KEEP CALM AND OCCUPY HONG KONG

LONG MARCH TO DEMOCRACY

The seven million residents of Hong Kong

The position of Occupy Central with Love and Peace in the context of new social action

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Abstract

The struggle for Self-determination remains ongoing for the inhabitants of Hong Kong, China. In 2014, years of tension resulted in a mass demonstration spearheaded by the Occupy Central with Love and Peace initiative. Hong Kong was accustomed to demonstrations and protests. However, rarely did a protest provoke such a massive amount of responses from various parties. At the time, the international stage was already familiar with the occupy phenomenon. Three years before the Yellow Umbrella movement, as OCLP would later be called, three "square movements" were the centre of worldwide media attention. In early 2011, all eyes were on the MENA region where several political uprisings located around city squares were given the name the 'Arab Spring'. In May, in reaction to the course of the Spanish elections the Indignados movement occupied city squares demanding financial reform. In October, anti-capitalistic sentiment crossed the Atlantic Ocean and inspired Occupy Wall-Street.

These three movements are considered a different phenomenon from old-style social movements and are approached using New Social Movement theory. This thesis will research Occupy Central with Love and Peace through the concepts and theories used to analyse the 2011 movements to create an initial idea how Occupy Central can be interpreted. A historic overview of the relationship between Hong Kong and China will set the grounds for in-depth analysis of the cause, conduct and means of Occupy Central with Love and Peace.

Keywords: Occupy Central with Love and Peace, New Social Movement theory, (digital) mobilisation, Hong Kong, Yellow Umbrella movement
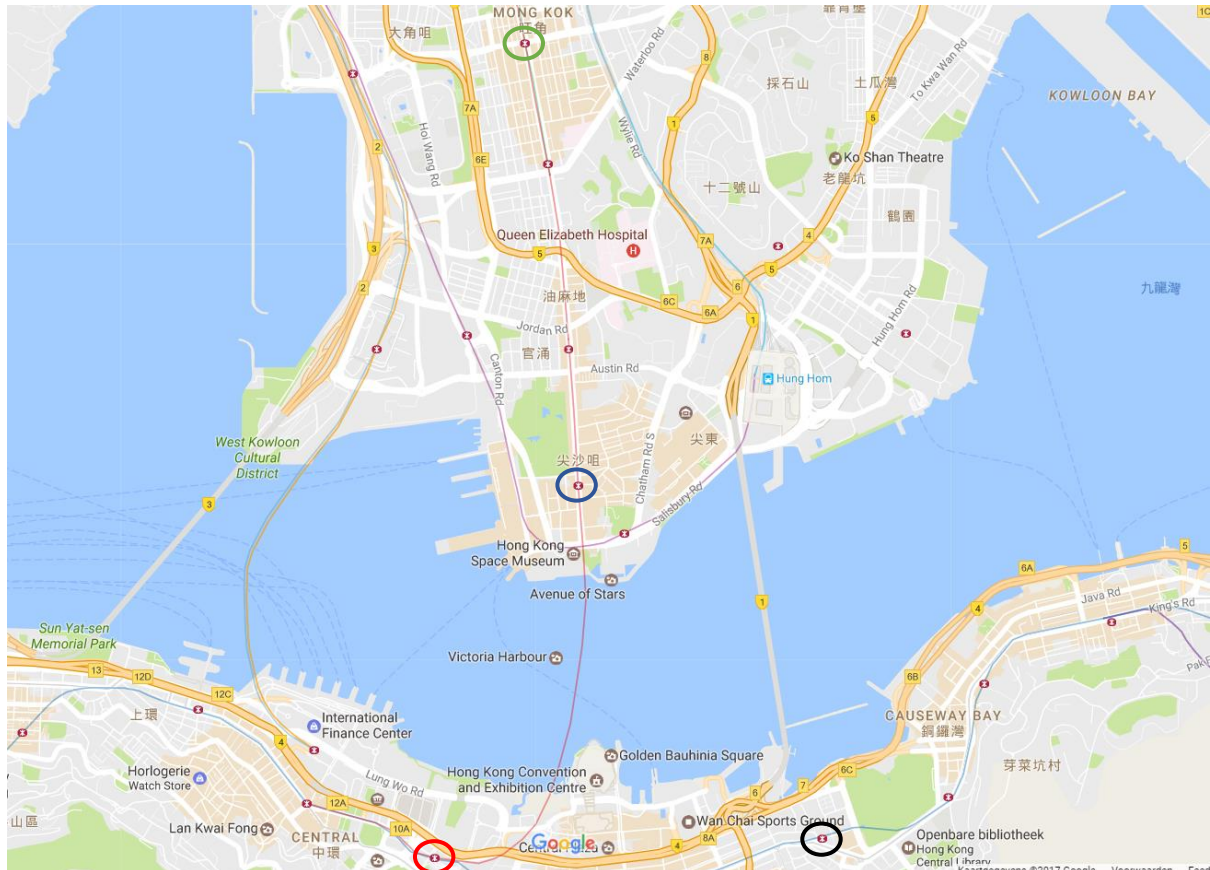
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List of abbreviations

LegCo   -   Legislative Council
NSM   -   New Social Movement
OCLP   -   Occupy Central with Love and Peace
OWS   -   Occupy Wall-Street
PRC   -   People's Republic of China
SAR   -   Special Administrative Region

Map of locations

Legend:

🟥	Admiralty
⬛	Causeway Bay
🟦	Tsim Sha Tsui
🟩	Mong Kok

1. Introduction

On September 28, 2014, police forces used tear gas and pepper spray to disperse protesters demonstrating in Admiralty, Hong Kong. For some time, the lack of universal suffrage in Hong Kong had been commented on and fought against. Since the return of Hong Kong to China and the introduction of the one country two systems arrangement questions have been raised on the desirable level of autonomy of Hong Kong.

In the weeks following the tear gas attack, the images of thousands of people sitting in the streets of Hong Kong under the common denominator Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) left an impression in collective memory not soon to be forgotten. The Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong estimated an average of 150.000 participants during the protests' primetime between 26 September and 15 December.[1] The OCLP movement was launched late 2012 by Chinese University of Hong Kong professor Chan Kin-man, reverend Chu Yiu-ming and Hong Kong University law professor Benny Tai, whose name would become the most prominent in this context.[2] Tai's reason for this initiative was the controversy surrounding the model for selecting the Chief Executive nominees which was to be determined by the Peoples Republic of China (PRC).[3] In a short interview, Benny Tai comments on the fact that the Occupy Central movement exposes a hidden division under the Chinese government. He states that the power of the Beijing government is so overwhelming that it can simply ignore any contesting views. 'We do not wish to create conflict rather resolve the conflict but to do this we must make sure that everyone's rights are respected.'[4]

Many will have associated the initiative with, or would at least have recalled the Occupy Wall-Street (OWS) protests in 2011. However, little research has been completed drawing a comparison between the namesakes. Indeed, little research has been completed on OCLP in general while OWS, its history and its relation to social movement theory, is widely discussed. Many authors draw comparisons and highlight causal relations between Occupy Wall-Street and The Arab Spring for the proximity in time and OWS and the Spanish

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[1] The Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong, "Participants in Occupy Central with Love and Peace," accessed on 6 June, 2017, https://hkupop.hku.hk/chinese/release/release1050.html
[2] The OCLP wordpress website lists January the 16th 2013 as the date Benny Tai put his proposal for Occupy Central with Love and Peace forward. Occupy Central with Love and Peace, "OCLP: How it all got started" https://oclphkenglish.wordpress.com/about-2/story/ However, a peer reviewed article by Johannes Chan claims 2012. Johannes Chan, "Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement," *The Round Table* 103, no. 6 (2014): p.573-574
[3] Chan, "Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement" p.574
[4] A Bank Space, "Exclusive Interview with Benny Tai," accessed on 8 March, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI6MqOhc5GU

Indignados for the proximity in time and shared motivations.[5] Since there is no substantial theoretical framework in which OCLP has been placed, it might prove useful to investigate whether OCLP can be assessed through theory used to assess its namesake and the other aforementioned movements. First, we must ask us: How much does the name, consciously or unconsciously borrowed from other occupy initiatives, speak for the phenomenon? A name voices a clear message through its associations in society and history. As a result, a name partially determines public opinion and it determines the popularity of the cause. The name of any organisation functions as a first impression. For instance, the word 'red' will be associated with socialism or communism. A social movement with a name that refers to violence or a violent fact in history will be met with more apprehension than a movement with a name referring to an international symbol of peace. The full name of the protest in Hong Kong was Occupy Central with Love and Peace projecting a clear anti-violence message to the (international) community. Furthermore, when Occupy Central was launched the term 'Occupy' was associated with peaceful protests of Occupy Wall-Street and therefore police violence against occupy protesters would have been condemned by the international community. Lastly, Occupy Central could draw from the hype and popularity surrounding Occupy Wall-Street which in a way jumpstarted the campaign. The importance of a name in the way the community and its organizers perceive a protest is undeniable, thus using a name as validation to apply certain theoretical frameworks is viable. This research therefore examines the following question: To what extent is Occupy Central with Love and Peace a continuation of the social uprisings in 2011 and to what extent was Occupy Central a different phenomenon?

