that public space. There is also a temporal dimension to the unit of analysis, restricting the study to the period that the Occupy movements were significant players in the public space. Although the encampments did not have the same duration, both Occupy movements are taken to be significant players on these spaces for more or less a year, from September/October 2011 until a year later in 2012. The focus of the research is on these demarcated public spaces as strategic arenas (Jasper, 2004) in and over which the different players struggle.

2.2. Methods

Methodologically, this research combines the investigation of the aims and collective identities of Occupyers with that of internal and external interactions. This allows us to study the repertoire of collective action both as part of the movements' collective identity and aims, and as a strategic means towards certain ends. This comparative research was conducted through six months of intensive fieldwork equally divided between two cases. Data was gathered through multiple methods, using triangulation to increase the reliability of the findings. Interviews were held with all players making claims on or uses of Occupy'd public space: participants of the movement, members of the city government (including the police), the objects of protest (employees of financial institutions), neighboring residents, neighboring shops, passers-by, and media. Short interviews were also held with representatives of Brookfield Properties, the owner of Zuccotti Park in New York. The aim of these interviews was to provide a comprehensive analysis of the struggle over Occupy'd public space and the way these different players experienced and understood that struggle. The different claims on and uses of this space were further investigated through the analysis of documents: minutes of Occupy general assemblies and other meetings (NYCGA, 2011), media reports, and court documents. Many meetings between Occupyers and other players were attended to observe processes of negotiation and compromise and the way in which collective identities are constructed in group meetings. Detailed data on how Occupyers understood and experienced the encampment as a protest form was gathered through in-depth interviews. A main strength of this approach lies in its ability to relate the same events to the experience of different groups and situate the occupation in a local context.

Research on this topic has to find a find a balance between distance towards the research topic and participation in the group. Finding this balance is not always a matter of choice, it also depends on the ways in which you as a researcher get access to different groups. Much data was gathered by attending the movements' general assemblies, regularly taking up the position of note-taker. On the one hand, taking up an organizational position within these movements by writing the minutes arguably gave the research a strongly participatory character, which was strengthened by frequently joining informal conversations and having drinks with Occupyers. On the other hand, this approach also allowed some distance as a researcher. The note-taker stance provided a way to join many meetings in a more or less purely observatory manner, as it was rarely necessary to join in the conversation myself. As such the note-taking position had several advantages. Firstly, this rendered the first author the opportunity to make notes of all proceedings

quite naturally. It also provided chances to ask for clarification if he did not understand something or if he needed more background information. Because he took on this questioning role in general assemblies and meetings, it felt easy to continue with asking questions in informal conversations. Secondly, taking up the unpopular task of making notes created goodwill from other Occupyers, and granted the observer a place in and access to the 'organizational machine' of the movement. When he became known as 'note-taker/researcher', many people would thank him for making notes and send additional information they thought would be interesting for him, or ask if he wanted to conduct an interview with them. Thirdly, the writing-up of the minutes forced him to weekly read over his notes and reflect on the progress of the research. To enhance member validation (Wacquant 2004), at several stages of the research preliminary reports on my findings were distributed to key respondents for feedback on: 1) factual inaccuracies; 2) important missing aspects; 3) their own interpretation of events and dynamics. This reflexive feedback from the field strengthens the validity and reliability of the analysis (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). In addition to that the observer felt that making the minutes could be a form of reciprocity towards his respondents.

Observation at night was always accompanied by a feeling of uneasiness and lack of safety. The observer's ideas about whether this would be safe were influenced by observations made (especially at night) and stories Occupyers themselves told. These feelings and judgments were therefore not purely personal, but also to a certain extent generic. Just as ideas of Occupyers about the difficulties and dangers of staying at the encampment are shaped in interaction, the observer's feelings about this were formed through conversation and experience. In New York, this was mainly the fear of getting into trouble with the police during demonstrations and by sleeping at Occupy at night. In Utrecht, feelings of lack of safety were caused by frequent harassments by students coming out of the nearby nightlife. The choice for distance or participation is not only a matter of weighing advantages and disadvantages, but is also determined by practicalities and personal feelings. Nightly observations strengthened the observer's idea that keeping the encampment standing was not always enjoyable for participants, and people were willing to give up much sleep and comfort to make sure the tents were kept standing. An important observation here was that the players are not the same people during the day as in the night, both for passers-by and for Occupyers. This means that social movements utilizing the encampment should not be studied solely by day, but that a full understanding requires researchers to conduct fieldwork at these spaces at night too.

The data gathered with these case studies was structured using Atlas.ti. The analysis

incorporated respondents' reactions to field reports, in an effort to engage in a reflexive dialectic between researcher and research population. Theorizing commonalities and differences in these cases was a matter of going back and forth between empirical findings, feedback from the field, and theoretical debates (Thornberg & Charmaz 2012). The in-depth investigation of a small number of cases situated in different contexts allows for an explorative study of the encampment as a protest form.

3. The Encampment as End and Means in Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Utrecht

3.1. Players and Arenas

OWS began as a day of action initiated through social media by Kalle Lasn and Micah White of the Canadian anti-consumerist publication Adbusters, although many additional groups were involved in this initial mobilization. Via several social media they campaigned for an occupation of Lower Manhattan on September 17th 2011. The original intended location for the protest was One Chase Manhattan Plaza, with Bowling Green Park and Zuccotti Park as alternative locations. A poster promoting the protest was created showing a protesting crowd behind a ballerina dancing on the iconic Charging Bull statue in Bowling Green, a symbol of the 'energy, strength, and unpredictability of the stock market' (Durante, 2007). On September 17th itself, both Bowling Green and Chase Plaza were fenced off by the police beforehand as they heard about the intended protest. However, the NYPD could not fence off Zuccotti Park as it is a 'Privately Owned Public Space' owned by Brookfield Properties. The space lies in the heart of the Financial District in Lower Manhattan. Wall Street lies two blocks downtown and the City Hall eight blocks up-town. After September 11, 2001, Zuccotti Park was covered with debris from the adjacent World Trade Center buildings. On June 2006 the park was reopened and renamed after John E. Zuccotti, the former chairman of the New York City Planning Commission, former first deputy mayor under Abe Beame (1974-1977), and now chairman of Brookfield Properties. This Canadian-American commercial real-estate company owns, manages and develops office properties in New York City and many other places, and invested private money to renovate the park.

The setting up of tents led to several clashes with the NYPD and subsequent arrests (Schneider, 2011). During the two months of the encampment there was a continual struggle between OWS participants and the city government (including the NYPD), who declared this form of protest illegal. Several efforts to evict the park were thwarted by participants of the movement through presence in large numbers, but the camp was eventually removed on November 15th

2011. According to demonstrators and their attorneys this removal was unlawful, but Justice Michael Stallman ruled in favour of the city officials and Brookfield Properties. He argued that the order does not prevent Zuccotti Park demonstrations, but that the protesters' First Amendment rights do not include remaining there 'along with their tents, structures, generators, and other installations to the exclusion of the owner's reasonable rights and duties to maintain' the area (CNN Wire Staff, 2011). According to Stallman, protesters rights cannot come to the exclusion of those who might wish to use the space safely (Idem). In the following months there were several (symbolic) efforts to re-Occupy Zuccotti Park. A year after the settlement on September 17th 2011, OWS has decentralized, but many of its small community-based groups were still very active. Zuccotti Park was still the site of many Occupy meetings and the weekly NYC General Assembly, and has an important symbolic meaning for many participants.

Following the insurrection of encampments in Amsterdam, The Hague, and other cities all over the world, Occupy Utrecht's demonstration started on October 16th2011 on the Ganzenmarkt. Unlike New York City, the municipality of Utrecht does not (yet) have a Privately Owned Public Space initiative, which means that the 'owner' of the Ganzenmarkt is the city government. Nonetheless, the privatization of the city centre is an important political issue in relation to the buildings neighbouring the Ganzenmarkt, as social and cultural institutions aimed at different strata in society are increasingly replaced by expensive shops and restaurants. An example of this is the long controversy over the eviction of the big squatters building Ubica (located at the Ganzenmarkt) to make place for a luxurious hotel. In the notification of the protest towards the city government, the official reason stated for the Ganzenmarkt as the chosen location of the encampment was that 'politics is housed here, and the city-centre is the best place to attract attention'[1].