Several sub questions need to be answered to successfully address this research question. The theoretical framework will discuss several theories brought up by authors discussing the aforementioned movements plus some theory regarding mobilisation and the conduct of social movements. The first chapter will illustrate how these theories are applicable to the 2011 movements by answering the question: In what way are Occupy Wall-Street, the Indignados and the Arab Spring representative of New Social Movement theory and what typifies their conduct and means? This chapter will provide validation to the set of assumptions made in the theoretical framework that can be used to assess OCLP. To do so, the first step is to construct a clear image of Hong Kong. The second chapter will offer an

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[5] The term 'indignados' was inspired by a French manifesto titled *Indignez-vous!* written by diplomat Stéphane Hessel. Translated to English, indignados means 'Time for Outrage'. Ernesto Castañeda, "The Indignados of Spain: A Precedent to Occupy Wall Street," *Social Movement Studies* 11, no. 3-4 (2012): 310

overview of the history of, economic affiliations of and social situation in Hong Kong. Together with the first part of the third chapter the second chapter investigates what directly and indirectly led to OCLP and the protests in 2014. The third chapter then continues to analyse the OCLP protest through insurgency theories on means and conduct. The fourth chapter highlights a specific means of mobilisation: digital media. It answers the question how digital media and technology has contributed to the mobilisation of Occupy Central protesters.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework reviews both theory specifically applied to the 2011 movements as well as theory applied to the mobilisation, means and conduct of social movements in general. On social movement theory, Sidney Tarrow states that contentious collective action serves as the basis of all social movements.[6] Social movements are a disruption of the existing order or, in other words, a disruption of daily life in a community. In the case of movements such as OWS and OCLP that existing order has a monopoly on power and henceforth 'the people' are the most threatening force to their representatives. Moreover, its supporters are the movements' only durable and stable resource. Reasons for participating in social movements are common purpose and social solidarity.[7] Sociologist Michel Wieviorka reviews the elaborate history of social movements starting with the working-class movements of the 1960s. From these working-class movements, the New Social Movements developed. Scholars have theorised on the emergence and significance of these contemporary social movements and have pointed out several examples and characteristics.[8]

Not every scholar agrees with NSM theory. Della Porta argues that the contemporary protests discussed in NSM theory are merely events and these separate events trigger broader collective support and consolidation of networks. Bluntly put: contemporary social movements are not really movements. However, the question whether what we refer to as New Social Movements are social movements or merely a chain of events in a highly-fragmented world is beyond the scope of this thesis. In the following chapters, "movement", "protest" as well as "event" will refer to the phenomena I am discussing. Della Porta does agree that some modern "events" share characteristics that distinguishes them from other "events". It is these characteristics I will investigate in this chapter.

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[6] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement. Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. (New York: Cambridge University Press 2011), p. 7
[7] Tarrow, *Power and Movement* p.11
[8] Steven M. Buechler, "New Social Movement Theories," *The Sociological Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1995): 442-443

The comparison made between OWS, the Indignados and the Arab Spring rests largely on the application of New Social Movement (NSM) theory. To extend the comparison to OCLP the first part of this theoretical framework is attributed to different points of view within NSM theory. The second part focusses on questions within the insurgency framework. Vastly simplified by the Merriam Webster dictionary, insurgency is a form of revolt against a government that is less than an organized revolution and that is not recognized as belligerent.[9] Belligerency in this definition is any form of legally recognized violent hostility, in other words official conflict or war.[10] Not all occupy movements are directly targeting governments. They are targeting the "established order" usually kept in place by governments. Thus, insurgency could provide a possible theoretical framework when addressing occupy movements. In the case of Occupy Central the movement did target the Beijing government.

The analysis will focus on the conduct and means of social movements and the identity formation of its participants as researched by a number of authors including Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and Donatella Della Porta. In addition, Christian Fuchs argues that digital (social) media is an important means to any occupy initiative and analyses its use through a framework of three dimensions of information distribution. From these contributions four preconditions are constructed and presented at the end of this sub chapter. First a short overview of the main pillars of NSM theory which are used in this thesis.

Sociologist Lauren Langman is one of the scholars who argue that the Arab Spring, the Indignados and Occupy Wall-Street can be understood through New Social Movement theory. According to him, NSM theory 'looks at the salience of culture, meanings, collective identity and social networks to consider why movements come into being'.[11] Derived from this theory, the object of our first precondition should be a consideration on why these social movements took to the stage. Returning to the foundation of the comparison laid down by Langman I ask the question: What must a cause amount to, to trigger a large social reaction indicated as a New Social Movement? The answer is two-fold.

Michel Wieviorka notes that New Social Movement are not political actors and yet are engaged in political action.[12] Above all, NSMs are built on a high degree of cultural

[9] Merriam Webster, "Insurgency," accessed on 8 March, 2017 https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/insurgency

[10] Merriam Webster, "Belligerency," accessed on 8 March, 2017 https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/belligerency

[11] Lauren Langman, "Occupy: A New New Social Movement," *Current Sociology* 61, no. 4 (2013): 511

[12] Michel Wieviorka, "After New Social Movements," *Social Movement Studies 4*, no. 1 (2005): 3-4

awareness revolving around establishing a favourable status quo rather than a brighter future. In a functioning democracy, society is interconnected with the political sphere and it demands reaction from its leaders through mobilisation of their own community or through international mediation. In other words, NSMs are typically making demands for quick changes focussed on the quality of life of the current generation.

A second notion believed to be true about New Social Movements is that their manifest is of global interest. Consequently, NSMs carry a message internationally supported or add to the concept of global justice. Wieviorka demonstrates the ideological character of the movements in stating that they do not contest (perceived) domination or exploitation but desire to construct a more ideal world. The movements' causes transcend nation-state borders, hence "global" justice.[13]

As to the means and conduct of the new type of social movement Tarrow observes that with the development of (mass) media, the better turnout in general and the addition of new – nonviolent – tools to the repertoire such as political marches, social movements transformed into performances in the twentieth century.[14] Firstly, Tarrow points towards nonviolence or pacifism as characteristic of contemporary social movements. This follows the idea that one cannot fight violence with more violence when one of the parties has a monopoly on violence, as is often the case when protesting a government. Secondly, Tarrow points to the emergence of (mass) media. I would like to put emphasis on digital media given its far-reaching impact in current society.

Christian Fuchs, who specializes in social movement theory and carries out research concerning the role of social media in occupy movements, identifies four characteristics of 'new-age' protests: decentralization, networking, dynamics and globality.[15] A new global protest is typically spread nationwide and each individual protest, although adhering to the main cause, acts and is autonomous at local level. Digital networking provides information and incentive at a greater velocity than any mainstream type of information carrier such as newspapers or news programs. Current technology allows for great amounts of digital networking which will be elaborated upon in chapter one and four. The constant wave of protesters arriving and attending makes for a dynamic structure. Once a protest gains recognition international interest or support will most likely follow.

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[13] Wieviorka, "After New Social Movements" p.10 & Donatella Della Porta, "Eventful Protest, Global Conflicts," *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* 9, no. 2 (2008): p. 21-29
[14] Tarrow, *Power of Movement* p.98 -102
[15] Christian Fuchs, *Internet and Society. Social Theory in the Information Age*. (New York: Routledge 2008) p.211

In conclusion, this theoretical framework leads to the following four preconditions:

- Precondition 1: A New Social Movement is a non-political actor that puts in effort to make a difference to contemporary cultural subjects and engages in political action

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- Precondition 2: The overarching theme of the New Social Movement is ideological and its beliefs about what is right internationally supported.

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- Precondition 3: The movement is largely nonviolent only with exception of possible extremist divisions

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- Precondition 4: The new form of protesting is both local as global and carries a large digital footprint whether its goal is to foster more support or to initiate a digital protest

In the following chapter the Arab Spring, the Indignados and Occupy Wall-Street are held against these preconditions. The OCLP movement shall be evaluated through the same assumptions over the course of this thesis and the final comparison shall be made in the conclusion. Before continuing, a short note on the methodology of this thesis.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis is a Humanities Honours thesis and will therefore use concepts and insights from different disciplinary branches such as history, philosophy, media and communication and social sciences. Moreover, it is inspired by the author's visit to Hong Kong as part of an Honours research exchange.

To formulate an answer to the research question several primary sources and secondary sources will be used. The primary sources will include news articles, interviews, and official websites of the respective occupy movements. Some of these sources have been pointed out to me by the participants of the exchange who are studying at Hong Kong University. One of the students has actively participated in the OCLP protests and has shared her experiences with me. I was not able to conduct a formal interview with her but I have used her testimony to achieve a better understanding about what drove the many young protesters. Secondly, I have gained a great deal of information from comparing her opinion about the cause of OCLP with academic sources and this as contributed a great deal to the

validity of my conclusions. The secondary sources will include academic articles and books on mobilisation, occupy movements and social movement theory. The research will be divided into chapters each answering a sub-question or providing context to a question spread out over multiple chapters. Altogether, the gathered information will lead to an argumentation on the relation between OCLP and New Social Movements such as the uprisings in 2011.

2. Occupy Everywhere

Occupy Wall-Street is often put in perspective with either the Spanish Indignados or the Arab Spring. Sociologist Ernesto Castañeda, who has done field research in Barcelona at the time of the Indignados quotes a fellow sociologist: "The Occupy Wall Street is the same movement as the Indignados".[16] In her research on the relationship between the Arab Spring and OWS Sarah Kerton defends her stance that the Arab Spring blew a new democratic wind through Europe and the Americas.[17] Guzman-Concha investigates whether a student uprising in Chile is an Occupy Protest or a more Classic Social Movement using an analysis of the motives, means and conduct comparable to the preconditions set in this thesis.[18] In order to understand whether Occupy Central with Love and Peace is an addition to the branch of new social movements, it is vital to review how the larger before-mentioned movements are addressed in scholarly work. In the process, the following question will be answered: 'In what way are the Occupy Wall-Street, Indignados and Arab Spring movements representative of new social movement theory and what typifies their conduct and means?'

2.1 The Arab Spring

The collective term Arab Spring denotes a string of uprisings across Northern Africa in early 2011. The uprisings included several significant events including the overthrow of former president Ben Ali of Tunisia and the occupation of Tahrir Square in Egypt and eventually resulting in the overthrow of the Egyptian president Mubarak. Sarah Kerton, writing on Tahrir square and its relationship to Occupy Wall-Street, refers to a briefing by Adbusters, which at the time of writing is unfortunately inaccessible. Adbusters is the online platform responsible for the call to occupy Wall-Street. Adbusters state that the success of Tahrir Square was due to the fact that the protesters made one single straightforward ultimatum, namely the resignation of Mubarak.[19]

Reportedly, several motivations fuelled the Arab Spring. First of all, most Arab countries had suffered a terrible blow due to the 2008 financial crisis leading to staggering economic inequality. Blame was placed on the post-colonial economic structure and its

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[16] Castañeda, "The Indignados of Spain" p. 318

[17] Sarah Kerton, "Tahrir, Here? The Influence of the Arab Uprisings on the Emergence of Occupy," *Social Movement Studies* 11, no. 3-4 (2012): 307

[18] Cesar Guzman-Concha, "The Students'Rebellion in Chile: Occupy Protest or Classic Social Movement?," *Social Movement Studies* 11, no. 3-4 (2012): 411

[19] Kerton, "Tahrir here?" p. 305

supposed inefficiency at creating market competitiveness.[20] Ineffective economics was just one of a myriad of causes of collective dissatisfaction with the regime. The second motivation for the Arab Spring was the general political disaffection based on the lack of autonomy, possibility of political participation and persistent human rights violations.[21] Many Arab regimes are a combination of autocracy and democracy and are thus not capable of adjusting to demands of the people quickly leading to instability as was the case with the Arab Spring.

Having shortly reviewed the motivations for the Arab Spring uprising, more information on the means of mobilisation and conduct of the protest is required to complete the analysis.

How to mobilise a public in an area of limited freedom of speech and press? U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel El Hassane Aissa identifies social media as a powerful tool during the (onset of the) Arab Spring. Associate professor in Media and Information Studies Ramesh Srinivasan explains the significance of information transmission through social media websites. Traditional media in the Arab countries, such as the newspaper, radio and public news programs are usually biased and government controlled. The information disseminated via Facebook or Twitter is deemed as purer and less propagandistic.[22] Political Scientist Gadi Wolfsfeld discovered a relationship between the amount of Facebook posts and demonstrations during the Arab Spring. Every major protest was preceded by several posts concerning the overarching cause and local reasons for protesting.[23]

2.2 The Indignados

Ernesto Castañeda has done field research on the Indignados movement and views the movement as a new phenomenon in the short history of social movements in Spain. He describes the movement, also known as the 15M movement (for 15 May), as a public outcry for awareness of the high unemployment rate in Spain. With the national elections just a week away, general discontentment with the stance of the running parties on Spain's social problems resulted in a call for a Spanish revolution, inspired by Tunisia and Egypt.[24]

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[20] El Hassane Aissa, *The Arab Spring: Causes Consequences, and Implications*. Strategy Research Project (Carlisle, PA 2012) p. 2-4
[21] Aissa, *The Arab Spring* p. 4-5
[22] Ramesh Srinivasan, Al Jazeera, "Taking power through technology in the Arab Spring," accessed on 6 June, 2017 http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/09/2012919115344299848.html
[23] Gadi Wolfsfeld; Elad Segev; Tamir Sheafer, "Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First," *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18, no. 2 (2013): p.124-132
[24] Castañeda. "The Indignados of Spain" p.310

Unemployment and housing crises had been the motivation of squatters to occupy abandoned buildings in Spain since the 1990's but the Indignados made no effort to stay out of the public eye. Moreover, the 15M movement protested issues with a global character, going beyond housing.[25] Castaneda adds that activists in the encampments agreed that Wall-Street should be occupied as well and that, for practical reasons, activists already living in New York took it from there. This would fit perfectly with the social movement theory on the influence of the activists' own transnational networks.[26] Castaneda cramps this causal relationship between the 15M movement and Occupy Wall-Street into one paragraph as if it is a simple case of monkey see- monkey do. Justin Helepololei investigates this relationship more elaborately and views both movements as part of a do-it-yourself revolution.[27] The name 'do-it-yourself' is very appropriate since the occupy movements rely on the mobilisation of the community. In most cases, there is no overarching organisation or strong leader figure to lead the movement and pick its protests. Several authors even describe the Occupy movements as a-political.[28] Ownership lies with the people; the movements thrive on general dissatisfaction and the collaboration that follows.

Before discussing OWS, I will first analyse the Indignados and the Arab Spring through our four preconditions. Both movements carry an ideological critique on their respective governments, they plea for global values like (financial) equality and widely acknowledged basic freedoms such as freedom of government and speech. Despite the differences in the political and social situation in Northern Africa and Spain, the drawn-up preconditions concerning NSM theory, manner and conduct are applicable. The Arab Spring was a democratic revolution spread over multiple states in the MENA region, transcending nation-state borders (precondition 2 and 4).[29] The uprising was a people's movement attempting political reform (precondition 1). Its success can partially be attributed to the usage of social media to spread information and direct protests (precondition 4). Lastly, the violent crowd management tactics used by government forces were rarely met with counter-violence from the protesters (precondition 3).

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[25] Castañeda. "The Indignados of Spain" p.314
[26] Castañeda. "The Indignados of Spain" p.318
[27] Justin A.K. Helepololei, "Manual Transmission: The Do-It-Yourself Theory of Occupy Wall Street and Spain's 15M," *Politics and Social Change: Politics of Dissent*, (2015): 119-121, accessed March 8, 2017, DOI: 10.3726/978-3-653-05582-5
[28] Castañeda. "The Indignados of Spain" p. 310 - 318
[29] The MENA region: economic and academic region referring to countries in the Middle East and North of Africa.

In Spain, there was already a rich culture of protesting unemployment and housing crises which extended to a massive protest on the eve of the election (precondition 1). Following online social networking campaigning, the reformistic ideas proceeded to inspire activists across the Atlantic to host a similar protest which eventually grew out to Occupy Wall-Street (precondition 2 and 4). The Indignados was largely a sit-in demonstration aimed at nonviolent action (precondition 3). The 15M movement supposedly inspired Occupy Wall-Street and Occupy Wall-Street inspired large crowd in the Western world and beyond. For this reason, OWS will be the final case discussed in this chapter.

2.3 Occupy Wall-Street

The area around New York City Hall is familiar with protests and small occupations carrying no more than a transient group of about hundred participants at a time and lasting only a few weeks. In 2011, the November protest starting at Zuccotti Park near City Hall seemed no more than a recent addition to these occupations. For a variety of reason these protests grew into a worldwide phenomenon.