From the beginning there was relatively close consultation with the city government, with a first meeting between participants of the movement and municipal officials on October 18th. Both the municipality and the movement recorded official contact persons, that switched several times on both sides over the next year. Official approval of the demonstration was given by the mayor, Aleid Wolfsen, on October 19th. The right to spend the night in tents on the square was officially acknowledged at this point[2]. There was continual dialogue and negotiation between the city government and the movement, through which the interests and complaints of other

[1]As documented in files for the court case between OU and the municipality of Utrecht, April 23rd 2012, page 17.
[2] Also in the documents of the April 23rd 2012 court case between OU and the municipality of Utrecht, page 22.

players (passers-by and nearby entrepreneurs and residents) were taken into account and acted upon. For this reason some tents were (re)moved several times, to create space asked for by these other players. The encampment was completely removed for several days because of New Year's, both for the movements' own safety and to make space for celebrations in the city centre. Occupyers temporarily removed the encampment again between April 29th and May 1st for Queen's Day celebrations, and in June for the European Football Cup, which would have been watched by many people on a big screen at the Ganzenmarkt if the Dutch team had gotten into the next rounds – it turned out to be a disastrous championship for the Dutch soccer team.

Negotiation about Occupy Utrecht's removal from the Ganzenmarkt and possible relocation somewhere else started in March 2012. In this period the relationship between the movement and the city government began to deteriorate, which led to a first court case in April. During this court case the judge decreed that Occupy would be allowed to stay on the Ganzenmarkt for a longer period, about which the city government was explicitly displeased. The latter made a second appeal with additional allegations against the movement. This led the judge to decide that the movement had to move away from the Ganzenmarkt in late August. At this point much discussion had taken place in which many OU participants themselves expressed that they felt the encampment was no longer constructive to the movement. The attendance of meetings had been declining for some time, and there was much annoyance among participants because very few people were willing to sleep at the encampment at night to protect it against nightlife harassment. Even though some participants disagreed, all the tents were packed into a minivan, without any forced evacuation by the police being necessary.

Both in Utrecht and in New York several players can be distinguished that make claims on and/or uses of Occupy'd public space: participants of the movement, members of the city-government, members of the object of protest (nearby financial institutions), neighbouring entrepreneurs, neighbouring residents, passers-by, and media. One quite important player is only constituted in the New York case: Brookfield Properties, the company that owns Zuccotti Park. These players are not stable entities but shifting coalitions (complex players) of individuals (simple players), including the Occupy movement itself (Jasper, 2012:20). They are the groups that Occupy participants may be in conflict with in their claims to legitimate their use of the public space. A 'player' is thought of here as a collective entity which, unlike a 'group' (Brubaker et al., 2006:11) that just has a capacity for concerted action, exercises concerted action on a regular basis. These players are all physically present on or near the public spaces in which the two Occupy movements

have their occupation, either continuously or at restricted times of the day. The way these players frame and legitimate claims on Occupy'd public space is influenced by their relation with other players in the strategic arena, and may change over time (Duyvendak & Jasper, forthcoming). As in this paper we are interested in the reasons activists state for using a certain protest form, the justificatory schemas of participants of the movements themselves are the main focus here.

3.2. Reclaiming Politics and Public Space: The Double Protest Theme of Occupy

The two Occupy movements that are the object of this study mobilized on a mix of (inter)national and local protest themes. Occupy is a global movement and the diffusion of its form and message are important fields of study. But as it is not an internet-based movement but one that manifests itself mainly in physical spaces, its participants and the particularities of its protest theme are locally embedded in the city in which they take place. Participants were asked about their reasons for utilizing the encampment as a protest form, and how this relates to their ideas about the main protest themes of the movement. All participants talked about the main protest message of Occupy movements in terms of reclaiming the public realm for the ‘99%’, both pertaining to politics broadly and of public space narrowly. But while Occupy’s broader protest theme of reclaiming politics is quite widely known, the narrower protest theme of reclaiming public space has not received the same amount of attention.