1.1 Occupy London at St Paul's Cathedral

1.2 Occupy Frankfurt at the European Central Bank

First of all, video footage of police brutality and of occupiers being arrested circulated and caused more people from different social groups to join in.[30] Secondly, anyone could easily participate because an occupy initiative could be set up in every large city with a popular square. In the United States the General Assembly in New York was first targeted but it functioned merely as a symbol. Each participant could insert their own reason to act against capitalism, often motivated by perceived wrongdoings in their direct surroundings, in the greater framework of Occupy Wall-Street. Because of this, targets and reasons to protest the financial sector were to be found in all of the United States and, as it turned out, all over the world. The images shown above depict occupy protests, inspired by Occupy Wall-Street

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[30] Nathan Schneider. "From Occupy Wall-Street to Occupy everywhere," *The Nation,* (2011): 16-17
& Castañeda. "The Indignados of Spain" p.316

in London and Frankfurt respectively. The friendly and nonviolent character of the sit-in protests made the cause attractive to join and persuaded many influential guest speakers to speak on behalf of the OWS cause. An example is Noam Chomsky who also wrote a special on his experiences in the OWS camps.[31] The final reason why Occupy Wall-Street grew out to a global phenomenon is its media presence and regular updates on social media sites that can be accessed all around the world.

With its cause Occupy Wall-Street advocated an ideological message that appealed to many people as they could all feel the pressure of the economic crisis (precondition 2). Above all, the message was directed at capitalistic government institutions in general allowing demonstrations to take place in every city (precondition 1 and precondition 4). The protest's nonviolent character made it impossible for executioners of the law to successfully stop or limit the protest's effects (precondition 3).

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[31] Noam Chomsky, *Occupy,* (London: Penguin Books, 2012) p.23-53

3. A Short History of Hong Kong

In everyday conversation inhabitants of Hong Kong often refer to China and the government in Beijing as 'the Mainland' as if speaking about a different country.[32] Officially, Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region of China since transferal of political control from the British Empire to Beijing in 1997, resulting in a rather difficult relationship. Social, political and economic differences between Hong Kong and the Mainland bring about complications felt not only by the Legislative Council of Hong Kong (LegCo) but also by the Hong Kong citizens. It is fair to suspect that sentiments surrounding these social, political and economic differences accumulated to eventually fuel the Occupy Central with Love and Peace protests. The question is, however, what exactly tipped the scale. To answer this complicated question, it is necessary to shortly discuss the history of Hong Kong and its relationship with China and to provide an image of the situation leading up to Occupy Central. The three aspects of society mentioned above are intertwined in the way that the political situation of Hong Kong led to social and economic advancement different from that of the Mainland of China. In turn, the social and economic advancement led to different political wishes in Hong Kong. To capture all aspects a short history of the affiliations of Hong Kong and China is required, including an overview of the formation of national identity in Hong Kong.

3.1 National and international politics

Hong Kong became a colony of the British Empire in 1843 after the British victory in the first Opium War. Hong Kong was assimilated to open up trade with China to the economic advantage of the British Empire. However, the treaty in which these arrangements were made was of little effect and the trade with the mainland remained barred. Thus, instead of becoming a hatch between China and Britain, Hong Kong had to be put to different use to be profitable for the Empire. As opposed to other British colonies, Hong Kong was never subjected to a civilisation mission. Its main function was to be an open port to the world and a naval base to the British Empire. Its government was small and its population was mostly made up of hardworking Chinese that were recruited to build the naval base. In 1898, Great-Britain's lease on the New Territories, without which Hong Kong would not be as profitable, was extended and under British law this contract would expire after 99 years, mid-1997.[33]

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[32] Personal experience

[33] Steve Yui-Sang Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong: 1841-1997.* (London: I.B.Tauris 2007) p.1-41

During this period Hong Kong would develop greatly and encounter several political waves influencing the manner in which the inhabitants of Hong Kong perceive the government-citizen relationship.

The first quarter of the twentieth century, Hong Kong got swamped up in Chinese nationalism resulting in anti-British sentiments. Eventually, not willing, or able to deal with British de-escalation and power, Chinese nationalists postponed their intentions to retake Hong Kong. Still, the short period of political commotion did leave its marks: afterwards the inhabitants of Hong Kong were more politically involved than before, and the colonial government held a different attitude towards its Chinese population.[34] During the inter-war era Hong Kong developed following European example. Social legislation improved working conditions and drew attention to dangerous child labour. The colonial government successfully put in effort to increase basic literacy and advancements in communication and transport generated new jobs.[35] In 1949 the communist party proclaimed the People's Republic of China resulting in a change in mentality in migrating or Hong Kong based Chinese labourers most of whom now chose to stay in Hong Kong and not to live under a communist regime. Some labourers simply could not return after border control on both sides was made stricter.[36] In other words, living in Hong Kong was, for the first time since the British government took control, not a temporary solution. Whether the inhabitants of Hong Kong were content with it or not, the British government was their government. As writer on numerous books on Hong Kong Steve Tsang states, after this development a local identity or imagined community emerged, a keystone in the uprising of the Yellow Umbrella movement.[37] Benedict Anderson explains that a community invented by nationalistic sentiment. The community is imagined because the members of the nation will never meet all of their fellow-members, yet they feel a degree of togetherness.[38] Thus, according to Tsang, a sense of belonging grew in Hong Kong in the fifties. However, the road to political reunification with China would not be shy of division.

In the 1950s and 1960s communist riots raged through the streets of Hong Kong supported by the Communist Party of China led by Mao Zedong. The Maoists could not gain foothold thanks to clever handling by the colonial government mimicking the Maoist strategy

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[34] Tsang, *A Modern History* p. 100-103
[35] Tsang, *A Modern History* p. 106-114
[36] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.181
[37] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.190
[38] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* (New York: Verso, 2006) p.6

of convincing locals to join ranks with the British.[39] As the hard-working entrepreneurs of Hong Kong flourished under the stability and opportunities provided by the British government and the riots threatened that stability, the locals were much more receptive to the message spread by their colonial overlords. The social disturbances reflected the need for reform in Hong Kong. An uprising against the colonial regime had to be prevented in order to secure the British profit and the manner in which to retain public contentment was government and social reform. Measures were taken against corruption in the government and police and the local population was provided with a general welfare programme and free education changing the public perception of the government. However, up until 1985 the government remained undemocratic. Not being able to participate in the negotiations between Britain and China about the future of Hong Kong, the locals grew frustrated and anxious about the outcome. [40] Their apprehension was justified as the Chinese government seemed to be unwilling to take into account British demands during the negotiations and it was decided in the Sino-British declaration that full sovereignty should return to the People's Republic of China in 1997.

The Sino-British declaration on the future of Hong Kong was made public in September 1984 and read that upon reunification Hong Kong would become a Special Administrative Region of China under direct authority of the Chinese government but with some level of autonomy. Hong Kong would have its own executive, legislative and independent juridical power and a government of local inhabitants under a chief executive appointed by the government in Beijing on basis of elections. Everyday systems in society such as freedom of press, speech, assembly, travel and movement would stay in place and Hong Kong would remain a free port.[41] In summary, the Sino-British agreement seemed a lucrative one for the population of Hong Kong. From an early stage, it was clear that remaining under British authority was not one of the options but with the agreement as it sat in 1984 the inhabitants of Hong Kong would be able to retain the life they had grown accustomed to. Above all, they would have a direct say in their regional government which never was the case during British rule. The commitments made by the Chinese government were stipulated in the Basic Law which would remain unchanged for fifty years. However, whether the situation in Hong Kong would indeed remain unchanged was completely dependent on interpretation of the agreement by future National People's Congresses and the

[39] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.186-189
[40] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.197-208
[41] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.217-226

goodwill of the PRC. Britain was tasked with reforming the governmental institutions of Hong Kong to make them ready for the transition but lacked the freedom to act independently from the Chinese government. Any progress made towards a democratic government in Hong Kong had to be approved first by the PRC or was at the risk to be made undone as soon as Hong Kong was handed over.[42] Johannes Chan of the University of Hong Kong remains slightly sceptical on this issue and he denotes that between 1985 and 1987 strong demands were made for direct election of the Legislative Council which were rejected by the British government.[43] Opinions on whether the "One country two systems" is effective differ. According to political scientist Anastasia Yip, China hoped to assimilate Hong Kong to the national picture and anticipated a peaceful transition. However, the years approaching the hand-over proved that the system provided a foundation for hostility towards China. [44] Political differences fuelled ideological action taken by the inhabitants of Hong Kong resulting in several demonstrations. A more positive attitude towards the system originates from an economic point of view.

3.2 Economic position

The economic relationship between Hong Kong and China is complicated because for the larger part of the twentieth century other countries and international politics have dictated its status. As mentioned before, the British lease on the new territories made Hong Kong worth investing in. The port of Hong Kong developed into an important node in the British trading network and required facilitation such as headquarters or regional offices of trading firms, an industry for ship maintenance and factories processing raw materials for the repairs.[45] These factories heralded an era of industrialisation stretching until the 1970s. When communist rule was established in China and the Cold War dictated suspicion of any communist activity, Hong Kong had to observe American embargos on trade with China. A system of certificates of origin ensured re-exporting imported goods from China was impossible.[46] The embargos increased the demand for the home industry of Hong Kong and the port grew in importance largely replacing the port in Shanghai for Western trade.

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[42] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.226- 236
[43] Chan, "Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement" p. 571-573
[44] Anastasia Yip, "Hong Kong and China: One Country, Two Systems, Two Identities," *Global Societies Journal* 3, (2015): p.21
[45] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.56-62
[46] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.162-164

The tension between USA and China was eased in 1972, lifting embargos making it attractive to outsource manufacturing activities to the mainland and shifting the focus to the third sector. Lack of land and natural resources limited the kind of industries that could be developed. As a result, the focus of Hong Kong's efforts to diversify its economy in the 1970s was to upgrade into a modern financial centre and regional hub for business services. China housed Hong Kong's industry and Hong Kong became the most important capital market for the PRC.[47]

At the time of the negotiations about Hong Kong's future, China and Hong Kong had grown accustomed to two completely different systems. Hong Kong was a capitalist society and China a socialist society. Economic reform in the late 1980s in China stagnated trying to hold on to the traditional system whilst implementing capitalist methods.[48] In other words, when realizing basic changes, capitalism and the Leninist system proved to be incompatible. The 1997 hand-over would mean unifying the two matured and established systems in a country of which its main government would have no knowledge of the workings of the capitalist society. Apart from this, economic and political history have determined the way of life in a certain area and thus play a role in identity building. Despite the difficulties discussed, the one country to systems administration proved to have a lucrative effect on trade. Economist Anne-Laure Delatte and Asia-expert Maud Savary-Mornet state that the economies of the SAR and China are closely intertwined despite their differences. Hong Kong profits from the industry near the Pearl River Delta and China benefits from the large thirds sector in Hong Kong.[49] In other words, the economies complement each other.

The political history and economic position of Hong Kong in relationship to China has shown both positive and negative results of the reunification. The sub chapters have discussed several complications in the exchange between the entities and has hinted at their consequences. The final two sub chapters on national identity and the social history of Hong Kong will complete this overview of situation in Hong Kong pertaining to China in 1997.

3.3 National identity

Tsang writes about the emergence of a Hong Kong local identity. To speak of collective identity in this sense is to suggest that within Chinese citizenship multiple sub-

[47] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.176-178
[48] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.246
[49] Anne-Laure Delatte; Maud Savar-Mornet, "Made in China, Financed in Hong Kong," *China Perspectives*, no. 2 (2007): p.58-59

groups exist, one of which the Hong Kong sub-group. The first claim is viable: next to being Chinese one can identify with a regional culture or specific school within religion associate with the others identifying in such a way. The second claim, however, requires a somewhat more extensive explanation as the Hong Kong identity could easily be misunderstood for nationalism given the circumstances.

As Tsang explains, the population of Hong Kong is ethnic Chinese and therefore for the larger part of the twentieth century felt more drawn to the population of the PRC than to the British. However, the British crown governed Hong Kong. To be clear: identity is the answer to the questions 'Who am I?' and 'What am I?'. Whether identity is constructed or dictated by nature is a lively debate. For the purpose of this research, and based on evidence from identity formation in Hong Kong, we speak of constructed identity. If not nature, what are the building blocks of the sense of belonging? As is the case with every socially constructed identity the ´Who´ and ´What´ questions are partially answered by positive distinction.[50] This means one is what one is not. One identifies by pointing out differences with other social groups. The colonial government had always carried out a 'touch base policy' meaning that any immigrant that settled and was able to gain employment would be permitted to stay. The influx of Chinese immigrants in the seventies gave life to a popular stereotype of the PRC inhabitant that had been cut off from the world and raised on a Maoist ideology.[51] The people born in Hong Kong thus regarded them as backwards and different. Therefore, affirming the constructed identity: a Chinese from Hong Kong was clearly different from a PRC-born Chinese.

Returning to the question whether nationalism played a role. Tsang points at the 'Hong Kong way of life' that became visible during the 1970s. This way of life constituted both Chinese and Western culture and a different Cantonese dialect with words unknown to Cantonese speakers on the other side of the water. When travelling, one was proud to proclaim the Hong Kong origin as opposed to the Chinese.[52] Why isn´t the development of a local identity more the onset of nationalism in Hong Kong? Allegiance in Hong Kong was not on the colonial agenda before the Second World War but in the sixties local support was key to resist Maoist attacks.[53] Gradually the relationship between the non-intrusive colonial government and its Chinese population changed. Western countries put social reform on their

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[50] Jolle Demmers, *Theories of Violent conflict: An Introduction.* (New York: Routledge, 2012) p.18-19
[51] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.193
[52] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.192 - 194
[53] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.188

agenda's and Hong Kong profited to a moderate degree from the installation of certain social institutions. The colonial government provided the conditions for industries to develop and grow: political stability, improved local infrastructures, massive resettlement or housing programme meant cheap and heavily subsidised housing made available to workers, heavily subsidised education and health services. Still, the inhabitants of Hong Kong weren´t required to identify with one nationality. Someone born in Hong Kong could switch his or her Chinese passport to a British one without too much difficulty.[54] The colonial government never excessively encouraged loyalty to the British crown. Professor of comparative literature Ackbar Abbas writes on the basis of nationalism in Hong Kong and claims that the relaxed stance of the colonial government allowed for a certain internationalism. Indeed, after the Joint Declaration announcing the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997, fear of losing the old way of life aroused anti-nationalist sentiments directed at the PRC.[55] In short, Chinese and Hong Kong identities developed differently over the course of the century. However, the 1997 reunification was not viewed as an impossible and undesirable reconciliation of those two identities. The next this sub-chapter will show how political awareness of Chinese affairs grew in Hong Kong and reveal a shared custom and the illustration of national identity in Hong Kong will be continued in chapter 4.

3.4 Social history

In 1989, Chinese activists used Tiananmen Square in the centre of Beijing as stage for their protest for democracy. The citizen of Hong Kong strongly supported this protest in mind and in the form of local demonstrations.[56] By June 1989 thousands of university students and other citizens had gathered in the square despite warnings by the Chinese government that the protest was illegal and would be met with counter-revolutionary measures if not dispersed soon. On the 4th of June, the government made true to that promise by ordering the People's Liberation Army, the armed forces of the communist party, to break up the protest using violence if necessary. This day is now commemorated in Hong Kong as the day of the Tiananmen Square massacre.[57] Jean Béja describes demonstrations as part of the culture in Hong Kong and a legitimate way to voice an opinion, noting that since 1997 there have been

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[54] Tsang, *A Modern History* p.165- 195

[55] Ackbar Abbas, "Cosmopolitan De-scriptions: Shanghai and Hong Kong," *Public Culture* 12, no. 3 (2000): p. 777

[56] Jean-Philippe Béja, "Is Hong Kong Developing a Democratic Political Culture?" *China Perspectives*, no. 2 (2007): p. 5-6

[57] The Censorship Files, "Tiananmen Square Massacre," accessed on 8 March, 2017 https://thecensorshipfiles.wordpress.com/tiananmen-square-massacre/

about 1000 demonstrations a year.[58] The population of Hong Kong is right to pay close attention to political developments according to Michael Davis, law professor at the university of Hong Kong. He states that the society in Hong Kong is clearly ready for universal suffrage, his evidence being the democracy movement and the establishment of democratic parties after the handover.[59] One can wonder whether the mere existence of democratic parties would suffice to create a successful democratic political order. If not everyone of the society feels represented in at least one of those political parties, and the opportunity for new parties to be successful is limited, the political order is arguably not a full democratic system. The other side of this coin is that without a democracy-supporting Chief Executive the room for, relatively fast, democratic development will stay limited. Since this has been the case for the years since 1997, the achieved democratic reform reflects serious ambition to constitute a full democratic system in the near future. Next to political reservations about the Chinese regime, entrepreneurs and workers also had some economic reasons to closely observe the developments in power distribution from China to Hong Kong. The Gross Domestic Product growth per capita in Hong Kong fell from 4,5% between 1983 and 1997 to 1,9% in 1997-2001.[60] In other words, the growth in income per head decreased what can result in a decrease in purchasing power if price inflation remains the same. A second economic development and reason for concern is the increase in the unemployment rate from 2,1% 1997 (the average being just 2,4% between 1985 and 1997) to 8,7% in 2003.[61] That is an increase from about 136.269 unemployed in 1997 to about 585.597 unemployed in 2003. Cheng points out that just constituting a democracy would not help solve any economic issue the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region encounters.[62] On the other hand, this might not be evident to the general population as the popular belief is still that democracy is undermined and has not been able to reach its full potential. With this critical viewpoint in mind one can imagine the growing dissatisfaction of the Hong Kong population in 2014 with the, still undemocratic, elections in 2012 in mind and a ground-breaking announcement from the PRC on the way which will be the starting point of the next chapter and a continuation of the discussion as to what tipped the scale towards the Occupy Central protests.