Participants of these Occupy movements express the idea of ‘reclaiming the public domain for the 99%’ in a broad way in reference to the influence of private interests into public decision-making. For many participants of OWS, the colonization of government decision-making by corporate business is embodied in popular opinion by the 'Citizens United' Supreme Court decision. With this verdict the Supreme Court of the US has endowed private corporations with unprecedented legal means to influence government decision-making through financial contributions –“*legal bribes for Senators”* in the words of a respondent at OWS. Occupy Utrecht has dealt with similar issues around the influence of companies like Monsanto and Shell into government decision-making. Related to this, participants of these two movements protest the unaccountability of financial institutions and the 'too big to fail' state of affairs. The fact that governments of different countries treat large financial corporations as 'too big to fail' has led many large scale crimes in the financial world to go unpunished.

Occupy protesters in Utrecht and New York organize frequent protest actions about the lack of legal action against financial institutions, for instance by making symbolic civil arrests of

infamous bankers on Wall Street. Occupy has been a way to move media attention to these infringements on public decision-making and legal accountability. The rhetoric of the '99%' is meant to reclaim a voice for large parts of society that are thought to have been excluded from decision-making processes which are aimed at central parts of their life. It is argued that topics like financial regulation, debt, and the housing-market are insufficiently subject to public discussion and government regulation. The enormous influence of private corporations on public decision-making jeopardizes the capacity of the '99%' to have a say over policies that concern them. In this broad way, Occupy movements protest the privatization of matters that according to them should be public (i.e. corporate control over government decision-making) and reclaim a voice for 'the larger public' in the debate over these issues.

But the significance of Occupy does not lie solely in this broad critique. Protesters at global forums and other anti-austerity movements have similarly criticized the way in which the influence of corporate business into the government comes at the expense of poor people. The innovative character of Occupy lies in connecting this broad protest against the on-going influence of private interests in public affairs to what is arguably its most concrete manifestation: the increasing privatization of public space. The increase in 'Privately Owned Public Spaces' in many cities in the United States is a very concrete example of this development. Occupy Wall Street's occupation of one such space, Zuccotti Park, is symbolic as a material form of resistance.

Since 1961 the NYC Department of City Planning has used zoning laws to give developers the right to build extra (higher) residential and office spaces, in exchange for providing plazas, indoor spaces, and arcades (NYC Department of City Planning, 2009). Respondents at OWS express indignation with this policy: "*they have to build us a park in exchange for stealing our sunlight with the higher skyscraper*". The Department of City Planning evaluates Zuccotti Park as one of the more successful projects among the generally mixed evaluations of the Privately Owned Public Spaces initiative, which has left many of these spaces neglected or badly designed (Kayden, 2011). Private enterprises have also abused the initiative, in a 2000 study, 'roughly half of the buildings surveyed had spaces that were illegally closed or otherwise privatized' (Idem). To counter these abuses, the Department of City Planning stimulates the renaming of privately owned public spaces after their owners as was done in Zuccotti Park, and the placing of accessory signs showcasing the name of this corporation. According to their policy this 'can add a sense of identity to a plaza, as well as ensuring that the quality and upkeep of the plaza are tied to the identity of the tenant' (NYC Department of City Planning, 2009). Besides several design rules and the requirement that this space be kept open 24 hours a day, the Department of City Planning has

allowed the owners to impose their own rules, the only limit being that they are ‘reasonable’, a quality that has remained undefined (Kayden, 2011; Berg, 2011). It is often vague what exactly the regulatory and executive powers of the owner and of the city government are, leaving much room for the ‘owners’ to impose rules themselves.

In interviews many participants of OWS argue that the Privately Owned Public Space arrangement is one of many causes of the fact that it becomes more and more difficult for them to fully use public spaces as they want to. Occupy is a movement with people from a broad range of backgrounds and many of them talk about public space as a protest theme for Occupy. Many homeless Occupyers see the encampment as their way of reclaiming the squares and parks from which they feel they are excluded. “*In some parks the park guards [not police officers but guards hired by the private owner of a space] don’t let you sit anywhere at all, in others they remove you when it gets dark. […] With Occupy we reclaim some of the spaces that symbolize this policy*”. As the privatization of public space is thought to be a cause of this exclusion, the occupation of Zuccotti Park, a prominent Privately Owned Public Space in the heart of the city’s Financial District, is frequently discussed as being a symbolic form of resistance. Since many participants find particularly high obstacles to make use of public spaces both during the day and at night, the encampment provides a way for them to reclaim physical public space for themselves.