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[58] Béja, "Is Hong Kong Developing" p. 9
[59] Michael Davies, "Constituting Democracy in Hong Kong," *China Perspectives*, no. 2 (2007): p.28-29
[60] Joseph Cheng, "The Pro-Democracy Movement: A Lost Decade?" *China Perspectives*, no. 2 (2007): p.16
[61] Cheng, "Pro-democracy Movement" p.16
[62] Cheng, "Pro-democracy Movement" p.17

4. Occupy Central: the movement and insurgency

From the previous chapter we have learnt that Hong Kong has developed differently from China on a social, cultural, political and economic level. Nevertheless, the future of Hong Kong is very dependent on the political course of China. From time to time, these two facts clash with each other. For years, the object of political demonstrations in Hong Kong had been direct elections for the position of Chief Executive. According to provisions in the Basic Law and the Joint Declaration, full democracy was to be instituted after 2007 through elections of both the Chief Executive and the Legislative Council. The Basic Law did, however, state that 'the method for selecting the Chief Executive shall be specified in light of the actual situation' providing a loophole for the PRC to influence the nominations.[63] In 2014, the Chinese government decided that direct elections were allowed but only from a pre-approved list of Pro-Beijing candidates. This decision was met with a lot of discontentment in pro-democracy circles. Student-strikes starting the 22nd of September initiated months of demonstrations. From the 29th September onwards, protesters gathered in Admiralty, an extension to the Hong Kong business district and home to several government complexes. The demonstrations spread to three other popular hubs in Hong Kong: Causeway Bay with its popular shopping and recreation areas, Mong Kok with its nightlife and many restaurants and Tsim Sha Tsui, a major tourist hub (see the map of locations).[64] As one can imagine, thousands of people sitting in the streets in these busy, highly urbanized areas made for quite a spectacle. Extraordinary at first sight but also an interesting phenomenon to study when determining whether the spirit of Occupy Central resembles that of the 2011 revolutions. Put in a question: How can the Occupy Central protests be characterized according to analytic insurgency frameworks?

Within the insurgency framework several authors theorize about spatiality in political protests. In other words, how are "places" used to achieve goals? A second way to analyse the Occupy protests in Hong Kong is through performance theories. The demonstrations were fuelled by a certain level of drama and spectacle from both the participants' and the defusers' sides. A third way to research insurgency is through the means and effectiveness of mobilisation which will be discussed in the final part of this chapter. The third chapter will pay special attention to the cyber section of these mobilisation strategies.

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[63] Davis, "Constituting Democracy" p. 29
[64] BBC News, "Hong Kong: Tear Gas and Clashes at Democracy Protest," published 28 September, 2014 accessed 6 June, 2017 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-29398962

I will start by discussing how to approach the usage of public space against the original owners of that space: the government. Linda Hershkovitz writes about the significance of Tiananmen Square in Chinese history and, most importantly, its significance in the call for democracy. With theories on the politics of place she describes how student movements took ownership of the square and how the government ferociously took that ownership back. In 1949 Tiananmen Square was outfitted with an enormous portrait of Mao as well as a memorial for the martyrs of the Chinese revolution. After 1949, virtually all important holidays and parades were held on or around the square and finally in 1976 the revolutionary character of the square came full-circle after Mao was enshrined in his Mausoleum.[65] In other words, Tiananmen Square was envisioned and constructed as a commemoration to the communist revolution and a symbol of the greatness of the PRC. Any demonstration against government decisions contested communist notions of unity. Thus, hosting a demonstration on Tiananmen Square assigns a new, more democratic, purpose to that space. Hershkovitz adds that 'the occupation of Tiananmen Square was an explicit challenge to the state's power to define and control political space'.[66] The student movement attempted to transform the sacred shrine of communism, the base of China's society, to an image of democracy and even added their own monument: the goddess of democracy. The Tiananmen Square occupation was about taking matters into one's own hands and the same is true for the Occupy Central movement.

Before continuing with the usage of space in Occupy camps first an illustration of national identity in Hong Kong as those are closely related. Béja wrote in his article: the PRC government thought Hong Kong not ready for universal suffrage due to lack of national identity.[67] In 2011 an organisation called Scholarism was founded in response to moral and national courses being added to school curricula. Scholarism opposed what its advocates called governmental brainwashing of the new generation with school subjects designed to create national identity.[68] Beijing meddling with the Chief Executive elections carried the same attitude towards the self-determination of Hong Kong. Like the protesters on Tiananmen Square the students in Hong Kong responded by taking matters into their own

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[65] Linda Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen Square and the Politics of Place," *Political Geography* 12, no. 5 (1993): p. 400-409
[66] Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen Square" p.410
[67] Béja, "Is Hong Kong Developing" p.4
[68] Klavier Wang, "Mobilizing Resources to the Square: Hong Kong's Anti-Moral and National Education Movement as Precursor to the Umbrella Movement," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 20, no. 2 (2017): 128

hands and displaying an incredible amount of national identity. Firstly, national identity was shown through mere protest. As stated in the previous chapter, demonstrations were part of the Hong Kong lifestyle and a legitimate way to voice an opinion. Furthermore, an occupy camp is quite suitable for the creation of a community. Everyone shares a cause, a common enemy and must make-do with the same, limited resources. A second way to look at national identity in Hong Kong is through art work and expression surrounding the occupy sites. Protestors in Hong Kong occupied the main roads and squares in all four locations. As Hui Yew-Foong states: "The act of occupying these roads re-spatialized them into protest sites with new meanings for Hong Kong residents".[69] Around Admiralty, for example, several art installations were set up just as an ´Occupy Workshop´ and a ´Big Stage´ for speeches and occasionally concerts. In other words, Occupy inspired a tightknit community in which people took care of one another and participated in activities together, apart from protesting. One might also argue that to the PRC, Hong Kong was primarily seen as an economic society. Such a substantial protest as the Occupy movement, taking place in areas that demonstrate Hong Kong´s economic character, shows that Hong Kong is not only an economic society but also a political and social society. Amply said, ´it shows´, which brings us to the second part of the analysis: the importance of performance, the way a protest is staged and handled.

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[69] Hui Yew-Foong "The Umbrella Movement: Ethnographic explorations of communal re-spatialization," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 20, no. 2 (2017): 147

4.2 Performance and mobilisation

Introducing this segment, a fitting quote by Charles Tilly: 'undemocratic regimes prescribe more performances, tolerate fewer performances, and forbid more performances than democratic regimes'.[70] This is a striking but true phenomenon when applied to the Hong Kong case. As witnessed in earlier democratic protests in China, such as the described Tiananmen Square protests, Chinese armed forces have a tradition of using violence against protestors. Engaging in protest is prohibited on the Mainland apart from the numerous state rituals and memorials praising the regime. The situation in Hong Kong is different, as long as it remains a Special Administrative System with its own system demonstrations can freely occur.[71] The Hong Kong people are thus at risk of losing this right if this special status is taken from them in 2047. It is important to note that performances are two-fold: demonstrators give a performance as well as the counter-forces trying to de-escalate the situation. First, we will look at the performance of the protestors and then to that of the counter-forces.

Embracing the freedom they now still possess, Hong Kong's protestors carry out their demonstrations in a remarkably peaceful manner. Wendy Gan from the University of Hong Kong recalls several passages of the Occupy Central protests such as the use of puns as method of protesting and the Happy Birthday song. The Happy Birthday song became a method to silence any opponent of Occupy Central. Instead of screaming at any speaker arguing against the protest or at the dawn of physical threat, protestors simply sang leaving the opponent without words.[72] The means of raising awareness and responding to counter-measures are incredibly important for the way a protesting crowd is perceived and framed. Humour as narrative is both effective in conveying criticism as an innocent way of expression. As Gan adds: the protest got known for its politeness.[73]

The counter-forces, on the other hand, can be described as anything but polite and peaceful. Many sources describe a notorious incident in the first week of the OCLP protests. On the 28th of September, the BBC reports a massive tear gas

1.3 View of the teargas attack published by the BBC

[70] Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances*. (New York: Cambridge University Press 2008) p. 179
[71] Daniel Garrett, "Visualising Protest Culture in China's Hong Kong: Recent Tensions over Integration," *Visual Communication* 12, no. 1 (2012): 57
[72] Wendy Gan, "Puckish Protesting in the Umbrella Movement," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 20, no. 2 (2017): p. 162-165
[73] Gan, "Puckish Protesting" p.165

attack on Occupy Central protesters. The national and international public is shocked by the violent retaliation.[74] Moreover, Adrian Chow has collected several police-related statements made during the Occupy Central protests from which a certain demeanour towards the protesters can be deduced. First of all, a statement made by Carrie Lam, at that time Chief Secretary for Administration of HK and currently Chief Executive. She proclaimed that 'the police had used reasonable violence in handling the Occupy Central Movement.'[75] The phrase often used in this context is 'reasonable force' and Lam's spokesperson later clarified that she meant to say exactly that. However, the crux is not what is meant but rather what is perceived. In other words, what matters is what is thought to be true. Any protest supporter could easily argue that this was not merely a slip of the tongue on the side of Carrie Lam. Why would she think of violence when addressing police action concerning the Occupy Central protests? The popular opinion certainly swayed towards the police's response being violent and far from reasonable since the movement was perceived as peaceful thanks to its performances. Incidents with police violence surfaced over the days following the teargas attack. Chow recalls seeing police officers attack unarmed students and refers to the "7 Policemen Incident" where a protester was caught pouring water on some policemen and thereafter was beaten and kicked by seven policemen for four minutes while cuffed. The whole scene was recorded and aired on the news the next morning.[76] These are the kind of images that remain in people's minds for an extended period of time. Above all, they will more easily sympathize with the protester than with the police. An everyday citizen cannot imagine what an uprising must be like through the eyes of a policeman, they can only identify with the participant's side as it is likely that they themselves have been a participant at some point in their lives. Performance and mobilisation are closely intertwined. The images of fellow citizen being brutalized by police brings about anger and while maybe not agreeing with the political objectives of the demonstrations, such actions inspire support in a broad section of the Hong Kong society. Hui, who walked through the Admiralty camps interviewing participants, did encounter several occupiers who joined in after the tear-gas attack by the police.[77] Again, this aspect is two-fold: a seemingly peaceful and pleasant situation in the Occupy camps will assure more people that it is safe for them to join in.

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[74] BBC News, "Hong Kong: Tear Gas and Clashes at Democracy Protest," published 28 September, 2014 accessed 6 June, 2017 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-29398962
[75] Adrian Chow, "Police-Related Statements during the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong – 'Laying Hands Down' or an Attempt at discursive formation," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (2015): p. 472
[76] Chow, "Police Related Statements" p. 473
[77] Yew-Foong "The Umbrella Movement" p.156

Besides, a peaceful protest will generate more goodwill and volunteers to help sustain the protest.

According to Tilly, two factors are vital to the ability to undertake action. Firstly, the repertoire of the claim, which basically means the history the claim is based on and the history of the actors involved in respect to each other. The second aspect is the strength of the social base of participants and the connections they have. In other words, the amount and quality of support they can raise for their cause.[78] In the case of Occupy central there are two separate histories. As previously stated, the PRC denied the existence of a national identity in Hong Kong. In other words, the PRC would like to establish a mainland national identity, created from mainland experiences and history in the former British colony. The lion´s share of the Hong Kong population has never been opposed to reunification with China but it cannot deny the shared (cultural) history which differs greatly from that of the population on the mainland. Through top-down attempts to instil a unified Chinese national identity, one might argue that people feel pushed towards what they know and will therefore reject the new identity. This would potentially make it easier to rally (non-political) citizen against the PRC. The reinforced Hong Kong identity will achieve the same result. The second notion by Tilly, concerning the social backbone of a movement, expands to different areas. This chapter will review the influence of leadership in mobilisation and shortly point out earlier arguments also consistent with mobilisation theory. The next chapter will take on virtual mobilisation of the social base which constituted a vital part of the Occupy Central's success.

4.3 Leadership in occupy

After observing physical violence, joining an insurgency is not the rational and logical step as it may have seemed from the previous explanation of why people joined in. The rational course of action would be to make a careful consideration of costs and benefits and to free-ride.[79] In other words, one's first reaction would be to support the cause passively, hoping that others will do this actively and then profit from any achieved benefits, in this case a more democratic government. The cost of active participation is the risk of a physical altercation with police whereas the benefits would be the good feeling of participating in a tight community and the ability to claim partial responsibility for a possible victory. In ordinary situations, the costs would weigh-out the benefits because the 'don't join-in'

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[78] Tilly, *Contentious Performances* p.176

[79] David Mason, *Caught in the Crossfire. Revolutions, Repression and the Rational Peasant*. (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefiled Publishers Inc, 2004) p. 86 -89

situation brings about mostly benefits and little cost. Hence, something or someone must persuade possible participants that active participation would benefit them more or would be the best decision to make. This is where the concept of leadership enters the stage. What makes a good leader? In the Occupy Central protests two leader figures can be identified: Benny Tai and Joshua Wong. Benny Tai, now in his fifties, started his activism when he was a student in university. Hogg & Knippenberg state on leadership that prototypical members of a group often occupy a leadership position.[80] Benny Tai grew up in Hong Kong and has fought his entire adult life for democracy making him a good prototype for the democracy movement. This allows him to have an influence over the behaviour of other 'group members' and makes sure he is perceived as a reliable source of information. Joshua Wong serves as a prototype for the current student-activist. In 2011, he established the Scholarism movement at the age of fifteen, mobilising more than 100.000 to protest the PRC patriotic education in Hong Kong.[81] Drawing from this experience, Joshua Wong makes a credible leader to the mass of student-activists wanting to make a difference. David Mason states that without leadership, collective action may be short lived as it usually has a direct cause that is reduced in relevance over time.[82] Any organization requires someone to keep pushing forward, setting new goals and activating the masses. Even though the "grievance" of lack of universal suffrage is still an issue in Hong Kong, the reason the Occupy movement went viral in 2014, after having existed for nearly three years, was the Beijing ruling against completely free elections for Chief Executive. The protest died out after the initiators of Occupy Central surrendered but the battle was continued through politics and further demonstration down the line. For instance, in 2016, Joshua Wong founded the political party Demosistō to address Beijing's 'authoritarian' rule.[83] Returning to leadership as an analytical framework of insurgency. The three original initiators of the Occupy Central movement and Joshua Wong possess at least two requirements to solve free-riding: they can make sure that any contribution made will not be in vain through their extensive social network and credibility. This leads to the second notion: the security that if one will join, others will do as well. Lastly, a close-knit university set-up constributes towards the elimination of free-riding since

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[80] Michael A. Hogg; Daan van Knippenberg; David E. Rast III, "The Social Identity Theory of Leadership: Theoretical Origins, Research Findings, and Conceptual Developments," *European Review of Social Psychology* 23, (2012): p.263-264

[81] BBC News, "Profile: Hong Kong Student Protest Leader Joshua Wong," published 2 October 2014, accessed 6 June, 2017 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29457900

[82] Mason, *Caught in the Crossfire* p.96

[83] Time World, "Hong Kong Activist Joshua Wong Launces New Political Party," published April 11, 2016 accessed 8 June, 2017 http://time.com/4288070/demosisto-hong-kong-joshua-wong/

any free-riders or non-participants are easily identified and motivated to change their conduct.

In short: people mobilize for several reasons. First of all, it is important that the public can sympathise with the movement and its cause. Nonviolent conduct makes the movement more approachable and less controversial to support. Leaders can contribute a great deal towards creation of a firm backbone to the movement through charismatic speech or their extensive network. However, Occupy Central would not have been able to reach the greater mass without a larger digital network. The final chapter will shed a light on mobilisation through online facilities.

5. Cyberprotest and Mobilisation through Digital Media

As touched upon in the first chapter, digital media plays a central role in occupy movements spreading information rapidly and mobilising the community. During Occupy Central the medium 'FireChat' was key to spreading information about protest sites and keeping contact. FireChat creates a decentralized network using people's devices as nodes meaning information travels from device to device as long as those devices are within short distance of each other.[84] The information flow between the nodes is not retraceable. This way communication takes place anonymously preventing government actors from singling out and disciplining activists, enabling protesters to strive efficiently towards their goal. Another advantage of the so called 'mesh network' that the FireChat app creates is that users are not relying on an active internet connection to receive and put through information.[85] A possible question following the use of the FireChat app is: 'How has digital media and technology contributed to the mobilisation of Occupy Central protesters?'. In order to answer this question, we first look at the relationship between online and offline activism. The first thing that comes to mind is something every internet user is or should be well aware of: the permanent character of everything that is posted online. A physical protest may be long gone but the remains of its glory days are still to be found online in the form of websites, blog posts or even tweets. Undoubtedly, the archive that is the internet provides a great deal of information on social grievances taking new social dissatisfaction to a higher, more heated, level. However, for the purpose of this article, only internet activism leading up to and during the actual physical protest will be considered.

5.1 Three dimensions

Most contemporary protests have a digital side to forge alliances and gain support. Networking should not only be interpreted as an individual or group reaching out to a specified other individual or group but more as a plea for support in general containing different intensities or dimensions. Fuchs sets out three dimensions in digital protest or cyber protest in his book on the occupy movement and social media: a cognitive, a communicative and a co-operative based on Durkheim's, Weber's and Tönnies' theories respectively.