But the protest theme of reclaiming public space is not restricted to those Occupyers who spend the night at the encampment. Meetings of the Queer Working Group focus on the difficulties of making use of public space for LGBTQ people. The Coloured People’s General Assembly is a platform for similar frustrations. Harassment of homeless people and sexual and cultural minorities, both by the authorities, guards of the private owners of public spaces and by other civilians, is a frequent point of discussion in general assemblies. A respondent argued that ‘by occupying we turn the city-centre into a safe space again for us, the excluded’. The encampment becomes an aim in itself both as a *literal* and a *symbolic* way of reclaiming public space. It serves as a space where they can manifest themselves, be heard, and discuss their issues in public. The fact that Zuccotti Park was renamed in 2006 after the head of realty company Brookfield Properties, which owns and maintains the park, makes its occupation highly symbolic for participants. Giving back its original name ‘Liberty Park’ is a way to symbolically reclaim public space for groups that argue they cannot use them as they feel they have the right to.

In Occupy Utrecht’s general assembly the ‘privatization of the city-centre’ is a recurring topic of discussion too. In interviews, many Occupyers on the Ganzenmarkt express indignation at the increasing domination of expensive shops, hotels and apartments in the city-centre, which

according to them makes these spaces less accessible to the less affluent. General assembly discussion often centres on the fact that alternative cultural hubs like the squatters building Ubica on the Ganzenmarkt disappear to make room for upper-middle class shops and services. These critiques are not only aimed at the lack of budget shops and services in downtown Utrecht, but also at the exclusionary policy that is perceived to accompany this trend. Analogous with Occupy Wall Street's criticisms, it is especially homeless people and ethnic minorities (mostly Turkish and Moroccan youths) who are active in the movement that complain about feeling that the city-centre is less and less 'theirs'. Homeless Occupyers express frustrations about being removed from squares and benches in the centre by the police and also sometimes by drunken students at night. "*They think that we dirty people don´t fit in the neat expensive city-centre the city-government has in mind*". People from ethnic minorities in OU express similar frustrations about not feeling welcome in the city-centre: "We can build a mosque in Kanaleneiland [a less-affluent suburb of Utrecht] but in the centre I don't even feel comfortable talking Arabic when I walk down the street". Students in the movement generally do not have the same experiences, but do support them in these critiques.

The fact that city-centre public spaces increasingly become the exclusive domain of upper middle-classes makes occupying these spaces an act that is in itself meaningful for participants, especially for those groups that find it increasingly difficult to make use of these spaces. In the words of a respondent at OWS, who echoes a common sentiment among movement participants, "*the struggle over this space is part of the effort to create a safe space for the 99% against the colonization by the corporatocracy of the 1%*". The broader political struggle against privatization of the public realm - in the form of corporate influence in government - finds its concrete manifestation in the fight over eviction from the square between participants of Occupy and other players. The Privately Owned Public Space initiative makes this privatization of public space more literal in New York than in Utrecht, although 'reclaiming the square' is also a major protest theme for participants of Occupy in the latter city. A sense of we-ness and collective agency within the movement are grounded in the territoriality of the encampment (see Duyvendak, 2011; Flesher Fominaya, 2010).

Compared to OU, many respondents from OWS are more confrontational and outwardly anarchist in their claims on Zuccotti Park and stance towards the claims of other players: "*mayor Bloomberg does not have the right to keep us from camping on this square"*. This view relates to a broader sense of distrust among OWS participants towards the government. Compared to this, Occupy Utrecht's stance has been one of more negotiation with the municipal government. But

even though the participants of OU and OWS are not equally confrontational towards other players, a large segment of both movements perceives keeping the encampment as a movement goal in itself. The protest form itself is not only a means but also a substantive aim.