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[84] Jack Smith, "FireChat: The App That Fueled Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution", *The Observer* Published 10 July, 2014 accessed 6 June, 2017 http://observer.com/2014/10/firechat-the-app-that-fueled-hong-kongs-umbrella-revolution/
[85] Jack Smith, "FireChat: The App That Fueled Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution", *The Observer* Published 10 July, 2014 accessed 6 June, 2017 http://observer.com/2014/10/firechat-the-app-that-fueled-hong-kongs-umbrella-revolution/

According to Fuchs, occupy movements implement all three of those dimensions in their digital protest and make use of both commercial and non-commercial media.[86] Commercial-type media does not have facilitating the movement as their main goal but simply provide a service that is applicable to the movement's needs, examples are Twitter and Facebook. Non-commercial media are usually founded and fashioned for the purposes of the movement such as the websites of *TheGlobalSquare* supporting Occupy Wall-Street and *Riseup* facilitating anonymous communications. A possibly more well-known example of a non-commercial webpage associated with the occupy movement is Occupy Wall Street's webpage which remains active up until this day.[87]

The cognitive dimension in digital protest by occupy movements entails images, live streams and news broadcasts or anything else providing information and updates.[88] Aptly named: the streams of information this dimension encompasses influence the way the larger passive community perceives a protest, its ideology, and method. For this reason, the occupy movement relies greatly on the spread of (visual) information to win the hearts and minds of "the people" as has been discussed in chapter 4.

The communicative dimension in digital protest includes any form of sender-to-recipient communication such as e-mails or chat boxes.[89] Comparing the two dimensions: whilst in the cognitive dimension information is spread through "official" channels, in the communicative dimension information spreads through social relations. Information is spread in the communicative dimension is more efficient in turning the passive public into active members of the protest. Being directly addressed by a family member or friend about the protest and its cause is more likely to motivate the recipient to come into action. This way, the movement spreads like a virus from household to household creating the support required to stand up against a government or other authority.

The final dimension described by Fuchs is the co-operative dimension which consists of actual activism.[90] In the co-operative dimension participants of the movement provide information by sharing their personal stories about their experiences with the authority they are protesting revealing why they support the cause. The general public can relate to those stories as they are based on everyday situations in which anyone can find themselves. Insight

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[86] Christian Fuchs, *OccupyMedia!: The Occupy Movement and Social Media in Crisis Capitalism*. (Alresford: Zero Books, 2014) Chapter 3

[87] "Occupy WallStreet: We are the 99 Percent," http://occupywallst.org/ accessed 06 June, 2017

[88] Fuchs, *OccupyMedia!* Chapter 3

[89] Fuchs, *OccupyMedia!* Chapter 3

[90] Fuchs, *OccupyMedia!* Chapter 3

in how the cause of the movement might also be relevant for them leaves them more favourable towards the movement and may lead to participation.

5.2 Occupy Cyberspace

Earl et al. identify four categories of internet activism: (1) brochure-ware; (2) online facilitation of offline activism; (3) online participation and (4) online organizing.[91] Combining these four categories with the dimensions drawn up by Fuchs makes for the following divide: The first dimension, cognition, contains mostly brochure-ware which is information distribution through websites. Chat boxes and online forums facilitate offline activism as part of the communication dimension. Lastly, the cooperative dimension consists of online participation, such as letter-writing or virtual sit-ins overflowing websites leading them to shut down, and online organizing denoting movements with no offline activism (like Anonymous). The latter category is of lesser significance when analysing a physical occupy movement but the former three all contributed to the mobilisation of participant for Occupy Central. The Cantonese website oclp.hk (*Occupy Central with Love and Peace*) provides visitors information on the movement and on themes concerning the movement. The website is not updated regularly, as the most recent posts all date from 2014, there is no direct discussion board but there is room for donations. All characteristic of brochure-ware.[92] The more accessible English website 'https://oclphkenglish.wordpress.com/' provides information and also the opportunity to 'get involved'. The visitor can opt to donate, find ways to contact local supporters of the cause (situated in Australia, Canada, the UK and USA) or start an initiative of his or her own. In other words, the website is brochure-ware and facilitates offline activism touching both the cognitive and communication dimension. Next to this website Occupy Central with Love and Peace also hosts its own Twitter and Facebook accounts providing a steady stream of informal communication to its followers.[93] In the case of Occupy Central the co-operative dimension only contains participation in online protest actions such as the petition to arrange a meeting with Chinese premier Li Keqiang but also, again, means such as Facebook to actively share stories and collaborate.[94]

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[91] Jennifer Earl; Katrina Kimport; Greg Prieto; Kimberly Reynoso, "Changing the World One Webpage at a Time: Conceptualizing and Explaining Internet Activism," *Mobilization: An International Journal* 15, no. 4 (2012): 429
[92] Earl et al. "Changing the World" 429
[93] Twitter: https://twitter.com/oclphk; Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/OccupyCentral/
[94] Matthew Robertson, "One Month into Occupy Central, Students Petition Chinese Premier Li Keqiang" *The Epoch Times* published 30 October, 2014 accessed 06 June, 2017
http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/1047858-one-month-into-occupy-central-hong-kong-students-petition-

6. Conclusion

The long march to democracy in Hong Kong has taken the next step towards its goal with the Occupy Central with Love and Peace demonstrations. Regrettably, this initiative has been underexposed in academia up until now. This thesis has attempted to construct an initial framework in which Occupy Central can be viewed answering the question 'To wat extent is Occupy Central with Love and Peace a continuation of the social uprisings in 2011 and to what extent was Occupy Central a different phenomenon?'. Shortly recapping, in academic discourse the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignados and Occupy Wall-Street have been analysed using New Social Movement theory. NSM theory dictates that the movements are supported by non-political actors that engage in political action. The overarching theme of the New Social Movement is based on internationally supported ideological beliefs about what is right and wrong. In addition to NSM theory, several concepts from the insurgency research field have been applied to the cases of the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignados and Occupy Wall-Street. It was found that all three movements were largely nonviolent and that their protests carry a large digital footprint.

From this starting point, it was hypothesised that Occupy Central was part of the same phenomenon as the aforementioned movements and therefore also a New Social Movement. we move on the to Occupy Central. Hong Kong did not object to returning to China thus any resistance against the Beijing government should not be viewed as nationalistic endeavours. The political action against the government should be considered as a battle for self-determination which is a broadly supported basic right in most parts of the developed world. Thus, OCLP shares the characteristic of having an ideological cause with the aforementioned movements. In extension of Wieviorka's view on NSMs, Hong Kong aspires to become a functioning democracy and even though this goal has not been fully realized its citizen demand Beijing's attention through mobilising against their government. In doing so, they do not make any attempt at carrying out a (violent) revolution. They merely voice their opinion through liberal democratic means, as they wish to continue doing in the future.

Admittedly, Occupy Central can also be viewed as a different phenomenon from the 2011 movements. Firstly, the Indignados, the Arab Spring and OWS were mainly targeting alleged financial missteps which were in turn attributed to the government instead of solely having a political agenda like the OCLP. The OCLP cause is part of an ongoing battle for

chinese-premier/?utm_expid=.5zxdwnfjSHaLe_IPrO6c5w.0&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.nl%2F

democracy and not a short-lived battle like, for instance, Occupy Wall-Street seems to have been. However, the main reason for protests in Hong Kong to flair when they did was the decision by the Beijing government that only a pre-approved list of Chief Executive candidates would be admissible for direct elections. OCLP could be considered as a direct response to this decision. Lastly, the argumentation that OCLP is part of the same phenomenon as the 2011 movements rests on the hypothesis that the 2011 movements are themselves part of the same phenomenon. Even though a comparison between these movements has been made numerous times by different authors, several differences between the movements can cause to think that these were isolated events. Especially the comparison between the Arab Spring and the Indignados or OWS can be questioned on grounds of for example history and level of development. Spain and the United States share a similar level of cultural, political and financial development. The Arab Spring was motivated by corruption and financial dissatisfaction but was mostly targeting the lack of democracy. In this sense OCLP is more similar to the Arab Spring with its critique on the level of democracy than to the financial character of the Indignados and OWS. However, the movement is called Occupy Central, not the Hong Kong Spring. Besides, the Arab Spring was more radical towards government leadership than OCLP, removing Mubarak and Ben Ali. For that matter, OCLP shares more similarity with the passive character of the Indignados and OWS.

Assuming Lauren Langman and others were right to draw the comparison between not only the Indignados and OWS but also the Arab Spring Occupy Central with Love and Peace seems to be a continuation of the social uprisings in 2011 and thus can be analysed accordingly. However, this provides only a foundation for necessary further research. I would like to stress the need for an in-depth analysis of the aftermath of OCLP which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Not to mention the assessment of other social movements that might be part of this phenomenon to create a more complete understanding of the individual initiatives.

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