3.3. The Ideological and Strategic Role of the Encampment

These findings of the encampment as a goal in itself for ideological reasons bring us into disagreement with the idea that efforts to keep the encampment standing against pressure from outsiders are motivated mostly by practical considerations. Both media and academics studying these movements have used this idea to criticize Occupy participants for 1) overly emotional attachment to the encampment and a lack of political orientation or 2) being self-interested in their participation in the occupation. Yet participants own understanding of the encampment both as a means towards other ends and as an end in itself challenges both criticisms. Although we restrict our conclusions to these two movements, there is good reason to expect that our conclusions might also apply (in part) to many other Occupy movements, and perhaps also to other social movements utilizing the encampment.

Firstly, it is frequently claimed that many participants of Occupy become overly preoccupied with keeping the encampment, causing a lack of 'political' orientation. From this point of view, the struggle over the encampment is seen as a distraction from 'real' protest themes, such as the corporate influence in government or the lack of accountability and transparency in large financial institutions. Discussions about whether Occupy movements are 'fetishizing space' are common both within Occupy assemblies and in the media (Kall, 2011; Marcuse, 2011). Peter Marcuse (2011) argues that 'the concern with occupied public space is a means to an end, and only one means among others, not the end in itself'. This leads him and others to label the fact that many Occupyers make keeping the space one of their main concerns as a distortion of priorities. In this view, a 'fetishization' of space is thought to obstruct the broader and more important goals of the movement. Yet, in our interviews conducted with participants of these movements, the goal of keeping the encampment against outside pressure is motivated not only as a means but also as an end in itself. An example serves to illustrate how participants wanted to keep the encampment out of explicit ideological reasons and not just because of the excitement of having a party in the park or of fights with the police.

In the general assembly's of OU during the months of April and May (2012) there was much discussion about whether the movement should move into an office in a building, after the

city government had suggested that they could help find such a space on the condition that they leave the Ganzenmarkt. Although many participants agreed that having an office would provide substantive resources that the movement could use well, almost all of them felt they should not give up their occupation at the Ganzenmarkt. Even though most of them were tired of the month-long occupation and felt that moving into an indoor space would probably help the movement, their efforts to *literally* reclaim a space in the city centre were very important to them *ideologically*. Arguments for what would be the most effective means to build movement infrastructure and gain media attention are distinguished from and even juxtaposed to arguments for keeping the encampment standing as an end in itself. Although the encampment is both a means and an end, the two do not blur but can be clearly distinguished in discussions between participants.

A second angle through which the encampment is seen solely as a means is in accounts that criticize Occupyers for supposedly wanting to keep the encampment out of self-interest. Especially homeless Occupyers have frequently been the object of this critique, when it is argued that Occupy serves as a free and easy sleeping place for non-ideologically motivated homeless people. Yet, our interviews with participants show that the widely-held viewpoint that most homeless Occupyers used the encampments as free and convenient places to spend the night, without caring much about the protest messages of the movement, is oversimplified and in many ways incorrect and unfair. The premise that Occupy's encampments were the most convenient place to sleep that was available to homeless city-dwellers is contradicted by the findings of this research. Both in Utrecht and in New York the occupation was frequently harassed at night, making it a particularly uncomfortable place of residence. In New York, there were frequent conflicts at night with the police, and many Occupyers said this made them want to leave the encampment at night. Because the Ganzenmarkt lies next to a nightlife district in Utrecht, there are also many nocturnal conflicts here. During this research observations were made of drunken people (mostly students) frequently pulling pins out of the tents so that they fall down, urinating on tents, grabbing people out of their tents during their sleep, and even starting fights. Although there were some cases in which Occupyers themselves started conflicts, the observations conducted at night for this research suggest that outsiders were most often the instigators of conflicts. The main antagonists are different ones, with OWS participants mostly fearing eviction by the police, while in Utrecht there are complaints of too little police protection against nightlife assailants. But the fact that many Occupyers experience spending the night as a burden shows that the ‘self-interest’ view is incorrect. Utrecht 'homeless' respondents of this research claim that

it would be easier for them to spend the night in a free sleep-in or at the Salvation Army, while respondents from the same group in Zuccotti Park claim that the frequent nightly police interventions and problems in the camp would have made it more attractive to sleep in other places around the city. The researcher's own notions of the lack of safety are in this sense generic of broader ideas about the nocturnal in these movements.

During the general assembly's of the long occupation on the Ganzenmarkt in Utrecht, one of the most debated topics is the fact that there are not enough people willing to spend the night at the encampment. Considering the pressure on the occupation from other players, the number of people that is present at the encampment at night is crucial to keep it standing. Holding the encampment is an interest all participants of Occupy consciously share, both as a means to gain attention and build movement infrastructures, and as an ideological aim in itself. 'Full-time' Occupyers who spend the night there often criticize 'apartment activists' for coming to talk during the day but not helping out with the daily (or rather nightly) difficulties of having an occupation. This tension is expressed by a participant of OU: *"the full-timers want the part-timers to be more often at the Occupation, especially during difficult times. The part-timers want the full-timers who sleep here to be different, more attractive to outsiders"*. The fact that sleeping at the encampment is experienced by almost all participants as an unpleasant and dangerous but important contribution to the movement, implies that 'homeless' Occupyers spending the night there are (at least partly) motivated by ideological reasons.

The encampment's role is partly as a means to attain movement goals like gaining attention for a cause and to build movement infrastructure in what could be called a 'free space'. As a tool to get attention for social issues it has been particularly successful, as the presence in public space makes it easily accessible to media and passers-by. Participants were well aware of this, although the lack of hierarchy and open character often made it difficult to frame a clear protest theme towards the media. As a means to build movement infrastructure, the occupation attracted many outsiders, and the anti-hierarchical spirit encouraged them to get involved with movement activities. But beyond being a means toward other movement goals, participants also perceive it as an achievement in itself, and keeping it standing against pressure from other players is a genuine ideological goal of the movements' participants. The struggle over Occupy'd public space is motivated not only by 'pragmatist-', but also very much by 'ideological' reasons. Occupyers wanted to keep the encampment standing even when many people agreed that this was not the most effective way to gain positive publicity or to build movement infrastructure. In addition to the goals of publicity and movement building, the reclamation of public space through the

encampment is a goal in itself that protesters value independently from other ends. The encampment was not solely a means to personal or to movement goals, but to a large degree motivated as an end in itself. Although we may say that 'the camp itself rather than the financial or political system became the main source of contention' (Uitermark & Nicholls, 2012:3), this is no reason to disqualify efforts to keep the encampment standing as motivated merely by short-term self-interest or practical considerations.

4. Instrumental and Non-instrumental Tactics

These case studies show how not only the emotional satisfaction of protest but also more cognitively oriented motivations may cause a protest form to become both a means and an end in itself. In OWS and OU the encampment as a protest form is both 1) a means as a way to get attention for a cause and a platform to build movement infrastructure and 2) an aim in itself as a way to reclaim public space. The argument of this study speaks in two directions, to two traditions that think in different ways about the choices and motivations protesters have to use certain protest forms and tactics. The political process tradition addresses them mainly as means in terms of effectiveness, positing a strong distinction between means and ends. Recent work on the role of emotions in social movements highlights how means and ends often blur in protest, which is one step forward in acknowledging that the form is not just a means towards another end but can be a goal in itself. We take issue with the next step taken frequently, one that questions whether the distinction is useful at all. We take on a third position in this debate by arguing that the distinction between means and aims is analytically useful and that the conflation of means with protest form does not always apply.

Firstly, this study challenges the approach to protest form as purely a matter of efficacy, prevalent in the resource mobilization and political process traditions. These frameworks tend to think about the choice to utilize certain protest forms and tactics in terms of effective ways towards a certain outcome. This study shows that participants of OU and OWS use the encampment at least partly because they find that it is important to do so in itself, not just as a means to get attention for an issue or to build movement infrastructure. It is clearly not a 'neutral' means about which protesters have no ideological ideas. This may explain participants' insistence on keeping the encampment standing even when many people agree that this may not be the most effective way of gaining positive publicity or building movement infrastructure. Even from a theoretical position that only recognizes purely 'cognitive' motivations as 'real' (Olson, 1965), the

case studies presented in this paper show participants consider tactics as ideological ends.

Secondly, this paper addresses recent work on the role of emotions in social movements. Building on theoretical approaches that challenge the distinction between emotion and cognition (Gould, 2009; Jasper, forthcoming) some may question whether means and ends can ever be distinguished. Yet, this paper shows that even though the protest form becomes an end in itself, it is still possible to distinguish means and ends in the actions and motivations of protesters since not all means become goals; some uses of the protest form are highly instrumental to reach fully 'external' goals. Even though participants may find satisfaction in their protest, much of their reasons for wanting to keep the encampment are of a more 'cognitive' character, informed by the ideological content of their protest theme. The fact that many Occupyers feel excluded from public space and use the encampment as a way to reclaim it makes this aim into neither a) an 'emotional' distraction from 'real' protest themes, nor b) motivated by the interest of a free and easy sleeping place. Insofar as it is fruitful to distinguish emotions from cognitions, these two cases portray how more 'cognitive' motivations can make the protest form an end in itself. The fact that the protest form is in this case both a means and an end challenges the view that the two cannot and should not be distinguished.

Hence, the fact that form may have this double role, challenges both political process theory's conflation of *form with means*, and the 'emotional' idea that *forms, means and ends* can never be distinguished since the protest form is always an aim in itself. Both forms of conflation empirically exist, no doubt about that: a protest form like the flyer action or petition may in most cases be fully instrumental, while the encampment or a march by an LGBTQ movement tends to become an 'identity' aim in itself. Form can be both means and ends, but this does not mean that these are not separated for social actors themselves. When emphasizing the role of emotions in social movements, it does often seem to be difficult to separate the ways in which the protest form is a means from the ways in which it is an end in itself (Jasper, forthcoming). But the form of protest may become an end in itself for other than emotional reasons, which allows actors to distinguish instrumental and non-instrumental reasons for engaging in a specific tactic. Theoretical controversy about the exact function of a protest form can be transformed into more 'emically' oriented understandings through investigation into actors' own use and justification of these distinctions.

This study shows the need for social movement scholars to be sensitive to the exact motivations protesters have to participate in a social movement and utilize a certain action repertoire. Studying both the strategic and ideological character of movement aims and collective

identities (Jasper, 1997; 2004; 2006) makes for a much more contextualized understanding of what protesters feel and think. Sensitivity to the emotional and cognitive ways in which the protest form may become an end in itself allows for a more comprehensive understanding of why people choose to engage in a protest. Choosing to protest is not just a matter of deciding whether it will 'pay off' or whether an opportunity is available (of whether a window opens). Frequently, choosing to engage in a certain form of protest is also motivated ideologically, and agreeing that this is the right way to do it is part of the ideological motivation of a protester. Talking about film as a medium with particular social effects, Marshall McLuhan famously used the phrase 'the medium is the message' to argue that the medium itself, not the content, should be the object of study (McLuhan, 1964; 1967). Within the context of social movement studies, we would not deny that the medium may sometimes be the message, but certainly not always and exclusively. Investigation of the exact role a protest forms plays in a social movement requires close attention to the strategic, emotional and moral dynamics of protest.

Conclusion

This research provides a view of two Occupy movements that emphasizes their aims to reclaim urban public spaces with the encampment, a protest theme related to the broader aim of reclaiming a place for the poor (or the '99%') in decision-making over their own lives. Our research shows that despite the vast differences in context, Occupyers are similarly ideologically motivated in reclaiming public space. Their ideological reasons to use the encampment make the protest form both a means and an end in itself, while its strategic function in gaining public attention and building movement infrastructure simultaneously makes it a means. Form as a means is distinguished from form as an end by participants of the encampment itself, which provides reason to re-evaluate the theoretical claim that the two always blur.

This study challenges political opportunity theory's conflation of protest form with means, and the claim made frequently in studies of emotions in social movements that ends and means always fuse. Close attention to the reasons participants themselves give for utilizing a certain tactic – be they strategic, emotional or ideological in character – can provide for more grounded and subtle understandings of repertoires of collective action.

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